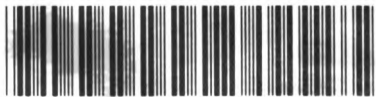


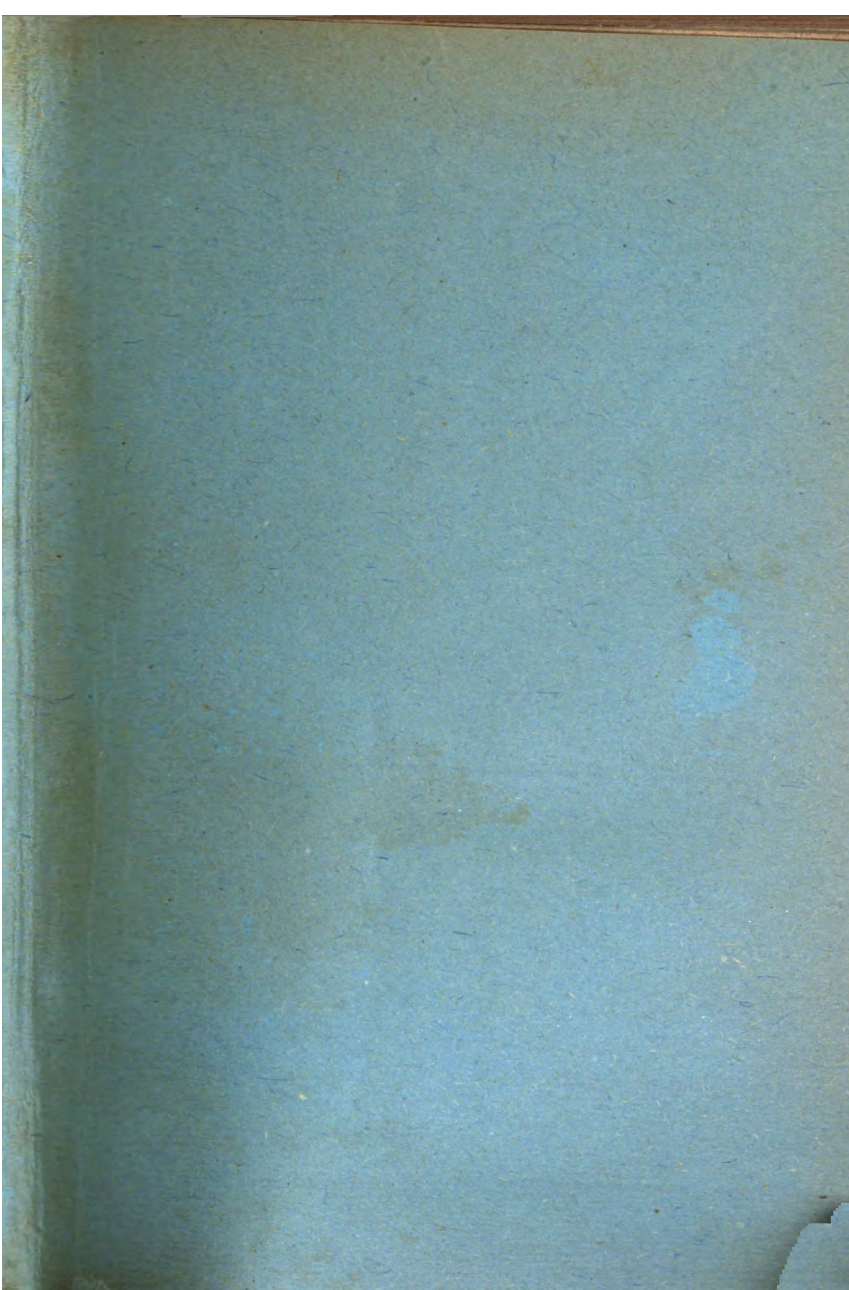




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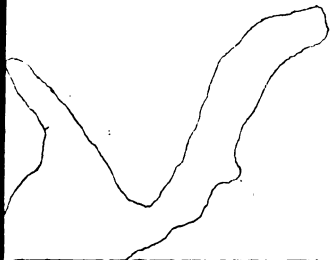
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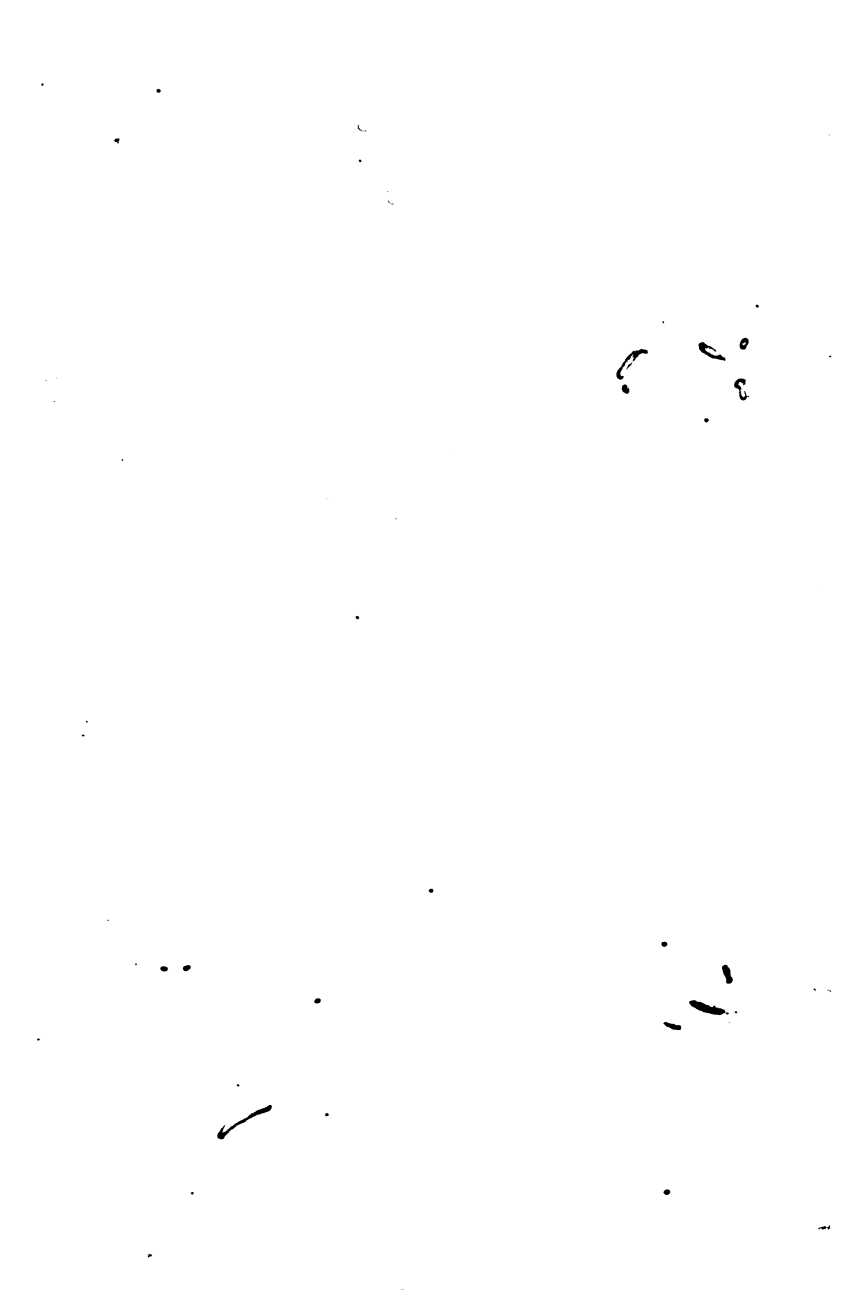
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A HISTORY
OF THE
FORTRESS OF MALTA.

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A HISTORY
OF THE
FORTRESS OF MALTA

BY

MAJOR WHITWORTH PORTER,
ROYAL ENGINEERS.



"Melita renascens"

MALTA—1858.
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PREFACE.



Having been engaged, during the last eighteen months, in the compilation of a history of the Order of St. John, which is now in course of publication by Messrs. Longman & Co. of London, I was led in the search of materials for that work, to study a number of manuscripts, which have long lain almost unheeded, in the Royal Engineer office in this island. My object in this search, was, if possible, to trace out the dates of the construction of the various parts of the fortress; and on this head I have found much information, ready to my hand. After my completion of this work, it struck me, that some of the information there obtained, might be thrown together, in the form of a

history of the fortress; containing much which would prove interesting to all, who from a lengthened residence in the island, or from other causes, were inclined to regard with interest any thing connected with Malta.

I have been compelled in this work, (to suppress many things, which appeared to me most interesting, from an anxiety to publish nothing, which could be considered in any way detrimental to the interests of the fortress, as it now exists; and for the same cause, I have made no allusions to any of the numerous additions, carried out since the island has been under the dominion of Great Britain, nor have I thought it right to attach any plan which should shew the present state of the fortifications.

However, even with these omissions, I trust that my brother officers of this garrison, and the public of Malta generally, will be enabled to glean some useful information, relative to this, the most powerful artificial fortress in the world, from the little work which I now submit to their notice.

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A HISTORY

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CHAPTER I.

Natural adaptability of Malta as a fortress—Original foundation of the Hospital of St. John at Jerusalem—Its organisation on a religious basis, and subsequent conversion into a military community—The loss of Jerusalem and Acre—Capture of Rhodes and establishment of the convent in that island—Overthrow of the Templars—The first siege of Rhodes by Mohammed the Second—The second siege and capture of the Island by Solyman.

THE geographical position of the island of Malta has combined with its geological configuration, to point it out as the natural and most suitable site for a vast insular fortress. Midway between Sicily and the north coast of Africa, it lies within easy reach of three quarters of the globe; and its situation in the centre of the Mediterranean, renders it the most convenient and accessible depot for the vast commerce, which flows, both eastward and westward along the shores of that sea.—The capacious and sheltered harbours, formed by the indentations of its eastern coast, are capable of containing, without danger or difficulty, the largest fleet; and the soft rock of

which its soil is composed, affords ample material for the construction of such bulwarks as necessity might demand or ingenuity suggest for the security of the port.

The intelligent traveller gazing for the first time upon the triple tier of batteries which frown upon his entrance from fort St. Angelo, and then suffers his eye to roam over the vast extent of parapet and rampart which greets him on every side, displaying all the various combinations of the art of fortification which the genius of successive ages has created, must be struck with two reflections: first, that such a gigantic artificial fortress could only have been reared in a country where the material for building was most abundant, and the cost of labour very trifling; and secondly, that a great proportion of that confused and crowded mass of works must be of but little use for all practical purposes of defence.— In both of these suggestions he would most undoubtedly be perfectly correct. The island being, throughout its extent, one vast quarry of stone, readily worked and easily raised; it required but the labour, necessary to sink the ditches of the fortress, to provide an ample supply of material for the raising of its escarps, in those places where the natural ruggedness of the rock did not altogether supersede the necessity of artificial defence. Labour at the same time was during the residence of the

Order of St. John in Malta, remarkably cheap and abundant.—In fact the great majority of the works were constructed by the compulsory toil of the slaves who were retained in vast numbers upon the island, and who, when not engaged in the galleys, were employed on shore, either in the dock yard, or upon the numerous works of defence which were ever in progress.

As regards the utility of many of these works, little can be said. It must however be born in mind, that when the first lines for the defence of the proposed city of Valletta were traced, the art of fortification upon modern principles was still in its infancy; and as time wore on, and improvements were suggested, additions were by degrees made on all sides, to remedy the original defects of construction. The fortress therefore can not be looked at as one vast and comprehensive whole, the offspring of a single mind; but rather as a gigantic piece of patchwork, the result of the continuous additions made during a period of upwards of two hundred years.

Another reason might be assigned to account for much of the useless labour expended on these works. The various Grand Masters, who swayed the fortunes of their order during its residence in Malta, were all naturally anxious to leave behind them some memorial by which their names might be rendered immortal to succeeding generations.—As in Rome the ma-

gnificent structures which grace that city have been the product of a similar design on the part of its Pontiffs, so in Malta, the numerous and interminable lines of ramparts, which are reared upon every available site, are the result of the ambition of so many Grand Masters to distinguish themselves by the addition of some new defence to their island home.

Numerous however as may be the defects of construction, they do not tend to impair the general strength of the work, since they arise more from a superfluity of useless detail than from weakness, and so long as one stone remains upon another, the fortress of Malta must ever stand an undying record, and a proud memorial of that illustrious fraternity, beneath whose sway the island was raised from a barren and inhospitable rock to the proud position of the most powerful stronghold in the world, if we except those where nature has contributed to aid the resources of science.

It will be well therefore, before entering upon a history of its gradual construction, to sketch briefly the antecedent records of that Military Order, to whose energy and liberality it owed its existence.

The rapid spread of Islamism, which within the half of a century from its first promulgation by the Impostor Mahomet, had spread over all the countries bordering upon Arabia, was not long ere it embraced the effete province of Judea within its newly conquered

limits. Although the caliphs, who from thenceforth maintained their sway over their sacred province, were far too keen sighted and politic to prohibit entirely the vast influx of pilgrims, whom an ardent sense of religious zeal was annually pouring forth from every country in Europe, to visit the soil consecrated by the ministry and passion of our Lord, still they were by no means unwilling to extort from the pious wanderers an ample tribute in return for their complaisance. Many hardships and much privation fell consequently to the lot of those whose worldly means were but ill adapted to meet the rapacious demands of the new lords of the soil; and the palmer not unfrequently found himself, at the term of his pilgrimage, utterly bereft of the means either of present sustenance or of future return to his home.

Under these circumstances, some charitable merchants of Amalfi, then an important commercial city of Italy, whose avocations had thrown them into frequent and friendly intercourse with the Caliph Monstaser Billah, in the year 1050 obtained his sanction for the erection of a Hospital, to be devoted to the shelter and support of such pilgrims of the Latin Church, as might require assistance and maintenance whilst in the Holy City. The benefit conferred by this establishment, even in the first years of its foundation, were so marked, and so loudly and universally lauded by the grateful pilgrims who had enjoyed its season-

able hospitality, that contributions rapidly poured in from all quarters, and the Hospital of St. John, under the pious administration of those charitable merchants, from the effects of whose zeal it had arisen, rapidly extended its sphere of usefulness, until it became an institution of no little importance in the sacred city. Many however as were the hardships which the pilgrim from Europe had been called upon to endure under the sway of the Saracen caliphs, their position was most fearfully changed for the worse towards the latter end of the 11th Century, the irruption of the Turcomans placed the destinies of the province of Judea in new hands.—Extortion and robbery of every description, and but too frequently accompanied by murder, awaited the wretched palmer in the city of his devotion; and the tales of wrongs endured and cruelties suffered, which were ere long narrated by such returning wanderers as had made good their escape from the scene of their miseries, aroused the religious enthusiasm of Europe to a pitch of frantic vehemence.—The efforts of Peter the Hermit to organise this popular ferment ended in that gigantic military expedition, known by the name of the first Crusade, in which a torrent of European Chivalry was poured upon the coasts of Asia, and which after a fearful loss of life, ended in rescuing the city of Jerusalem, and some of the neighbouring provinces, from the hands of the Turks, and

in the establishment of a Latin kingdom on that spot under the sway of the noble Godfrey of Bouillon, whose able leadership had been greeted with such ample success.

The Hospital of St. John was, at this time, under the control of Peter Gerard, who presided over the Institution under the title of rector, and no sooner had the crusaders forced their way into the city, than the portals of the Hospital were at once thrown open for the reception of the sick and wounded of the suffering army. Godfrey and the other leaders were so impressed with the benefits thus conferred upon their followers, that they hastened to testify their gratitude, by endowing the Institution with numerous manors and benefices in every part of Europe.—The wealth of the Hospital having by their means received a vast augmentation, its rector became desirous of placing it upon a more permanent and solid basis. He demanded therefore, and received the Papal sanction for the formation of an Order upon a religious footing; the members of which should embrace the three monastic vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience; and who should be distinguished by a regular habit, consisting of a black cloak bearing a white cross of eight points on the shoulder.—Numbers of the crusaders, whose religious fervor had been stimulated by the success of their late efforts on behalf of their faith, abjured the world, and enrolled themselves as members of the

infant institution, which rapidly increased both in numbers and in wealth, as these changes became more generally known throughout Europe.

The death of Gerard, and the accession of his successor, Raymond du Puy, in the year 1118, brought another and a most important change in the organisation of the fraternity. Hitherto it had merely assumed a religious character, and differed but little from the numerous monastic institutions of a similar nature throughout Europe. Du Puy was however a man of a very different character from the pious and saintly Gerard; and there were many amongst the members of his convent, whose hearts were not so deadened to the martial enthusiasm of the age, as their profession required. The ranks of the community had been largely recruited from amongst the crusaders of Godfrey's army: men whose lives had been spent in scenes of strife, and to whom the excitement and glory of a martial career were as necessary as the breath in their nostrils. A very short seclusion, amidst the calm and monotony of the Hospital of St. John, had been sufficient to engender a feeling of lassitude, and a craving for exertion in the hearts of these neophytes; and happily for them, the spirit of their new chief beat in responsive unison with their own desires.

The infant kingdom of Jerusalem was still in a very precarious position. Consisting merely of isolated cities, with the territories immediately adjacent, all

the intervening country was still in the hands of an inimical population, and the communication between the various strongholds of the Christian power, was dangerous and frequently intercepted. The proposal of Raymond du Puy, to convert his peaceful brethren into a band of warrior monks, who without abandoning either the vows or the principles of their original institution, should add thereto the further obligation of combating in behalf of their faith, was received therefore with as much eagerness by the king of Jerusalem, as it was greeted with joyful enthusiasm by the members of the convent. The change was indeed a great one; converting the peaceful and indolent churchman once more into the eager and zealous warrior; and supplanting the quiet and solitude of the cloister by the excitement of the battle field; and yet it was strictly in accordance with the spirit of the age which had originally prompted the formation of Crusading expeditions. Papal sanction was speedily obtained for the contemplated change; and before many years had passed, the White Cross banner of the Order of St. John had waved over many a field of strife, and had spread terror and dismay amidst the ranks of many an Infidel host.

Under the new organisation of the community, its members were divided into three classes; first of whom, in rank and position, were the Knights of Justice; admission into which was only granted to

those who could produce satisfactory proofs of the nobility of their descent. Every candidate for this class must have already received the accolade of knighthood from secular hands, ere he was eligible for enrolment amidst the Knights of Justice of the Order of St. John.—The second class comprised the strictly ecclesiastical portion of the convent, and at a somewhat later period was again subdivided into two distinctive grades: the conventual chaplains, who performed all the religious functions of the Order within the Convent and Hospital at Jerusalem; and the priests of obedience who performed similar duties at the various stations which were speedily established throughout Europe, for the due superintendance and management of the property which the Order possessed in every country—the third class were denominated serving brothers, and were also subdivided into *servientes armorum* and *servientes officii*. The servants at arms acted as esquires under the Knights of the first class; and were eligible, to be raised into the ranks of the Knighthood of the Order. The servants of office however, were men in a menial capacity, who performed all the duties of that nature, required within the convent; but who, without the dignities and position of their nobler brethren, nevertheless possessed numerous privileges and emoluments, which rendered admission into the Order, even in this grade, very advantageous to men of the lower class of society.

As the new duties of the Order of St. John enabled them to render frequent and most seasonable assistance to the struggling kingdom of Jerusalem, the fame of their exploits soon filled the Christian world, and recruits from the noblest families in every country, flocked to their standard. Wealth also rapidly poured into their coffers; it being considered by those, who were unable or unwilling to arm personally in behalf of their religion, that they were adding their quota to the good work, by contributing to the support of a fraternity whose sole duty it was to maintain the integrity of the Christian cause throughout the world.—In order therefore to ensure the due and proper administration of their vast property, preceptories were formed, afterwards termed Commanderies, wherever the territorial possessions of their institution were sufficiently extensive to require such a foundation. In these branch establishments, the interests of the fraternity in the immediate locality were duly protected, and eventually it was decreed that novices might be professed into the Order within their limits, without necessitating a previous visit to the head quarters of the Convent.—At the head of each Commandery was a member of the Order, who presided over the institution with the title of a Commander, and who might be either a knight, chaplain, or serving brother; by far the larger proportion however being of the former class.

A certain number of the commanderies in each country were clustered together into Priors, over which presided a dignitary, under the title of Grand Prior, who watched over the interests of the districts confided to his charge. There were often several of these Priors within the limits of a single kingdom; the greatest number being in France, where the Order was possessed of very extensive property. Such was the organization of the fraternity in its early days, and although several changes subsequently took place, which will be noted in future pages, the principles which governed their establishment never varied.

It is needless to follow the career of the Order through the various struggles which marked the twelfth century. The precarious hold which the Latins maintained over the city of Jerusalem, the principalities of Antioch, and Edessa, and the other points where they had gained a temporary footing, gradually gave way to the ever advancing inroads of the Saracens, who as they became better acquainted with the European tactics of war, were enabled to maintain a more equal combat with their Christian foes, and to derive more certain advantage from their enormous numerical superiority. In all these struggles the Order of St. John bore a noble part, and shared with the brethren of the Temple, the glory of maintaining the integrity of Christian domination in the East.

This latter fraternity had sprung into existence

very shortly after the establishment of the Order of St. John on a military basis; and as these had adopted the distinctive badge of a white cross upon a black ground, the former selected for themselves a red cross upon a white ground, in consequence of which, the rival fraternities were commonly distinguished as the White Cross Knights and the Red Cross Knights.— A similarity of design, and a rapidly accumulating revenue in the treasury of either order, gradually led to the engendering of a fatal feeling of jealousy between the two communities. This jealousy at first only displayed itself in the honorable emulation of the battle field, and the sole superiority sought for was the honor of bearing the banner of their own Order the farthest into the heart of the opposing hosts. Eventually however, many a slight cause of quarrel gradually embittered their connection with each other, and as the hold of the Latins over the drooping kingdom became more and more feeble, and when it was more than ever necessary that a perfect feeling of unity should be preserved between the only two powers capable of affording any real support to the rapidly diminishing kingdom, these broils and disputes broke out into open strife.—It would doubtless have been impossible for the military orders to have ultimately preserved the Holy Land from the power of Islamism, even had their union never been disturbed, but that fatal moment might have been considerably retarded;

and it cannot be denied that the loss of Jerusalem was much accelerated by the ill timed strife, which was with difficulty appeased, even by the vehement remonstrances of the Pontiff, the common superior of both Orders.

The struggle with the Infidel was maintained with various success throughout the twelfth century; until the rise of the celebrated Saracen warrior Saladin sounded the death knell to the struggling kingdom. Advancing from victory to victory, this heroic chief drew nearer and nearer to the great object of his ambition, the recovery of the city of Jerusalem from the power of the Christians, and this event was unfortunately hurried forward by a fatal determination on the part of Guy de Lusignan, the unworthy and feeble king of Jerusalem, to stake his all on the issue of a single field.

The disastrous result of the battle of Tiberias, which was fought in 1187, determined the fate of Jerusalem. The Christian forces were, after a most desperate and protracted conflict, utterly routed and overthrown. The King, the Grand Master of the Templars, and a host of other dignitaries fell into the hands of the Saracens, and Garnier di Napoli, the eighth Grand Master of the Order of St. John, and one of the few Englishmen who have ever held that dignity, fell nobly upon the field of battle; or at last received there his death wound, although he lived to reach the city

of Ascalon, where he sank under the effects of his injuries.

Jerusalem was now lost: the Christian host was annihilated and dispersed, and the road to the sacred city, which was utterly denuded of defenders, was open to the advance of the Infidel. Saladin was not the man to neglect the advantage thus presented to him; and in a brief space he had reaped all the benefit which the most skilful generalship could derive from the successful issue of the battle. Jerusalem itself was one of the first cities to capitulate upon the approach of the foe. After a brief resistance, protracted through a space of fourteen days, more from the despair of its few defenders, than from any hope of ultimate success, the town passed into the hand of Saladin, and was thus for ever lost to the cause of Christianity. This melancholy result of a strife which had raged for nearly a century, took place on the 2nd October 1187; and well was it for the inhabitants, that their conqueror Saladin was endued with nobler feelings of clemency, than had found a place in the bosoms of that Crusading army, which ninety years previously had originally torn the city from the grasp of the infidel. Then its streets and mosques had been deluged with blood; and a cruel and merciless massacre, without regard to age or sex, had disgraced the success of the Christian arms, and had cast a foul stain upon the holy cause in which

they were engaged. Saladin however sought no bloody revenge for this scene of carnage: the transfer of the city was effected without slaughter, and he carried his clemency so far as to permit ten members of the Order of St. John to remain for a year within the city, to continue their care of the sick with whom the Hospital was then, as it always had been, crowded.

Saladin indeed, seems to have always held the fraternity in the highest respect and honor, and a legend is narrated of him by contemporary historians, which without bearing upon it the impress of truth, marks the opinion of the times on this subject. It had reached the ears of the Saracen monarch that in the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem shelter was afforded to the sick and needy of all nations and of every creed, the Moslem not excepted and that whilst the brethren themselves were contented with the coarsest food, no expense was spared to provide the sick with such delicacies as might contribute to hasten their cure. Anxious to test this fact to the uttermost, the legend runs that Saladin disguised himself in the garb of a Moslem pilgrim, (for to Mahometans Jerusalem has always been held a sacred city, second indeed only to Mecca,) and sought admission into the Hospital; a boon which was readily granted. For two days he steadily refused to partake of any nourishment under the plea of illness and when, on the morning of the third day, he was strongly pressed

by the charitable brethren to name some dish by which his appetite might be tempted, he at length announced that the only thing for which his stomach craved, was one which it was impossible for him to obtain. Being further urged, he confessed that the coveted delicacy was neither more nor less than a portion of the leg of the favorite charger of the Grand Master of the Hospital. This request, unreasonable as it was, was at once communicated to the Master; and he, without a moments delay, directed that the whim should be gratified; and the unfortunate animal was conducted to the Hospital, there to be slaughtered, to gratify the disordered appetite of the Mahometan pilgrim. Saladin was so much struck by this prompt compliance with his most unreasonable wishes, that he not only hastened to prevent the consummation of the sacrifice, but at the same time left a handsome donation to the treasury of the institution. So runs the story; but without vouching for its accuracy, it may safely be recorded that Saladin ever regarded the Hospital with a friendly eye, although its members had been amongst his most inveterate and certainly his most dreaded foes.

The loss of Jerusalem created an excitement throughout Europe, scarce inferior to that popular ferment which had produced the first Crusade; and ere long the armed chivalry of Europe was once more wending its way eastward to recapture the holy city. This

expedition, known as the second Crusade, boasted no less than four crowned heads; the monarchs of England, France, and Austria, with the Emperor of Germany having all joined in its ranks. The history of this Crusade is too well known to require much detail here.—The unworthy King of Jerusalem, Guy de Lusignan, had been taken prisoner at the battle of Tiberias, and his release had only been purchased by the surrender of the powerful city of Ascalon, one of the few remaining bulwarks of Christianity in the East.—After the first panic, consequent on the utter overthrow of the kingdom, had subsided, Guy collected under his standard the shattered and feeble relics of his forces, and being joined by the military orders, who had also been much reduced in the late war, he laid siege to Acre, one of the cities which had, during the panic, opened its gates to Saladin almost without resistance. Whilst engaged in this operation, he was gradually joined by the various forces composing the Crusade, and after a most deadly and protracted struggle of upwards of two years, during which the Christians lost more than one hundred thousand men, the capture of the city was effected in 1191, principally owing to the gallantry and energy of the heroic Cœur de Lion.

From this date, until the entire loss of the kingdom, a century later, the city of Acre became the stronghold of the Christian power; and the Hospitallers,

who after the loss of Jerusalem; had fixed the head quarters of their convent at Margat, now transferred it to Acre, where it remained till the ultimate loss of that city; and where they continued to practise those duties of hospitality to which they owed their name, and which formed a fundamental principle in their institution, although it could be no longer practised on the spot where they had originally established themselves.

The success of the second Crusade ended with the capture of Acre; and in spite of the zeal of Richard Cœur de Lion, the desertion of his allies, and the reduction of his own forces by disease and the effects of climate, prevented the successful prosecution of that enterprise for which he was so eager, namely the ultimate rescue of the sacred city. Numerous other crusades were subsequently formed for the same purpose, but they all failed. The Emperor Frederic indeed, did succeed in extorting by treaty the transfer of Jerusalem to the Christians, but the boon was coupled with the condition that no fortifications were to be raised for its defence, and the gift was consequently of no value and speedily lost.—King Louis the ninth of France, commonly called St. Louis, also led two Crusades for the recovery of the Holy Land; but the first was brought to an untimely end in the marshes of Egypt near the city of Massoura, where the King himself fell a prisoner into the hands of

the Infidel, from whom he was only rescued by the payment of an enormous ransom, a large portion of which was contributed from the coffers of the Hospital of St. John. His second expedition, which was diverted from its original destination into the attack of Tunis, likewise failed utterly; and the pious King fell a victim to the pestilence which was decimating his army. Another expedition had made itself master of Constantinople, and having annihilated the effete Greek empire, had erected a Latin kingdom in its place.

Little benefit however had accrued to the Christian cause in the East from this change. Year by year did the prospect of recovering Jerusalem become more and more feeble, and it also annually appeared more and more improbable that the last strongholds of Christianity in Syria could be much longer maintained. Indeed, but for the constant and most zealous exertions of the military orders, who were now augmented by a third community called the Teutonic Order, composed entirely of Germans, under similar principles to the others, and first established during the protracted siege of Acre, the kingdom must have long since been utterly lost.—Even their exertions however, brilliant though they were, could not avert, although they succeeded in postponing the impending catastrophe, and the unfortunate results of their conflicts with the Saracen power, under the Sultans

Keladun and Mansour reduced the limits of the kingdom to the single city of Acre, which had been for eighty years the capital of the Christian power in Syria, and the fortifications of which had been strengthened by so many different princes, that it gradually had risen to the position of the proudest fortress in the East.

Crowded with a vast population from every nation in Europe, the luxury of Acre had reached an almost fabulous pitch, and the ancient chroniclers exhaust their powers of invention in their endeavours to give a picture of the extraordinary accumulation of wealth which was gathered within the city. Glass, which at that time was almost unknown in Europe, was here in common use; and silken awnings are said to have stretched from side to side, across the streets to screen the passers by from the fierce noon day blaze of the almost tropical sun of Syria.—Vice and immorality of every description stalked rampant through the town, and the frail beauties who lived on the traffic of their charms swarmed in countless numbers within its precincts.—The city was under the government of no less than seventeen municipalities of the various nations composing its population; the control thus exercised being so lax and insufficient that a general spirit of licence prevailed unchecked on all sides.—To this discreditable point had the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem dwindled in less than two cen-

turies from its original foundation; and even this last stronghold was now to be torn from their sway.

In 1291 the Sultan Khalil, with an army of sixty thousand cavalry and one hundred and forty thousand infantry, appeared before the city; determined, once and for ever, to drive the last remnant of Christianity from Syria. John de Villiers, the twenty first Grand Master of the Order of St. John, at this time swayed the fortunes of his convent, and Peter de Beaujeu that of the Templars.—Under these two gallant and daring spirits the members of the Military Orders maintained a long and spirited resistance, aided by a reinforcement brought in person to the town by the king of Cyprus. Their valour and devotion were however in vain exerted to the utmost against the numerous hosts of the infidel; and Henry of Cyprus with his auxiliaries having abandoned the city to its fate, and a great number of its knightly defenders having already bit the dust in their numerous conflicts with the foe, the powers of the remainder became too feeble to maintain their bulwarks, and the Infidels succeeded in penetrating within the walls.

A frightful scene of carnage and licence now ensued: neither age nor sex were spared, and the power of Christianity in the East was annihilated amidst the despairing shrieks and dying groans of countless thousands who met their end during the massacre.—

The Grand Master of the Temple died at his post on the last day of the siege; but John de Villiers, the chief of the Hospital, was more fortunate; and in the general scene of confusion, which, ensued on the capture of the city, succeeded in embarking the slender relics of his order, and rescuing them from the fate which was at that moment befalling all who had not the means of escape from the doomed spot.

Saddened and dispirited, the reduced band of warriors who still followed the White cross banner, wended their melancholy way towards the island of Cyprus, where they were received with every hospitality by the king, who was anxious to atone, as far as possible, for his pusillanimous abandonment of Acre.—Here the convent was once again established, and a hospital opened, in which the members were enabled to continue one of the leading duties of their profession, although the power of combating for their faith had for the time been taken from them.

They were not indeed without hope that they might be enabled once more to establish themselves in the land of their adoption, with the aid of a new Crusade from the west; and great efforts were made once more to arouse the religious enthusiasm, and the chivalric ardour of Europe, but in vain: that spirit which had prompted the universal rush of the kingdoms of the West to the rescue of the Holy City had now died out. So many unsuccessful expeditions

had exhausted the fervor of Christian zeal, and quenched the ardent aspiration of chivalry; and now that the Holy Land was irrevocably lost, there was no desire evinced to join in any effort for its recovery.

The Knights of St. John feeling themselves thus balked in their efforts to renew the struggle to which by their profession they had devoted themselves, commenced to turn their attention to the establishment of their convent in a new home, where they should no longer remain in the dependant position to which their residence in Cyprus subjected them. William de Villaret the twenty third Grand Master, who ruled the fraternity at the commencement of the fourteenth century, turned his eyes towards the island of Rhodes as well adapted for the future home of the community, and made his preparations for its conquest. Death however intervened to prevent the accomplishment of his design, but his brother Fulk who was raised to the vacant dignity, completed the organization of the expedition which had been commenced by William, and in 1208 landed in the island, of which after a protracted conflict, he made himself master.

The island of Rhodes, the most beautiful and fertile of the numerous isles of the Levant, was at this time peopled principally by Mahometan pirates, who had proved themselves the scourge of the Mediterranean, and whose lawless career had rendered them the terror

and bane of all mercantile enterprise in the East. Villaret had no sooner settled himself in his new home, than he commenced to assemble a fleet of galleys for the protection of Christian commerce from the depredations of the infidel corsairs who swarmed in those seas. Unable longer to act up to the letter of their profession, in the manner contemplated by their founder, the Knights of St. John were still determined not to abandon the good cause; but to continue their protection of the interests of Christianity in any manner in which they could still make it available. Ere long, the white cross flag of St. John became as much an object of terror to the Infidel in the waters of the Levant, as it had been to his brethren on the sandy plains of Palestine.

This period may be marked as the epoch, when first arose that naval superiority on the part of the Order, which they continued to preserve until the commencement of the eighteenth century, and which rendered them at once the scourge of the Moslem, and the protectors of Christianity throughout the Mediterranean.

It was during the reign of Elyon de Villanova, the successor of Villaret, that the Order was first regularly divided into languages. Hitherto the natives of the various countries who comprised the fraternity, had known no other division than that of the three classes of knights, chaplains, and serving brothers. Now

however it was determined to create a new classification, without disturbing the distinctive organization which already existed; and the members of all three classes were divided into the seven languages of Provence, France, and Auvergne, (all three French languages,) Italy, Arragon, Germany, and England. To these seven, an eighth was subsequently formed, to increase the Spanish interest in the fraternity, by the sub-division of the language of Aragon, and the formation of a new Portuguese language. Subsequent events somewhat changed this division. The Reformation in England annihilated the language of that country in the early part of the sixteenth century, and in the middle of the eighteenth century a new language was formed in Bavaria, which was coupled to the extinct English tongue, and formed the Anglo-Bavarian language.

It has been already stated that throughout the last century, during which the Christians continued to maintain themselves in Palestine, frequent and bitter animosities had broken out between the rival fraternities of the Hospital and Temple. On one occasion, this spirit of antagonism had carried them so far that a regular combat ensued, in which the Order of the Temple was almost annihilated. The historians who have recorded these events, have differed greatly in the colouring which they have given to them; so much so, that it is very difficult to decide where lay the greatest blame in this suicidal conflict.

The difference in the conduct of the two Orders however, subsequent to the loss of Acre, is so marked, that it requires no great perspicuity to decide between the rival factions. Whilst the Hospitallers, eager to carry on the duties of their profession, hastened to establish themselves as near the former scene of action as possible; and to continue that warfare, to the maintenance of which, they, in common with the other Orders stood pledged, the Templars, on the other hand, abandoning all ideas of a further contest with the Infidel, hurried to their European preceptories, where by idle ostentation and haughty turbulence they soon created for themselves a host of powerful enemies amongst those princes whose avarice coveted their vast wealth, and whose jealousy could ill brook the bands of armed men that had established themselves throughout their dominions, and that claimed exemption from all the ordinary duties and imposts of their fellow subjects.

The result of this injudicious conduct was speedily manifested, and it was not long ere the fraternity of the Temple had bitter cause to rue their abandonment of the holy cause in which, by the laws of their profession, they should still have engaged. A conspiracy was formed for their utter overthrow, between Philip the Fair, King of France, and Pope Clement the Fifth, who had owed his elevation to the Papal chair entirely to the King's interest, and was consequently

his most obsequious tool throughout his Pontificate, for the utter overthrow of the order, and the confiscation of their revenues.

The details of this melancholy story do not pertain to a narrative, which only pretends to be a slight summary of the history of the Order of St. John :— suffice it therefore to say that amidst much cruelty and persecution, ending in many cases in martyrdom, the Order was annihilated in France, whilst in England and in other countries, the same result was effected in a much milder manner.—A general scramble now ensued for the property and revenues thus left without a master, and the kings and nobles of the various countries in which the fraternity had flourished, hastened to secure for themselves a rich booty out of the prey thus abandoned to their power.—The loss of such a vast amount of wealth from the control of ecclesiastical authority, did not at all suit the views of the Pontiff, and although he had so far yielded implicitly to the dictation of Philip, as long as his demands only involved the cruel persecution of a body of men, whom he himself regarded with no great affection, he was not prepared tamely to submit to the confiscation of all the wealth, that had originally been dedicated by pious donors to ecclesiastical purposes. By dint of much exertion, and the promulgation of several bulls, he ultimately succeeded in rescuing a portion of the

coveted property, with which, after due deliberation, the Order of St. John was endowed; it being considered that that Order had shewn, by its determined stay in the East, and recent capture of Rhodes, a most praiseworthy determination to preserve intact the duties of their profession.

The causes assigned by Philip and his party, in exculpation of the cruel persecution to which the unfortunate Templars had been subjected, were childishly absurd and foully calumnious. The hideous orgies with which they were accused of celebrating their ceremonials, and the foul blasphemies and infidelity with which they were charged, are the mere inventions of the bitterest malice, and require no refutation on the part of their defenders, who invariably ascribe the entire transaction to the rapacious avarice of the King. There can however be no doubt that the conduct of the Red Cross Knights had been such as to create them many enemies, and to alienate many friends; and their pride, luxury, and licentiousness, coupled with their total abandonment of the cause they had espoused, and for the defence of which they had originally been endowed with that wealth which they now lavished on such widely different purposes, marked them as fit subjects for suppression. Had this suppression been effected without cruelty, and had due provision been made for the future support

of such members of the extinct order as were dependant on its revenues for their support, little could have been urged against the justice of the measure; but the needless barbarity, and the relentless ferocity with which they hunted their victims, and concluded by leading so many of them to the stake, have aroused a very different feeling in the heart of every one who peruses the melancholy tale. Who has not sympathised with the heroic James de Molay, the last Grand Master of the Temple, at the moment of his cruel martyrdom; and who could refrain from stigmatising the author of the measure, as a savage and blood thirsty tyrant?

At the same time, the fact that the Order of the Hospital had created for itself a very different reputation, may be plainly seen by the result. Whilst the one community was annihilated, the other was not only left uninjured, but was endowed with the wealth of its rival, as a testimony of the zeal which it continued to manifest in the good cause. This gift however was for many years, more nominal than real; and it was long ere the coffers of the Hospital were swelled by any considerable contributions from the lands of the Temple.

Meanwhile the Order continued to flourish in its new home, and to gain for itself fresh laurels from the frequent conflicts in which its galleys were engaged, not only with the infidel corsairs of the Levant,

but also, in conjunction with the other maritime countries, against the ever increasing power of the Ottoman Turks, who had by this time superseded the Saracens, for so many years the constant foes of the Order. Fortifications had arisen round the city of Rhodes, which was also defended by the dauntless bravery and the heroic spirit of its knightly garrison. The country around, whose fertility had gained for it the appellation of the garden of the east, was cultivated by numerous bands of peaceful peasantry, who found a secure refuge within the town in case of danger, and who trusted with implicit reliance on the protection of their gallant defenders.

The numerous conflicts however, which the Knights of St. John had maintained against the Ottoman power, had so far embittered the feelings of that nation, that an earnest cry for revenge gradually arose throughout the empire. It was to be no longer tolerated that a mere handful of men, a band of armed monks, whose sole principality was a small island in the Levant, should presume to exist so close to the confines of the empire, and to harass by their constant enterprises, the commerce and navy of the East. Mohammed the Second, who had raised his empire to a pitch of the highest glory, determined to end his career by the utter annihilation of the Order of St. John, and the rescue of the lovely island of Rhodes from their power.—He had lately succeeded in the

capture of Negropont from the Venetians, and being thus at liberty to prosecute his enterprise undisturbed, he assembled a vast force, both naval and military, which was appointed to rendezvous at the port of Phisco in Lycia, in the early part of the year 1480 and which consisted of a fleet of an hundred and sixty vessels, bearing an army of upwards of eighty thousand troops.

Peter d' Aubusson was at this time Grand Master of the Order, the thirty eighth from Raymond du Puy, who had been invested with that dignity; and well was it for the issue of the conflict, that the fortunes of the fraternity were, at this critical moment, swayed by one who was pre-eminently fitted for the dangerous post.—For three months the power of the besiegers was strained to the uttermost, to penetrate into the city, and during that period numerous desperate assaults were given and invariably repulsed. The tower of St. Nicholas, an important post situated at the extremity of a narrow neck of land, at the entrance of the harbour, was at first the main point of attack, and on two occasions it was the scene of a struggle, in which the whole strength of the Ottoman army was employed to overcome the steady and obstinate resistance offered by its defenders.

Hitherto, the Turkish army had been almost invariably victorious in the numerous wars in which they had engaged, but they now encountered a foe widely

different from those who had previously succumbed to their prowess; and after two fruitless attempts, in which numbers of the flower of his host met a bloody grave at the foot of the ramparts of St. Nicholas, Paleologus Pasha, the commander of the Turkish forces, was compelled to change his point of attack, and to move round to a quarter which he considered more feebly protected. Here he commenced a fresh attack upon the Jews Quarter, in the ramparts of which he speedily effected a breach, where he again twice delivered an assault, and was twice met by that wall of living steel which supplied the place of the crumbling ramparts. On both occasions he was repulsed, and the second time with such vast slaughter, the victorious garrison pursuing their flying foe even into their entrenchments, that he was compelled to abandon the further prosecution of the enterprise, and to embark in all haste with the shattered relics of his once magnificent army.

The glorious issue of this conflict was not purchased without severe loss on the part of the garrison, and d' Aubusson himself received, whilst engaged in the repulse of the last attack, a dangerous wound, which it was at first feared might prove fatal.—He however eventually recovered, and lived many years to enjoy the brilliant reputation, which his gallant deeds and those of his brethren had achieved. The Pope presented him with a Cardinal's hat, in token of his ad-

miration, and the fame of the Order rose throughout Europe, even to a higher pitch than it had yet attained. Mohammed, on the other hand, was so overwhelmed with the disastrous issue of the enterprise, in which his army had suffered a loss of nine thousand killed, and fifteen thousand wounded, that he sunk under the disgrace, and died in the following year; directing that the only epitaph to be inscribed on his tomb should be; "I designed to conquer Rhodes and to subdue Italy."

His death brought with it a most seasonable period of repose to the Order, whose resources had been greatly exhausted by the fearful conflict in which they had been engaged, and in which, notwithstanding its successful issue, they had suffered most extensive losses.—The vacant Ottoman throne was disputed between his two sons Bajazet and Zizim, and the former having succeeded in making good his claim, the latter was compelled to fly from the vengeance of his brother, and to seek refuge with the Knights of Rhodes. D' Aubusson was overjoyed at finding himself the negotiator in a matter so nearly affecting the internal peace of the Ottoman empire; and the power which he obtained by the possession of the person of a rival to the throne, whose claims he might at any moment support in opposition to the Emperor, was used by him to obtain terms, such as placed the Order free from all fears of further invasion

on the part of Bajazet, who not only paid them an annual subsidy for the support and maintenance of Zizim in a position suited to his Imperial birth, but even condescended to make them an extensive payment as a compensation for the injuries inflicted by his father during the late siege.

Until the death of Zizim, which occurred several years later, from poison, administered to him by the iniquitous Pontiff Alexander the Sixth, the celebrated poisoner of the Borgia family, profound peace reigned between the Order of St. John and the Turkish empire, and although, after that event, when Bajazet had nothing further to dread from the fraternity, war once more broke out, it was confined to naval encounters, so that the island had ample opportunity afforded to it, for recovering from the effects of the devastation caused by the army of Paleologus.

This state of peace and prosperity was not however destined to be of very long duration, for in 1522. Solyman the Magnificent, the grandson of Bajazet, who had lately ascended the Ottoman throne, determined to mark the commencement of his reign by the successful prosecution of an enterprise which had proved beyond the powers even of his great ancestor Mohammed; and having as a preliminary exploit, besieged and taken the powerful fortress of Belgrade, he commenced earnest preparations for this new attempt.

In the previous year, Philip Villiers de l'Isle Adam, a knight whose name is justly celebrated as one of the noblest Grand Masters that ever held the baton of that office, and the founder of his Order in their new home upon the barren rock of Malta, had succeeded to the supreme governance of his fraternity, as their forty second Grand Master; and he lost no time in preparing his island for that storm which was gathering in the east, and which was destined so soon to break over it.—Every effort was made to swell the numbers of his garrison, and the members of the community were summoned from all their various European Commannderies, to hurry to the protection of their convent.—When all had arrived, it was found that their numbers amounted to about six hundred knights, and four thousand five hundred other troops; a slender force, with which to resist the gigantic host that Solyman was organising for the overthrow of their city.

At length, on the 22nd June 1522, the hostile fleet bore in sight, consisting of four hundred sail, bearing on board an army of one hundred and forty thousand men, in addition to sixty thousand peasants from the forests of Wallachia, who had been brought to Rhodes, to aid the army in the construction of their trenches and batteries. The siege was at once commenced, and for six months L' Isle Adam and his heroic garrison maintained their resistance against the

stupendous forces opposed to them. During this time, assaults were incessantly made against every available part of the enceinte; the posts of England, Spain, and Auvergne, being the favorite points of attack.

It may be mentioned here, that after the division of the Order into languages, it had become the custom to portion out the ramparts of the city in such a manner that a separate quarter was appropriated to each language, and was called the post of that language. A spirit of rivalry was thus generated, and in the emulation which ensued, much benefit was derived for the general security of the town.

For a long time it seemed doubtful whether the determined gallantry of the defenders would not once again cause the forces of Turkey to recoil in disgrace from their ramparts; but the army which now surrounded Rhodes was far superior, both in numbers and constitution, to that which had been led thither by Paleologus, and they were further stimulated by the knowledge that they were fighting under the immediate eye of their Emperor. In vain did L'Isle Adam look for aid from Europe; in vain did he dispatch messenger after messenger to hurry forward the expected relieving force. Months glided away, and still his little garrison, reduced in numbers, but dauntless in spirit, were left unaided, to present their firm and serried ranks, an impassable barrier to the

foe who raged around their walls. Various causes, chief amongst which was the continued prevalence of contrary winds, combined to retard the aid which had assembled at the port of Messina, and at last the fatal moment arrived when the defence could be no longer protracted.

L' Isle Adam had determined, when he found that it was in vain to look for assistance from Europe, to bury himself and his fraternity beneath the ruins of his city, in a resistance maintained to the last; and in this decision he was supported by his knights. The townspeople however, who were well aware that such an act would entail upon themselves the fearful miseries and the brutal atrocities, by which the Turkish army was ever wont to punish too obstinate a resistance, were by no means disposed tamely to coincide with this determination. They were bound by no ties, such as those which fettered the Knights: they were surrounded by their wives and little ones, whose fate under such a catastrophe would be even more dreadful than their own; and they were resolved, if possible, to avert the blow which impended over them, and to resign the barren honors of martyrdom for the more tangible benefits of a peaceful capitulation.

The power was thus in a measure taken out of L' Isle Adams hands, and he was compelled, against his own desire, to treat for a surrender. After con-

siderable parleying, and much diplomacy on both sides, terms were obtained, which, under the circumstances, were quite as favorable as the Knights could have ventured to expect. The island with all its dependencies, was to be surrendered into the hands of Solyman; in return for which, he pledged himself that the churches should be protected from profanation, that the inhabitants should be allowed the free exercise of their faith, and should be permitted to make their selection, whether they would follow the fortunes of the Order in their exile, or remain under the sway of the Moslem; that the knights should be allowed to embark in their own galleys without let or hindrance, and that they should be permitted to take with them their sacred relics, and the records of their institution.

Twelve days were allowed for the execution of this treaty, and before that period had expired, L' Isle Adam and his sorrowful brethren, accompanied by four thousand Rhodians, who had availed themselves of the permission of Solyman to accompany the Order, rather than remain in the island under its new regime, quitted Rhodes on the 1st January 1523, and sought their fortunes once more, as homeless wanderers on the wide sea; and the island, which for a period of two hundred and fourteen years had flourished under their sway, fell once more, and for ever, under the blighting influence of Moslem

dominion, and gradually sank to the low and comparatively degraded position which it now occupies, as an insignificant Turkish dependency. The numerous buildings with which the fraternity had adorned the island, were preserved with the utmost care by Solyman and his successors; and until lately, the ruins of the convent of St. John constituted a great attraction to the traveller.—Unfortunately however, the violent earthquake which visited the Mediterranean in October 1846, destroyed those relics which time had spared, and little now remains within the island, to recal the memory of the Knights of St. John.

CHAPTER II.

Arrival of the Order at Malta. Description of the island. Its previous history. Erection of Forts St. Michael and St. Elmo. Foundation of Senglea. Rumours of an impending siege, and preparations for defence. The strength and composition of the garrison.

FOR seven years after their expulsion from the island of Rhodes, the Order of St. John led a wandering and homeless life. Candia, Messina, Cumœ, and Viterbo were successively the scenes of their residence, and their diminished revenues were exhausted under the expense of providing for the Rhodians who had accompanied them, and who received a support from the public treasury, under the name of "the bread of Rhodes."

Meanwhile L' Isle Adam was exerting himself on all sides, to procure such aid as should enable him to reconquer his old home; or, failing that, to secure the establishment of his fraternity in some new and convenient locality, for the continued practice of their

professional duties.—The Order had been found so extremely advantageous to the commerce of Europe, in protecting it from the daring attempts of Infidel corsairs, that a general desire speedily manifested itself, that they should not abandon the Mediterranean, the scene of their former exploits, but should be furnished with a new home on its shores.

Charles V, King of Spain, and Emperor of Germany was at this time at war with Francis the first, King of France; and the issue of the battle of Pavia having thrown that prince into his power, Francis was being retained a prisoner at Madrid.—L' Isle Adam visited the court in that city, partly to request assistance in his project for the recovery of Rhodes, and partly to endeavour to negotiate between the two monarchs, and secure the release of Francis.—In both of these attempts he was perfectly successful, and was gratified by the most liberal assurances of support from the two princes.—Charles V indeed, offered him the Islands of Malta and Gozo, and the city of Tripoli, as a residence for his convent, in case he should fail in his project against Rhodes.

Many difficulties however occurred, before the acceptance of this offer was finally determined on. Charles had coupled with the gift, several conditions that could not be entertained, and the intervention of the Pope for their mitigation could not, for some time, be made available, as he was then at war

with the Emperor.—Peace however having at length been declared, the Pope, who had himself been in former days a Knight of St. John, and had abandoned the Order, to pursue that ecclesiastical career, which raised him to the Papal chair, under the title of Clement VII, exerted his influence to obtain for his protégés a mitigation of the terms, which shackled the proffer made by the Emperor.

Things were at last arranged to the satisfaction of all parties, and in the year 1530, Charles signed a deed,* in which he made over to the Order of St. John, in perpetual sovereignty, the Islands of Malta and Gozo, with their dependencies, and the city of Tripoli, upon the condition of an annual payment of a falcon, as a recognition of the feudal tenure of the gift. The Order further agreed never to make war against the Emperor, or the Kingdom of Sicily; that the nomination of the bishop of Malta should rest with him, from amongst three candidates to be selected by the fraternity; and that the sovereignty of the island should never be transferred to other hands, without his sanction previously obtained to the act.

* This document is still preserved in the Record Office of Malta. It is a square of parchment in admirable preservation, written in Latin, and signed in the Emperors own hand writing: "*Io el Rey.*" A seal is attached, bearing the impress of the Emperor on horseback, brandishing a drawn sword.

The history of the island of Malta, prior to its transfer to the Order of St. John, is not important, and may be dismissed in a few words.—Its original inhabitants are presumed to have been the Phœacians, a race of giants, to whom are attributed some of the ruins still visible, which appear to have been constructed of stupendous masses of material. At a very early period, the island was colonized by the Phœnicians; and, in many parts, it is still rich in remains of that people. About 755 B. C. the Greeks, whilst returning from the siege of Troy, overran the Mediterranean, founded some cities in Calabria, and amongst other acquisitions, drove the Phœnicians from Malta, and established themselves in their place. Prior to this event, the island had been known by the name of Ogygia, but that appellation was now changed into Melitas. Nearly three centuries later, Hannibal expelled the Greeks, and converted Malta into a Carthaginian colony, and they in their turn were overpowered by the Romans, after they had raised the island to a high pitch of civilisation, and had so stimulated its commerce that, even at that early date, the Maltese were esteemed the most hardy mariners in the Mediterranean.

The gradual decline of the Roman Empire led to the loss of Malta; and when Theodoric, King of the Ostrogoths, established himself on the throne of Rome, that island fell also into his power.—It again

reverted for a brief space to the Greek empire of the Romans, amongst the numerous other short lived conquests of Belisarius, in Africa and Italy, but was soon once more lost in the tide of Saracen invasion, which rolled westward in the eighth century. Much that is Saracenic, both in building and language, still remains to mark this period of occupation, and indeed the Maltese may be said, as a race, to partake more of the Arabic, than of the Italian character, to this day.

At the close of the eleventh century, the Saracens were expelled by the Romans, under Count Roger; who caused himself to be crowned King of Sicily and Malta; and after many other unimportant changes of dominion, it eventually became an appanage of the German Emperors, in whose hands it remained, until Charles of Anjou, who was invested with the government by the Pope, annexed it to the kingdom of Sicily, and with that kingdom, it fell into the possession of Spain, after the tragedy of the Sicilian Vespers; until Charles V. transferred it to the Order of St. John.

With great natural capabilities for the formation of a powerful naval station, Malta was at this time little more than an arid rock, about twenty miles in length, by twelve in breadth, and presented a most uninviting appearance to the commissioners, dispatched by L' Isle Adam, to take possession of his

new acquisition. Its only point of attraction was, in fact, the magnificent port which lay on its eastern coast, and which presented a capacious and sheltered harbour, where the largest fleet might ride in security. This harbour is divided into two parts by a promontory of land, projecting from the inner side of the bay, in a north easterly direction. The eastern port, by far the most capacious of the two, is, in its turn, subdivided by the indentations of its eastern coast, which, by the projection of two other promontories in a north westerly direction, forms three inner harbours. The western port, called the Marsa Muscette, though smaller than the other, is however still of sufficient capacity to be most useful, and is sheltered from the north east wind, always very prevalent and violent in the Mediterranean. A small island lies in this harbour, which materially diminishes from the extent of accommodation it would otherwise have afforded.

The only protection of which the island boasted, at the time of its transfer to the Order, was a small fort, on one of the promontories jutting out into the great harbour, and called the castle of St. Angelo; around the foot of which, a small collection of houses, little better than huts, had clustered, to take advantage of the protection afforded by the two guns, with which the fort was armed.—This hamlet was termed the Bourg.

The chief town, called the Citta Notabile, lay in the centre of the island; and although surrounded by a rampart, was barely capable of the slightest defence.—The island in fact lay completely open to the piratical incursions of the infidel corsairs, who swarmed on the northern coast of Africa, and nothing could have protected it from their visits, save the utter and hopeless poverty of its inhabitants. Barely able to raise a few scanty vegetables from the ungrateful soil, they depended almost entirely on Sicily for the importation of grain; and this they obtained by the exchange of their cotton, which they cultivated to a considerable extent, and which was one of the few plants that appeared to flourish. Not a tree was to be seen, and with the exception of a few caroubas, dotting the landscape here and there, the eye roamed in vain, in search of a patch of green, to relieve the glare of the white rock which dazzled the eye, when reflecting the blaze of a summers sun. The island was almost destitute of springs, and the inhabitants were entirely dependant on cisterns for their supply of water.

In addition to the Citta Notabile which was itself little better than a village, there were several other smaller villages, called Casals, dotted over the island: the total population however did not exceed twelve thousand souls.

Gozo was found to be divided from Malta by a channel of about four miles in width, in the midst of which lay two smaller islands, called Comino and Cominotto. It was far more fertile in its soil than Malta, but was totally destitute of harbours. Its extent was short of eight miles either way, and its inhabitants, to the number of five thousand, dwelt in small casals, like those of Malta.

With regard to the other gift, which was annexed to that of the islands of Malta and Gozo, and with which the Knights would gladly have dispensed, it will not be necessary here to enter into any description. The city of Tripoli remained in their possession but little more than twenty years, before that fate befel it, which had, from the first, been foreseen as inevitable; and the Order were expelled after a long siege, in which, notwithstanding the obloquy which his capitulation most unjustly threw upon his name, the Marshal La Vallier greatly distinguished himself.

One of the first cares of the Grand Master, after arriving in his new home, and after he had been formally invested with the sovereignty of the island, and had received the glad homage of his new subjects, was to provide for the immediate security of his convent from the attacks of the corsairs, who were likely to be tempted to make a descent upon the island, now that it boasted of a prey worthy of their

notice. For this purpose he improved the slender enceinte which enclosed the Bourg, sank ditches, constructed flanks, of which it was hitherto utterly destitute, and repaired the castle of St. Angelo.

These first additions were however, of the most trifling description, for the mind of L' Isle Adam still ran strong upon the recovery of his beloved island of Rhodes.—He had discovered, by means of agents employed for the purpose, that the inhabitants were very discontented under the sway of their new lords; and he was assured that any attempt he might make upon the island, would be warmly seconded from within: he had even opened negotiations with the commander of the tower of St. Nicholas; a renegade, who was willing to purchase advancement by a second treason. Whilst this matter was in abeyance, L' Isle Adam begrudged any labor or expenditure upon the barren rock, which he trusted so soon to abandon for his old home. The contrast between the lovely and luxuriant island of Rhodes, with its undulating plains, teeming with verdure, glowing with all the brilliant hues of summer foliage, and peopled with a numerous happy and thriving peasantry, when compared with the arid rock, to which his evil fortune had now doomed him, where the scant vegetation was burnt by the fierce heat of an almost tropical sun, and the miserable inhabitants bore in their appearance, the

unmistakeable evidence of their degradation and wretchedness, could not but render him discontented and disgusted with his new home.

An unsuccessful attempt however, to surprise and capture the port of Modon, in the Morea, intended as a preliminary measure to the more important step, of the re-occupation of Rhodes, led him at length completely to abandon the idea, and to decide upon establishing himself and his convent permanently upon that rock, whereon the banner of St. John had been so lately reared.

Several additional works were consequently undertaken in the year 1533, but they were confined entirely to the improvement of the paltry enceinte of the Bourg, and the Castle of St. Angelo.

During the absence of the Grand Master Peter du Pont, who on the death of L'Isle Adam in 1534, was elected to the vacant dignity, and at the time of his elevation was residing in Calabria, the Grand Prior of Toulouse, who acted as his Lieutenant, continued the same works; adding the bastion which flanks the castle of St. Angelo, and excavating its ditch from sea to sea, so as completely to isolate the fort by water.

In 1541, the Grand Master, John d'Omedes, called in the chief engineer of the Emperor, named Caracolin, in order to receive his opinion, as to the proper steps to be taken, for the due security of the fort,

and the improvement of the existing works. That officer at once condemned both the Bourg and St. Angelo, as being incapable of maintaining any serious or protracted defence; nor did he consider it advisable to make any great outlay for their additional security, deeming that their situation, overlooked as it was, by so many of the neighbouring heights, within a very easy distance, was radically defective and untenable.* He purposed therefore, as a more efficient measure, to fortify the promontory which divided the two harbours, called Mount Scieberras.

Although this work was not executed in accordance with the suggestions of Caramolin, the credit is undoubtedly due to him, of being the first to point out the advisability and necessity of occupying that most important point. The dread of the expense, and other causes prevented his design from being then carried out, and the Order contented themselves with still further deepening the ditches of the Bourg, and raising a cavalier in the Castle of St. Angelo, which should dominate over all the neighbouring ground.

The insecurity of the island remained however, even after these additions, so great, and the danger of an attack from the infidel chiefs who had esta-

* The heights here alluded to, are those of Mount Salvator, and the promontory of Senglea, which have long since formed a part of the works of defence.

blished their piratical governments in Algiers and Tunis, appeared so imminent, that it was clear further works must be undertaken, or the convent would inevitably fall beneath the power which threatened it in such dangerous proximity. Counsels however differed as to the steps to be taken, and meanwhile nothing whatever was effected.

In this conjuncture, the Prior of Capua, who was sufficiently clear sighted to perceive how great a risk the Order was running by their constant delays, brought forward in full council, a clear statement of the position in which they stood, and the measures which he considered the most suited to the circumstances of the case. A vehement debate ensued, but he succeeded in carrying his point; and his project was adopted by a large majority. This design, in addition to an increase in the works of the Bourg and St. Angelo, contemplated the occupation of the point of land, which, as has already been described, jutted out from the eastern coast of the Great Harbour, parallel to that on which the castle of St. Angelo stood, with a fort to be called St. Michael, and the extremity of Mount Scerberras, with another, to be named St. Elmo.

In order to carry out these additions with the greater vigour, three commissaries were named, one for each post; who, assisted by the Knights and other members of the Order, pushed forward their

respective works with the utmost rapidity, and stimulated the workmen with their constant presence. Don Pedro Pardo, a celebrated Spanish engineer, designed the new forts and the other works, to the rapid execution of which each one strained himself to the utmost: the Bailiffs and other Grand Crosses contributed the golden chains which supported the insignia of their rank, and also a large portion of their plate; and other knights followed their example, subscribing liberally from their private means, for the use of the public treasury, to enable the great expense, consequent on these extensive works to be duly and regularly met. The galleys were also retained in port, in lieu of performing their accustomed cruises, or caravans, as they were termed, in order that their crews, who were principally composed of slaves, might be employed on the rising works.

The result of these exertions was so great, that in the month of May of the following year, 1553, the Forts of St. Michael and St. Elmo, and the bastions traced at the head of the Bourg, were completed and armed, whilst the ditches, although not quite finished, were in a very advanced state.

At the latter end of this year, the Grand Master d' Omedes died, and was succeeded by a French knight, named Claude de la Sengle, who at the time of his nomination was residing at Rome. He hurried at once to Malta, and so far from feeling content

with the amount of new fortification recently constructed, he determined upon at once enclosing the entire of St. Michael's Mount, on the side of the Coradin hill, which dominated over it on the west.—In pursuance of this project therefore, in the following year, viz 1554, he constructed a bastioned line along the entire side of the promontory next that hill, within which he founded a town, under the protection of his newly raised ramparts, and which, in honor of him, and in memory of the boon he had conferred, received the name of la Sangle, afterwards corrupted into Senglea.

La Sangle was followed in the magistracy by John Parisot de la Valette, who succeeded him in 1557; under whose governance the Order was destined to achieve the most glorious success that had ever attended their arms.—The first design of the new chief was to occupy the entire peninsula of Mount Sceberas with a line of ramparts, similar to those that had been constructed at Senglea; and for this purpose, he invited Quinsan de Montalin, an engineer of high reputation, to visit the island, and report upon his project. After a minute inspection of the locality, it was decided that, although the measure would undoubtedly be most advisable, and would add greatly to the general security of the works, more especially the Bourg, which still continued to be the head quarters of the convent, yet that, owing to the great

drain which former constructions had caused upon their treasury, means no longer existed for carrying the design into effect.

As however the Grand Master had been warned by his emissaries in Constantinople, that, an expedition was preparing, for the subjugation of Malta, he determined at once to make such additions to the fortress, as his limited means permitted. A gigantic chain was fixed at the entrance to the port of the galleys, one extremity of which was secured on the platform below fort St. Angelo, and the other at the point of Senglea.*

He also constructed a battery beneath the fort of St. Angelo, nearly on a level with the waters edge, which afterwards proved of the utmost benefit to the garrison, during the siege then impending. The front of Senglea on the land side was greatly improved, terrepleins were added where required to the ramparts, and the ditches of the Bourg were brought to a state of completion.

So anxious was La Valette to hurry these works, and to ensure their completion before the arrival of the foe, that he and his knights laboured themselves constantly at them; and it is recorded that the Grand Master, and the other dignitaries of the Order, took

* A few links of this chain are still visible on the point of St. Angelo.

their places amongst the long file of laborers, who were carrying earth in baskets to the ramparts. The viceroy of Sicily, Don Garcia de Toledo, having at this juncture paid a visit to Malta, to arrange with La Valette, as to the measures of defence to be adopted, it was proposed by him that a ravelin should be constructed at fort St. Elmo, on the side nearest the Marsa Muscette, and this design was at once carried into effect.

Such was the state of the fortifications of Malta, at the time when that storm burst over the island, which had been so long brewing, and which had, for so many months kept the arsenals of Constantinople in a state of the utmost activity. From the moment when the Order had first established themselves upon the island of Malta, and had recommenced those naval expeditions, which had rendered their flag redoubtable during their occupation of Rhodes, Solyman had pondered over the design of once more advancing against his old foes, and driving them from their new homes, as he had done from Rhodes.

Various causes however, had hitherto interfered to prevent the accomplishment of his purpose, and the Knights had availed themselves to the uttermost, in taking advantage of the respite thus obtained, to add to their security. The fortifications of Malta, although still very feeble, and unfit to endure any serious or protracted attack, were widely different

from what they had been, thirty years previously, when the small and ruinous fort of St. Angelo, with its two guns, was the only defence of the Bourg ; * and the garrison, fired with the hope of avenging the calamities, brought upon them by the Moslem, in the capture of their beloved island of Rhodes, burned for an opportunity of once more crossing swords with their infidel foe.

A constant and harassing warfare had, all this time, been carried on against the piratical settlements of Algiers and Tunis. The names of the brothers Barbarossa, Horuc and Hayradin, and their lieutenants Sinan and Dragut, the latter of whom was, at this period, the sole survivor, ruling over the city of Algiers as a tributary of the Sultan, had become well known, and were mentioned with terror throughout the Mediterranean. More than one expedition had been formed against these troublesome neighbours, by Charles V, whose Spanish coasts were constantly threatened with their incursions, and on these occasions the Order of St. John had contributed an ample contingent, which was ever found in the van, eager to meet the foe, who had for so many ages been their traditionary opponents.

* A glance at the small plan, attached at the commencement of this work, will shew more clearly than any description would do, the state of the fortress in 1565.

Not content with adding their quota on these occasions, the Maltese galleys had frequently taken the sea on their own account, and in their constant engagements, had generally succeeded in humbling the Ottoman flag.—More and more irate did the powerful and now aged sultan become, as news of these successes reached his ears; but the event which filled the vial of his wrath to overflowing, was the capture, in the Adriatic, of a large and richly laden Turkish galleon, after a desperate conflict of five hours duration. Most of the valuable cargo on board this galleon, was the property of the ladies of the Sultans harem; and the fair odalisques were aroused to a high state of indignation at the loss they had sustained. All the power of the seraglio was therefore exerted, to induce Solyman to avenge the affront by a signal chastisement; and the capture of Malta, when asked for by bright eyes and rosy lips, was speedily decreed by the amorous Sultan.

A vast armament was promptly prepared; the command of which was entrusted to the Pacha Mustapha, whilst the fleet was placed under the control of the Admiral Piali. The Sultan however strictly enjoined both of these leaders to receive the corsair Dragut into their counsels, that celebrated freebooter having pledged himself to join the expedition at Malta, with a reinforcement of Algerines, within a short space of time.

Whilst these preparations were making in Constantinople, La Valette was, on his side, by no means idle in preparing to resist the storm. A general call was made, for all knights and members of the Order, whose age did not preclude them from taking part in scenes of strife, to hurry at once to the defence of their convent, and to swell the ranks of its garrison at this critical moment. He also petitioned all the Courts of Europe, for assistance in a war, in which the interests of all were engaged, but his appeal met with only a scanty response. Spain indeed did contribute a small body of troops, and the Pope a trifling sum of money, but the other powers held aloof, and watched the struggle without interference. The Viceroy of Sicily had, as we have already seen, paid a personal visit to the island, and had pledged himself to come to their assistance with a powerful succour, in case they were really attacked. He also left his son under charge of La Valette, in order that the youth might win his spurs under so renowned a knight, and flesh his maiden sword in so honorable a conflict. With these exceptions, the Order were left to sustain the shock of Ottoman invasion unaided.

Undaunted by this prospect, La Valette continued his preparations for resistance with unabated zeal, and was met with the utmost ardour by the members of his community. From all quarters they flocked in eager haste to Malta, and once more arrayed them-

selves beneath that banner which had so long waved in triumph above them. In order to ascertain that every one was possessed of the necessary arms and equipments, a general parade of the languages was held, each of which was inspected by two knights, selected from another language.—It was then found that the following were the numbers present, viz :

	<i>Knights</i>				<i>Servants at Arms.</i>			
Provence	...	61	...	...	...	...	...	15
Auvergne	...	25	...	...	...	...	...	14
France	...	57	...	...	...	...	...	24
Italy	...	164	...	...	...	...	...	5
Castile	...	68	...	...	...	...	...	6
Aragon	...	85	...	...	...	...	...	2
Germany	...	13	...	...	...	...	...	1
England	...	1*	...	...	...	...	...	0

making a total of 474 knights and 67 Servants at arms. There were also, in addition, several conventual Chaplains; but as their profession precluded them from taking any part in the defence, they cannot be included amongst the garrison. Great pains had been taken by La Valette to cause the militia of the island to be properly trained, and they

* The solitary English Knight, present at the siege, was Sir Oliver Starkey, Latin secretary to La Valette, and author of the inscription on the tomb of that hero; by the side of whom his own remains are laid in the Crypt of St. Johns Church.

had been duly organised into battalions for that purpose. The same steps had been taken with respect to the crews of the galleys, and so it was found, on a general muster of the forces, that the garrison, in addition to the above mentioned 641 members of the Order, was composed of the following troops.

REGULAR FORCES.

Hired Spanish Troops.	800
Ordinary Garrison of St. Elmo and St. Angelo	} 150
Household of the Grand Master in- cluding his Guard	
Artillery men	120

MILITIA AND OTHER FORCES.

Crews of the Galleys	700
Militia of the Bourg	500
Do of Burmola and Senglea. ...	300
Do. of remainder of the Island ...	4560
Volunteers from Italy, Sicily, Genoa } Piedmont &c.	} 875

Total... 8155

so that including his Knights, La Valette might count upon a force, rather less than nine thousand men, for the defence of his island. His next step was to appoint to each his proper post on the

ramparts, and in accordance with the ancient usage of the Order, this was done by languages. The land front of the Bourg, then considered the most important and dangerous post, was appropriated to the three French languages.—The line from thence to St. Angelo, facing the sea was garrisoned by the Knights of Castile and Germany, whilst the inner line, facing Senglea, and which was a mere curtain, since destroyed, was the post of the Spanish Knights. The defence of Senglea was entrusted to the language of Italy, under the command of the Admiral De Monte, who, in after years, became Grand Master of the Order. St. Angelo itself was under the immediate command of La Valette, with a force contributed from all the languages, and with a due proportion of soldiery.

The ordinary garrison of St. Elmo had hitherto been composed only of sixty men, under the command of an aged knight named de Broglio; but, in the present emergency, it was deemed necessary considerably to augment this slender force, and a reinforcement of sixty knights, with a company of infantry, under the command of a Spanish Knight named La Cerda, were directed to place themselves under the orders of de Broglio.—A more difficult matter appeared to be the appointment of a governor to the fort, more youthful and active than that veteran; a step which appeared absolutely necessary, but which La Valette nevertheless felt very indisposed to take.

It was at length decided that d' Eguerras, the Bailiff of Negropont, a commander of tried valor and experience, should be dispatched into the fort, under the anomalous title of captain of succours; who, without displacing de Broglio from his command, should give him the benefit of his advice and more youthful energy during the approaching crisis.

There yet remained the Citta Notabile and the island of Gozo to protect; and opinions were much divided in the council, as to the proper measures to be adopted in these cases. Some were for abandoning both points, and withdrawing their garrisons, to swell the numbers of the defenders of the Bourg, as the most important point: others again, whilst anxious to abandon Gozo, deemed it more prudent to retain the Citta Notabile, which would act as a diversion, and would either cause a most seasonable delay, should the Turks undertake its siege, or else would prove a constant annoyance to their rear, should they at once sit down before the Bourg. La Valette however determined upon retaining both of these posts, in order if possible to distract the enemy from their main attack, so as to give more time for the arrival of the succours promised by the Viceroy of Sicily; and the garrisons of both places were therefore reinforced, and placed under the command of Knights, in whose dauntless courage and constancy he reposed the utmost confidence, and who, in case

they were attacked, would, he felt sure, maintain their posts to the very last gasp.

Every thing was thus arranged to prevent confusion; and to equalise as far as possible, the distribution of the garrison; and La Valette, conscious that he could carry his precautions no further, and that he must now trust the issue to God, his own strong arm, and the anticipation of succour, made a spirited harangue to his troops, in which he recalled to their memory the long list of victories, which in former years, the Order had gained over the Infidel, when their numbers were even more disproportioned than at that moment, and further urged upon them that, as true soldiers of the Cross, they were bound, if necessary, to seal their faith with their blood, deeming themselves highly favored if, by a death in the defence of their religion, their convent, and their home, they could earn for themselves those glorious privileges of a blissful future, ensured to such as had attained the honors of martyrdom.

This inspiriting harangue was succeeded by a ceremony, yet more calculated to arouse all the religious fervor of their hearts: The entire body of the fraternity wended their way in solemn procession to the conventual church of San Lorenzo, and there, after confessing their sins, and receiving due absolution they partook of the Holy Eucharist, and once more consecrated their weapons to the preservation of

their faith, and of their convent^o home.—At that solemn moment, each one felt that he had renewed a sacred pledge, made with his God, and only to be redeemed with his best hearts blood; and, as he contemplated the possibility of the wanton violation of all he held sacred and dear, which must follow the capture of his city by the Infidel, he once more vowed within himself, that ere that moment should arrive, he would be stretched a mangled corpse upon those blood stained ramparts which he was no longer able to defend.

CHAPTER III.

Landing of the Ottoman army—Siege of St. Elmo commenced—Effect of the Turkish bombardment—Loss of the ravelin—Arrival of Dragut—Renewed bombardment.—The garrison become discontented—The first assault on the fort.—Its successful resistance—The complete investment of St. Elmo is effected.—The second assault. The third assault and capture of the fort.

THE Turkish fleet, which was descried by the sentinels of Fort St. Elmo, on the 18th May 1565, consisted of one hundred and thirty vessels, carrying troops to the number of thirty thousand men, besides stores and artillery in vast quantities. This latter comprised sixty three guns of very large calibre ; some of which threw stone balls of a hundred and sixty pounds weight. The Turks had always been celebrated for the enormous size of their guns, and continued to use them, long after other armies had discovered that their effect was more than counter-balanced by their extreme cumbrousness.

A partial landing was effected that night, in St. Thomas' creek, and the remainder of the force was safely disembarked on the following night in Marsa Scirocco. Some skirmishing ensued between the advanced troops of the invaders, and a body of men, whom La Valette had dispatched in the direction of Marsa Scirocco to reconnoitre, under the command of the Grand Marshal Coppier; after which, the Turks advanced towards the fortress, and made a reconnoissance of the works, in order to determine upon their future line of operations. Piali, the admiral, was of opinion that they should attempt nothing, until the arrival of Dragut, the Pasha of Tripoli, on whose opinion and advice the Sultan had laid so great a stress. Mustapha however, who dreaded the arrival of succours to the besieged, before his object should have been gained, urged that they should at once undertake the siege of St. Elmo; an insignificant fort, not capable of any lengthened resistance, and the capture of which would enable their fleet to enter in safety the Marsa Muscetto, where they would find shelter, and a convenient point of disembarkation, for their stores. His opinion prevailed, and the siege of St. Elmo was forthwith commenced.

This fort, whose construction was narrated in the last chapter, partook very much of the form of a star, consisting of four salients. The land front was broken into a bastioned form, by the addition of

small rounded flanks, and, on the sea side, arose a cavalier, which dominated over the remainder of the work.* On the side of the Marsa Muscetto was a small ravelin, constructed by the advice of the Viceroy of Sicily, and barely completed when the Turks made their appearance. The entire fort was, owing to the nature of the ground on which it was traced, narrow and confined; and the garrison, small as it was, found itself very much cramped for room within its limits.

With incredible toil, the Turks commenced the construction of their trenches and batteries, on the rocky soil of Mount Sceberras. Earth there was little or none; and their parapets were consequently formed, less by the excavation of trenches, than by the piling together of vast masses of stone, assisted by gabions, fascines, and timber, all of which had to be brought to the spot from a distance. Their great numbers however, and the zeal with which they laboured to place themselves under cover, speedily effected their object; and on the 31st May, their batteries opened with vigour against the devoted fort. So energetically was their artillery served, and

* The present fort of upper St. Elmo retains much of the trace of the original work; the cavalier however being now embraced within the enceinte, instead of communicating with it, as it did then, by means of a wooden bridge.

so great was its effect, that several large breaches were speedily gaping in the curtain of the land front, and in the salient of that side next the Marsa Muscetto.

D' Eguerras now perceived that his garrison was no longer sufficiently numerous for the protection of his post. So long as his ramparts had remained intact, and stood, an obstacle secure from escalade, he was enabled to provide for his defences; but now that that security had been lost, he required additional troops to man the breach, and oppose the advance of the foe. He therefore dispatched the Spanish knight La Cerda to the Bourg, to seek for reinforcements.

It may here be mentioned that, in order to keep his trenches defiladed from the raking fire of St. Angelo, Mustapha had constructed them almost entirely on the Marsa Muscetto side of the ridge of Mount Sceberras; so that free communication was left open between St. Elmo and St. Angelo: this defect in the arrangements of the besiegers was taken every advantage of by La Valette, who kept up a constant intercourse with the besieged fort; and poured in reinforcements, as they were required, withdrawing the sick and wounded to the Bourg, where they could be better tended, and would no longer cramp the defenders in the narrow space of their work.

La Cerda, whose conduct throughout the attack on St. Elmo, appears to have been much tainted with cowardice, an almost solitary instance of that defect amongst the garrison, spoke in such lively terms of the extreme peril of the fort, and of the impossibility of maintaining it beyond a few days, that the cholér of the Grand Master was highly excited against the injudicious envoy, who was thus publishing, before the assembled knights, what he should have reserved for the private ear of his chief. La Valette was indeed much disappointed at this speedy demand for succour from that quarter, before a single assault had been delivered. He had counted upon the delay, which the attack on St. Elmo must occasion, as the salvation of the island; since it would have enabled the Sicilian envoy to redeem his pledge, and to hurry to his rescue. If however, as La Cerda proclaimed, the fort could be held but for a few days at farthest, he might expect to see the siege of the Bourg opened, long before Don Garcia could possibly arrive. He hastened therefore to comply with the demand of D' Eguerras, and dispatched two hundred men, with fifty additional members of the fraternity, under the command of the Chevalier de Medrano; a gallant soldier, in whom La Valette placed the most implicit confidence.

Medrano had no sooner entered the fort, than he proposed a sortie to destroy the besiegers trenches;

and headed the operation in person. At first the attack was completely successful, and the Turks were routed with the utmost confusion; their parapets overthrown, and the results of much labour destroyed. As however they speedily rallied, and returned to the attack in overwhelming numbers, Medrano was compelled to draw off his slender force, and to make the best of his way back into the fort.—The wind, which at the time was southerly, had however blown the smoke in the direction of St. Elmo, and concealed the operations of the besiegers from the view of the garrison. What was their amazement and dismay, when it cleared away, to perceive that, under its cover, the Turks had advanced, and taken possession of the counterscarp and its covered way, within which they were rapidly engaged in entrenching themselves. A heavy fire was at once opened upon them, but without effect; the counterscarp was, from that moment lost, and became an integral part of the Turkish attack, which was thus brought close to the walls.

A few days later, a gross act of carelessness on the part of the garrison, caused the loss of the ravelin itself. Some Turkish engineers were engaged, under cover of the night, in making a reconnoissance of the opposing works from the ditch, to which, since the capture of the covered way, they had free access. Anxious to discover the nature of the defences in

the ravelin, one of these officers had the hardihood to climb into an embrazure, for the purpose of inspecting the interior of the work, trusting to the darkness of the night, to elude the observation of the sentinels : to his amazement, he found the place apparently untenanted, and certainly unguarded. He hastened back to his camp ; informed Mustapha of what he had seen ; and offered to lead a party to the instant attack of the unprotected point.

In an incredibly short space of time, a chosen band of Janissaries were prepared ; and, led by the Engineer, silently stole into the work.—The guard were taken completely by surprise, and unable to present any effective resistance. Driven backwards by the fierce onset of the excited Janissaries, they immediately gave way, and were forced to seek refuge within the fort, whither they were hotly pursued by the foe. D' Eguerras, Medrano, and other knights had however, upon the first sound of the tumult, hurried to the scene of action ; and by their exertions they prevented the enemy from penetrating into the main work. The ravelin however was lost ; nor could all the efforts of the besieged prevent the construction of a lodgement within it.

The Turks were so stimulated by this success that, hoping to end the whole attack on that day, they poured into the ditch, and endeavoured to take the fort itself by escalade.—Their ladders were however

too short ; nor were the garrison likely to permit the success of such a foolhardy attempt, which only ended in the slaughter of a great number of the assailants, and the utter discomfiture of the remainder.

Much recrimination ensued, touching the loss of the ravelin ; and it at length became the general opinion, either that the sentinel on the exposed point was asleep at his post, or that he had been killed by a chance shot, and that his death had been unperceived by the guard. In either case, it was clear that the latter had not performed their duty, by making frequent rounds ; which, in so exposed a post, they most undoubtedly should have done. Dearly did that devoted and heroic garrison subsequently pay for this act of neglect on their part ; and nobly did they redeem the fault which they had committed.

St. Elmo now stood utterly shorn of its outworks, and restricted to the main fort and its cavalier ; whilst the covered way and ravelin teemed with the foe, who had established extensive lodgments in both places.—On the other hand, to counterbalance this misfortune, the garrison had inflicted such great loss upon their assailants, in the futile attempt at an escalade, that it was a matter of opinion, on which side the greater amount of success lay, in the days conflict.

At this juncture, Dragut made his long expected appearance from Tripoli, with a fleet of thirteen galleys; and was greeted with the most enthusiastic joy by the Turkish army: his reputation in all matters, military and naval, standing at a very high point. He at once condemned the line of proceedings that Mustapha had hitherto adopted, in attacking St. Elmo. He considered that, in the first place, the island of Gozo should have been secured; and after that, the Citta Notabile; before any attempt was made upon the Bourg or its outworks. By these measures, the Knights would have been cut off from receiving any assistance, either in men or provisions, from those points: the rear of the besieging army would have been secure; instead of being, as it then was, liable to be harassed by constant attacks and sorties from the Citta Notabile; and the landing of a relieving force for the garrison, would have been rendered far more difficult. As however, the attack on St. Elmo had been once actually commenced, he did not consider it consistent with the dignity of the Sultan, to abandon the enterprise, and he therefore proposed pushing it forward with the utmost vigour.

His first step was to construct a battery of four culverins, upon the point of land which commanded the entrance to the Marsa Muscetto, opposite to St. Elmo; which headland has, in consequence, since received the name of Point Dragut. Another bat-

tery for thirteen guns was also raised near the summit of the ridge of Mount Sceberras, from whence it could play, not only on the land front of St. Elmo, but also upon St. Angelo; the fire from which would probably prove very destructive, in the event of an assault, if not previously checked.

After the late attack, La Valette had removed the wounded from the garrison of St. Elmo, amounting to nearly an hundred men, and had reinforced them with an equivalent number of fresh troops, commanded by the Chevalier de Miranda; a knight who had lately arrived from Sicily, and who earnestly besought permission to enter St. Elmo, as the post of the greatest danger, and consequently of the greatest honor.—This knight had already achieved a high reputation for military genius and courage; and La Valette immediately acceded to a request, which added to the defenders of so vital a post as St. Elmo, such an experienced commander.

The new batteries of the Turks were no sooner completed, than they opened with the utmost vigour on the exposed ramparts of St. Elmo.—The ceaseless roar of artillery, which now awakened the echoes of the surrounding hills, was not without its due effect. Ere long, the walls gave way in every direction, and crumbled beneath the iron hail, so mercilessly and unrelentingly poured against it. Wider and wider grew the gaping breach, as discharge after discharge

was vomited forth, from the various batteries which thundered in unison against the fort; until, at length, the garrison, perceiving that further resistance under such circumstances was hopeless, dispatched an emissary to La Valette, craving permission to abandon the ruined fort, and to withdraw the garrison into the Bourg.

For this mission, they selected Medrano, a man whose previous reputation and conduct during the siege, would render his report free from all taint of cowardice or exaggeration. La Valette upon receiving his communication, referred it to the council, who were unanimously of opinion that St. Elmo should be abandoned, as no longer tenable. The Grand Master was however of a different opinion: every day that the fort held out, detained the besiegers from their main attack on the Bourg; and gave the Viceroy more time for bringing up his succours,—A message had lately arrived from Sicily, stating that, unless that post were held, the Viceroy would not consider it consistent with his duty, to move for the defence of the island. Under these circumstances, La Valette decided that, at all hazards, and at any sacrifice, St. Elmo must be retained until the very last gasp; and this answer was brought back into the fort by Medrano.

The older knights prepared at once to carry out the wishes of their chief; but the younger members

of the community, who had not yet been sufficiently trained to abandon themselves, without a murmur, and with unquestioning devotedness, to the will of their superior, were not willing to yield so unreserved an obedience, in those cases where they considered the command unreasonable. They were quite prepared to meet the foe, face to face, and to die, if it were needful, with arms in their hands, striking one last good blow in the defence of their convent; but this was a different matter; and to die tamely, in a position where they could offer no effective resistance, and where they must speedily be overwhelmed in the ruins of the crumbling fortalice, was beyond their powers of fortitude. Loud murmurs speedily arose in their ranks; and a cabal was formed to resist the harsh mandate; the result of which was, that a letter was dispatched to the Grand Master, signed by fifty of the garrison, and dated on the 8th June, in which they threatened that, if they were not instantly recalled into the Bourg, they would sally forth into the trenches of the foe, and there meet, in open fight, that end to which they would be inevitably doomed, by any longer retention of the fort.—The stern indignation of La Valette was aroused by this act of insubordination. His own mind was cast in an iron mould; and he required from others, the same unshrinking and implicit obedience, that he would himself have rendered, under similar circumstances.

In order however that he might not appear to have slighted their request, he dispatched three commissioners into the fort, to inspect minutely, and to report upon its condition.

These commissioners, on their arrival, found the garrison busily engaged in preparations for an immediate abandonment of their post. Shot were being thrown into the wells, and other steps taken, to prevent the use of their stores by the Turks; whose banner, it was fully expected, would float over the ruins of St. Elmo, before nightfall. Two of the commissioners gave their judgement that the place was decidedly untenable: the third however, an Italian, named de Castriot, was of a different opinion; and he openly proffered to make good his words, by conducting its further defence in person. This proffer on his part, which was regarded as an idle vaunt, caused the greatest discontent amongst the garrison; and a disturbance could inevitably have ensued, if the aged de Broglio had not promptly sounded the alarm; which caused every one to hurry to his post.

On their return to the Bourg, de Castriot repeated his proffer to La Valette, and once more undertook to maintain the fort, provided he might collect a sufficient force of volunteers from the garrison. To this proposal, the Grand Master promptly acceded; less with a view to actually carrying out the design, than for the effect which such a step would have on

the defenders of St. Elmo. Volunteers were at once called for by de Castriot; and so great was the general enthusiasm, that every one desired to be enrolled in the honorable band.—La Valette then dispatched a fresh message to the garrison of the fort, bidding them at once to return to the Bourg, where they would be in greater security; and announcing to them that fresh troops would take their place, in whose constancy and valor greater reliance could be placed.

The receipt of this intelligence filled the mutineers with dismay. They had desired to be relieved, but not to be replaced by others: they were willing to abandon the post, but not to yield up the honor of its defence to other hands.—They felt that a stigma would ever after attach itself to them, were they to permit such a transfer; and that an honorable death was far preferable to life, purchased at such a sacrifice. The utmost enthusiasm once more prevailed in their ranks; and a humble missive was despatched, in which they retracted their former insubordinate demands, and besought permission to retain the defence of the post in their own hands. At first, La Valette affected to decline this request; but eventually, after a second embassy, he consented; having gained precisely what he had intended, and having aroused the garrison to a state of enthusiasm, which bid fair to prolong the defence of St. Elmo, far be-

yond what under ordinary circumstances would have been deemed practicable.

The batteries had now continued their pitiless storm for several days; and many circumstances were noted on the fifteenth of June, which led the garrison to expect an assault, either that night or the next day. During the course of the night, the whole Ottoman fleet moved from Marsa Scirocco, where they had hitherto lain, and took up a station to the seaward of St. Elmo, in order to aid in the impending attack; and that they might be prepared to enter the Marsa Muscetto, so soon as their flag should be waving over the captured ruins of the fort.

Mustapha made his preparations for the assault with great prudence. A body of four thousand selected marksmen were distributed along the lines of trenches, whose sole duty it was, to keep down the fire of the defenders, and to pick off any of their number who might shew themselves above the ramparts.—The assaulting column was composed entirely of Janissaries; and, at an early hour, they made a rush, on the appointed signal being given, and advanced swiftly to the attack. The besieged were however, quite prepared for their reception. From the moment that they emerged from their trenches, a withering discharge of artillery, from the guns of St. Elmo in their front, and from those of St. Angelo on their flank, poured upon their devoted

ranks.—The head of the column was speedily annihilated, and the remainder reeled under the effects of that furious cannonade.—Still they continued to advance: those in front being impelled onwards by their comrades in rear, until the foot of the breach was attained. Here however they were met by the dauntless garrison, who closed their ranks with the most determined obstinacy over the gaping chasm. With shouts of rage, the Moslems hurled themselves upon their foe, and endeavoured to penetrate within the barrier. Amidst the clashing of steel, the rattling of musketry, the groans of the wounded, and all the horrid din of war, the strife was continued with equal energy on both sides: the Infidel, determined on forcing an entrance into the fort; and the Christians, equally bent on preventing such a catastrophe.

Whilst the main attack was thus progressing on the land front, two other attempts were made to carry the place by escalade: one, on the Marsa Muscetto side, near the captured ravelin; and the other on the cavalier. The former was repulsed without difficulty, but the latter bid fair to prove a more obstinate conflict. Thirty fanatics had bound themselves, under a solemn oath, to penetrate into the fort, or to perish in the effort; and they sought, and obtained from Mustapha, permission to lead a column to the assault.—They made their rush at the

cavalier, in full view of St. Angelo, and succeeded in planting their ladders against its wall. The defenders were, in truth, taken somewhat by surprise; never having for one moment contemplated that such a spot, the loftiest in their enceinte, and exposed to the fire of St. Angelo, could be selected for an escalade.—The determined fanatics, followed by a column of Janissaries, had well nigh effected a footing on the work, when the guns of St. Angelo opened upon them. La Valette, who had been watching the conflict, with the most intense eagerness, from his post in that quarter, soon perceived the desperate effort; and at once prepared to render his assistance to the defenders. The first shot however was most unfortunate, being directed too much to the right: and, in lieu of falling amongst the assailants, it raked the parapet of the cavalier, killing eight of the garrison: subsequent discharges however, rectified this mischance, and threw the assailants into such complete confusion that, their fanatical leaders having all met that fate, which they themselves had determined should be the alternative of failure in their enterprise, the remainder abandoned the attempt, and returned to their trenches.

Meanwhile, the main attack had continued to rage, on and about the breach, with unabated fury, and with considerable loss on both sides. Hoops of fire were hurled from the ramparts, which often encircled

two or more of the foe, whose flowing garments rendered them peculiarly sensitive to this species of annoyance ; and, unable to extricate themselves from the fiery embrace, they perished in the utmost torment. Pots of wildfire were also made use of ; consisting of earthenware shells, with a slowmatch fuze, and filled with the most combustible matter. When hurled into the midst of the assailants, the shell broke in its fall ; the wildfire was ignited by the slow match ; and an uncontrollable blaze burst forth in every direction. In addition to these, every missile, which ingenuity could devise, was brought to bear upon the turbaned crowd who thronged around the contested spot, and who still strove, spite of their enormous losses, to break through the serried phalanx opposed to them.

The sun had now risen high ; and yet no progress had been made : the breach was still in the possession of the Christians, and the White Cross banner still floated, in proud defiance, on the rampart. Human endurance could be pushed no further ; and Mustapha, who like his great antagonist La Valette, had watched the protracted strife with the keenest and most devouring anxiety, was at length reluctantly compelled to sound the retreat.

Slowly and sullenly, the discomfited Moslem withdrew from the contest, and left the breach, in the undisputed possession of its heroic defenders ; from

whose ranks there rose a shout of exultation and defiance, poured forth with such heartfelt enthusiasm, that its sound was borne across the waters, and the garrison of the Bourg learnt that the Infidel had once more given way before the White Cross of St. John. Their excitement, upon thus learning the successful issue of the defence, knew no bounds. Shout after shout rose into the air, and awoke the surrounding echoes. Well and nobly had the devoted garrison wiped away the reproach, which their late insubordination had cast upon them; and they now had the inestimable gratification of feeling, that those who had hitherto looked most coldly upon them, were now the loudest in admiration of their gallantry.

Their success however, had not been purchased without a fearful sacrifice; three hundred men, of whom seventeen were knights, having fallen during the day. Amongst these latter was the heroic Medrano, who was struck down, whilst in the act of wrenching a banner from the grasp of an advancing Turk: his remains were removed to the Bourg, where he was interred in the conventual church of San Lorenzo.—The loss of the Turks was never ascertained; but that it was very large, the masses of slain, which lay in gory heaps upon the trench, and at its foot, amply testified. Indeed the whole space, between their entrenchments and the point of conflict,

was strewn with the corpses of those who had fallen in the advance ; so that altogether, their losses must have swelled to a very considerable number.

As soon as night had closed in, La Valette dispatched fresh reinforcements to the fort, and withdrew those who were too seriously wounded to be of further service to the garrison. D' Eguerras and de Broglio were both of this number, but they steadily refused to leave the scene of their triumph, and announced their determination to maintain their posts to the last gasp.

Dragut now perceived that, if the communication between St. Angelo and St. Elmo were allowed to continue unchecked, they could never hope to gain the fort, until they had exhausted the entire garrison of the island ; and he urged the necessity of changing the mode of attack. Hitherto, the Turkish trenches had been kept on the Marsa Muscetto side of Mount Scerberras, to screen them from the fire of St. Angelo. Now, however, it was determined, in spite of that disadvantage, to continue them right across the peninsula, and to construct a battery which should command the landing place, and thus prevent all communication between the two garrisons. Whilst this work was being constructed under his personal superintendance Dragut was struck on the head by a splinter, the effect of a shot from St. Angelo, and received a mortal wound : a loss, infinitely greater.

to the besiegers, than that of a whole column of men. The work was nevertheless persevered in; although La Valette, who foresaw the inevitable consequence of its successful completion, kept up an incessant cannonade on the working parties; and at length the garrison of St. Elmo felt that their fate was sealed, and that they were completely cut off from all further assistance, and thrown entirely on their own resources.

The work of investment was completed on the eighteenth of June, and from that day till the twenty first, an overwhelming fire was brought to bear upon the already ruinous defences. Had the ramparts of St. Elmo been constructed entirely of masonry, they must have been completely swept away by the effects of this continuous fire, but in many parts, they had been reared upon the solid rock, which indeed constitutes the soil of the whole peninsula; and these portions withstood the vehemence, even of the Turkish cannonade. For the same cause, no attempts could be made at mining; and thus the garrison had the satisfaction of feeling that they had, at all events, only the open foe to contend with; and that no insidious and invisible labor was undermining their bulwarks.

The twenty first was occupied by the besiegers in such preparations as plainly foretold a renewed assault, and on the break of day the following morn-

ing, the signal was given. The scene was but a repetition of that which had been witnessed on the sixteenth: an impetuous rush on the one side, a firm and unyielding resistance on the other; a dogged combat, in which neither party would give way: the same carnage; the same cries; the same scene of confusion; and it may be added, once more the same result. After several hours of useless strife, Mustapha was compelled again to retire, and once more the noble garrison raised a shout, the token of another triumph of the Cross against the Crescent: and a glorious triumph it most certainly was, although the last which the defenders could ever hope to wring from their opponents. Cut off from all reinforcement, they had no means of recruiting their diminished ranks; and well they knew that the following day must witness their utter annihilation.

One last effort did La Valette make, under the cover of night, to communicate with the garrison, and to recal them from that fatal spot, which even he felt could not possibly be retained another day; but his boats were speedily discovered by the watchful sentinels, whom Mustapha had posted for that express purpose, being fully convinced that some such effort would be made. Fire was instantly opened on them, and they were forced to retire, and to leave their unfortunate comrades to their fate.— These had watched, with the keenest anxiety, the

effort making for their deliverance ; but when they perceived its discovery by the foe, and consequent failure, they at once abandoned all further hope of escape, and prepared calmly to meet that death which they now felt was inevitable.

Silently and solemnly they gathered together in the little chapel of St. Elmo; and there, at that midnight hour, once more confessed their sins, and partook of the holy Sacrament for the last time upon this earth.—It was a touching spectacle, to see that group of careworn men, most of them suffering from some wound, received during the last assault ; sad, yet resigned, calm and determined in aspect ; their features lighted up with the hope, imparted by the sacred rite, of which they had just partaken, standing together in groups, around the humble altar of their little chapel; the darkness scarce dispelled by the few and feeble lights which flickered around. The mind of the reader can never dwell on the fatal tale of St. Elmo's loss, without recalling this last touching episode of the story.

Their religious duties being thus performed, the garrison prepared at once to take such measures as their reduced numbers and limited means would permit, to resist the assault, which they knew would be delivered at the first glimpse of dawn. Such of their number as, from their wounds and consequent feebleness, were unable to stand, were seated by their

comrades on the breach, in order that they might meet their end with arms in their hands, boldly fronting the foe to the last.

At length the gloom of night was broken by the first streak of dawn, which denoted that the morning of their last day was approaching ; and as the light grew more distinct, the Turkish troops began to assemble, for the consummation of that victory, for which they had so long toiled. With a loud shout of triumph, they rushed upon their victims, trusting, with the first effort, to overcome their feeble resistance. In this however, they were mistaken ; for they were once more met with a firm array, and a barrier, through which, slender as it was, they could not penetrate. For four hours, did the strife rage round that devoted spot, and yet St. Elmo was not gained. Knight after knight, soldier after soldier, of that little band, had been struck down, never to rise again, and yet no step was yielded : the survivors only closed their ranks still more firmly, and offered a resistance still more determined.

At length a point was reached, beyond which even their heroism could not pass. Only sixty wounded exhausted men remained standing on the breach, the sole obstacle between the Turkish army and its prey.—Mustapha perceived that at length the day was his, but in order to secure his advantage with the more certainty, he ordered the temporary

recal of the assailants, that they might collect themselves for one more rush, and so terminate the last vestige of resistance. At the sound of the atabal, they fell back, and left the scene of carnage once more in the hands of those few and feeble men, who alone survived to dispute possession of the fort. La Valette had, throughout the morning, gazed with poignant anguish, upon the scene, unable to render the slightest assistance, and anticipating every moment to witness the banner of his Order torn from its standard, and the hated ensign of the Infidel reared in its place. What was then his amazement, when he perceived the enemy once more retiring from the contest, and the fort still in the possession of its defenders. The whole Turkish army had indeed recoiled from the efforts of sixty wounded men, and were compelled once more to collect their ranks, before they could pierce the barrier.

D' Eguerras took advantage of this momentary lull to recal the defenders from the cavalier, to recruit his little band on the breach ; trusting that his abandonment of the work might not be perceived by the enemy. Mustapha however instantly detected the movement ; and at once despatched a body of Janissaries to take possession of the dominant spot ; from whence they could securely strike down any one who appeared on the ramparts of the work. All was now over ; the last rush was made, the fort was

won, and the garrison annihilated. De Broglio, D' Eguerras, and Miranda, who had all three hitherto survived the dangers of former combats, now fell in this last struggle; and over their mangled corpses the infuriated victors strode to the attainment of their object.

The only survivors of this fatal day were a body of nine men, who surrendered themselves to Dragut's corsairs, and were by them protected from death; these freebooters considering that they were a more valuable prey whilst alive, than when dead. A few of the Maltese soldiers, who were expert swimmers, also threw themselves into the sea, and in spite of the showers of bullets aimed at them, succeeded in making good their escape. The rest all fell, and when the last had sunk in the agonies of death, the Turkish Pasha felt that, at length, he had gained his object, and that St. Elmo was his own.—His banner was reared on the cavalier in token of triumph, and the Ottoman fleet, which had so long awaited that auspicious moment, streamed in gay procession into the Marsa Muscetto.

Mustapha, the native ferocity of whose character had been aroused to the utmost, by the desperate and protracted resistance he had encountered, ordered that the bodies of the Knights should be carefully selected from amongst the piles of slain; that their heads should be struck off, and the trunks fastened

on planks, extended in the form of a cross ; the same emblem being also deeply gashed upon their breasts. This brutal mutilation having been accomplished, they were cast into the harbour, where the current speedily bore them across, to the walls of St. Angelo—a sad token of the fate which had befallen the heroic garrison of St. Elmo.

Thus, on the twenty third of June, the eve of their patron Saints day, did the Order lose that stronghold, in which they had maintained a resistance for an entire month; during which period they had inflicted the most severe losses upon their besiegers; whose casualties, ere they had made themselves masters of the contested point, amounted to many thousands.—The Order had, during the struggle, to mourn the loss of three hundred knights, and thirteen hundred soldiers; a fearful diminution of the slender garrison, with which they were still to maintain themselves in the Bourg and Senglea.

Dragut, the master mind, to whose advice the ultimate success of the Turkish arms was entirely owing, had lingered till now, under the effect of his wound. He no sooner however learnt the successful issue of his plans than, as though he had but waited for that moment, ere he took his departure, he raised his eyes in gratitude to heaven, and calmly yielded up his last breath.

CHAPTER IV.

Investment of the Bourg—Arrival of a reinforcement to the garrison—Attempted parley by Mustapha—Bombardment of the Spur Bastion and the Post of Castile—Assault on Senglea—Its complete failure—Assault of the Post of Castile—Exhaustion of the garrison, and also of the besiegers—Landing of succours by Don Garcia—Overthrow of the Turks and consequent abandonment of the siege.

THE fall of St. Elmo was a warning to La Valette that the siege of the Bourg would be no longer delayed; and he prepared himself at once for the impending contest. The month which he had gained by the heroic resistance of that unfortunate garrison had not been wasted: every precaution had been taken to strengthen the works, at the points where they were most liable to attack, and numerous retrenchments had also been formed, to protract the defence, even after the outer ramparts should be lost.

More than one messenger had been dispatched to Sicily, to urge upon the dilatory Viceroy the absolute

necessity of his speedy arrival with reinforcements, but as yet without effect; and La Valette began to dread, that he would have to continue the contest, entirely without assistance. He did not however allow this fear to have any effect on his conduct, or to weaken his determination of holding the fortress to the latest possible moment; and he lost no opportunity of exciting similar feelings in the breasts of his followers, and of arousing their enthusiastic valour by inspiring harangues. On St. John's festival, the day after the fall of St. Elmo; when the ordinary ceremonies of the Church had been celebrated, he called upon his comrades to avenge the cruel fate of their friends. Their mangled corpses had been reverentially raised from the ignominious position in which they had floated to the fort of St. Angelo, and placed in a common sepulchre in the church of San Lorenzo, all the members of the Order joining in the sad solemnity. Their hearts were therefore well attuned to receive the urgent exhortations of their chief; and many a knitted brow, and clenched hand amongst his hearers, told La Valette that his words had not been lost, and that he might count on support to the very last.

Meanwhile Mustapha commenced his preparations for the continuation of his enterprise, to which the capture of St. Elmo had been but a preliminary step. Still when he stood upon the summit of Mount Sce-

berrias, and gazed upon the frowning batteries and ramparts which met his view, both at the Bourg and Senglea; marking at the same time that, even were both of these obstacles overcome, the castle of St. Angelo would remain as a last keep, in which the defenders might continue to hold out, for an almost indefinite length of time, his heart sank within him; and when he remembered that those ramparts were manned by hearts as heroic, and spirits as dauntless, as those which had so long retained St. Elmo from his grasp, he could not refrain from giving expression to his feelings. "What" exclaimed he, "may we not expect the parent to cost us, when we have purchased the child at such a price." Under these circumstances, he conceived it advisable to try the effects of a negotiation, before he once more sought the ultimate appeal of arms; trusting that the result of the late struggle would have rendered the garrison not unwilling to listen to terms. For this purpose he dispatched a Greek slave, with a proffer of favorable conditions, provided the Grand Master would at once surrender his island, and cease all further resistance. The envoy was conducted blindfolded into the presence of La Valette; and that chief no sooner heard his mission, than he directed that the unfortunate wretch should at once be hanged. There is no reason to suppose he ever seriously contemplated the actual execution of this stern decree; but he was desirous

of so far terrifying the messenger, that no further attempts of the same character should be made. He therefore yielded to the solicitations of the slave, and revoked his mandate; bidding him however tell his master, that should he ever dispatch another messenger on a similar errand, such should most assuredly be his fate. As the trembling wretch was led beyond the fortress, one of the officers, pointing to the deep ditch which surrounded the works, told him, that there lay the only spot in Malta which the Order were prepared to yield to the Turks, but that even that was sufficiently deep to contain them all.

This untoward result of his embassy warned Mustapha that, if Malta was to be taken, it must be by force of arms alone, and he at once prepared to invest the new points of attack. Trenches were opened, which extended in a complete semicircle, from Mount Coradin on the one side, to Mount Salvator on the other; and extensive batteries were raised on both of these points; that of Mount Coradin to breach the Spur bastion, at the extreme promontory of Senglea, and that of Mount Salvator to effect the same purpose at the corner bastion of the land front of the Bourg, termed the post of Castile.

Before however this investment was completed, a small reinforcement, consisting of forty knights and seven hundred soldiers, commanded by the Chevalier de Robles, succeeded in making their way, under

cover of a thick fog, into the Bourg, where they were hailed with the utmost joy by their brave comrades. As soon however as Mustapha, taught by the events which had occurred at St. Elmo, had completed his entrenchments, the two peninsulas were completely cut off from all communication, save by water, and this point was zealously guarded by the galleys of Piali. In addition however to the reinforcement already mentioned, La Valette had previously swelled his numbers, by calling in five companies of soldiery from the Citta Notabile, where they were no longer required, now that it was clear no siege of that place was to be feared. Further aid he could not look for, until the Viceroy should land with such a force as could enable him to penetrate the Turkish lines.

The batteries upon the two heights were no sooner completed than they at once opened fire, and ere long a practicable breach was effected on both points of attack. Mustapha determined to concentrate his strength upon one point only, and St. Michaels was selected as the scene of his operations. In order that he might be enabled to deliver his assault by water, he had recourse to a most extraordinary expedient to provide himself with transport. Feeling that it would be impossible for his galleys to force their way past the guns of St. Angelo, he caused a number of large boats to be taken to the head of the Marsa Muscetto, and from that point to be dragged across the land,

to the other harbor. This operation was speedily performed by the soldiers under his command ; and ere long La Valette perceived an extensive flotilla springing up in those waters, all access to which, he had, as he thought, so zealously guarded.

The intentions of the enemy were further made known to him, by information received from a deserter of high rank, named Lascaris ; who, anxious to throw off the thraldom of his position, and to embrace the Christian faith, had preferred the risk of uniting his fortunes with those of the garrison, to remaining longer amongst a people whom he abhorred ; and from this person much valuable, and always trustworthy information was obtained.

In order to oppose the new attack, with which he was threatened, La Valette caused a strong palisading to be constructed around the point of Senglea, stretching from thence towards the Coradin. This work was executed in an incredibly short time by the Maltese, who were excellent divers ; and although it could only be carried on by night, in little more than a week it was completed. Mustapha was amazed to see this new and unexpected obstacle springing up ; and he determined upon effecting its destruction by similar means to those employed in its original construction. A body of the most expert swimmers in his army were selected ; who, armed with axes, proceeded to the spot, and commenced the

demolition of the barricade. The Maltese, nothing daunted, instantly dashed to the rescue; and, for some time, a fierce engagement raged in the water, the combatants on both sides swimming. The superiority of the Maltese in this element was speedily manifested, and the discomfited Turks were forced to retire, with the loss of a great many of their number, and without having in any way effected their purpose.

About this time Mustapha had been joined by the Algerine corsair Hassem, with a body of his freebooting followers; and that leader had expressed his surprise at the length of time Mustapha had been detained before St. Elmo; and requested permission that the assault at St. Michaels might be entrusted to him. His demand was promptly granted; the Turkish commander being only too willing that the young braggadocio should have a taste of that resistance which he had himself for so long a time encountered.—All was therefore arranged for a general assault on the morning of the 15th July; which was to be delivered at two points simultaneously: that on the land side being commanded by Hassem, and that by water being entrusted to his lieutenant Candelissa.

At the appointed signal, a long string of boats, laden with Janissaries, and led by Candelissa, with a few of his Algerines, left the shore of Mount Coradin,

and steered their course direct for the palisade, which they proposed to force. Candelissa, who was in the foremost boat, strove hard to achieve the destruction of the obstacle, but it proved too strong and firm for his efforts, so that he was compelled to desist. During this attempt the boats had been exposed to a most galling fire from the ramparts, and already a considerable loss had been inflicted. Candelissa therefore, unwilling further to expose his men, in striving to accomplish an impossibility, plunged into the water, and waded to land, followed by the rest of the assailants.

A dash was instantly made at the breach, and other points were attempted by escalade. The defenders however, from their vantage ground, were more than a match for their opponents: the ladders were thrown down as soon as raised; and those who had crowded on to the breach, found there an obstacle, yet more impassable than the palisades beneath, in the firm line of Christians who crowned its summit. At this moment unfortunately, a magazine of combustibles, which had been lodged upon the ramparts, for the use of the defenders during the attack, suddenly ignited, and blew up with a loud crash, killing and wounding a vast number of those who were in its vicinity. All was now in hopeless confusion; and when the dense smoke cleared away, the foe were found to have established themselves on the parapet.

The dismay of the defenders speedily gave way to feelings of rage, and a determination to conquer, when they perceived the hated infidel swarming through the breach; and once more rallying his forces, the commander Zanguerra dashed into the midst of the Moslem ranks, and the conflict again raged with doubtful success upon either side.

Both La Valette and Mustapha, who were watching the progress of events, decided, at the same moment, upon sending reinforcements to the scene of action, so as to turn the tide of battle in favor of their own side. On the part of the Turks, a body of a thousand Janissaries, embarking in ten large boats, speedily advanced to the rescue. In order to avoid the palisades, they steered in a northerly direction; and with the intention of landing at the extreme point of the spur, neglected the precaution of keeping the peninsula of St. Michaels between themselves and the watchful foe at St. Angelo. A battery had been constructed at the latter point, close to the waters edge, and no sooner had the boats come within easy range, than a murderous discharge of grape, musket balls, and other missiles, with which the guns were loaded, belched forth upon the foe. The effect was awful in the extreme: nine of the ten boats sank instantly; and such of their occupants as were not killed, were speedily seen struggling in the water. The reinforcement was, in fact, annihilated at a



stroke; and the strife on the rampart was, by mutual consent, suspended for a few moments, whilst both parties gazed, with widely different feelings, upon the awful scene.

At this moment, the reinforcement forwarded to the defenders by La Valette, reached the scene of action. A floating bridge had lately been constructed between the two towns, by means of which a ready communication was maintained; and by this channel, a select body of men now advanced to the aid of their comrades at St. Michaels. Their appearance, and the catastrophe which had lately befallen the Janissaries below, decided the day. With loud shouts of defiance and victory, the inspirited garrison now rushed upon the enemy, and in a few moments drove them headlong from the breach. A general panic ensued: the defenders sallied forth on to the rocks beneath their ramparts, and commenced an indiscriminate slaughter of the almost unresisting foe.—To the cries for mercy and quarter, which were shrieked forth by the despairing Moslem, the stern reply was given, “Such mercy as you shewed at St. Elmo, shall you now receive,” and the sword of the victor was instantly dyed with the hearts blood of his victim. From this day, similar scenes of vengeance became jocularly known amongst the Christians, by the name of St. Elmo’s pay; and amply were those heroic spirits revenged before the close of the siege.

Candelissa who, till this moment had continued to exert himself to the utmost, to rally his men, now became infected by the general panic; and, as he stood upon the extreme point of the rock, shouting and waving for the boats to return, which, by his own order, had previously drawn off from the spot, he presented a most unedifying spectacle to the crowds of Moslems, who were gazing at the scene from the heights of Mount Coradin.—The boats at length arrived, and the few relics of the assaulting force, that the swords of the Knights had left untouched, were speedily borne away from the scene of strife.

During all this period, the land attack, led by the boastful Hassem, had been raging furiously, but without success. In vain had the young Algerine, conscious that failure would cover him with ridicule, exerted himself to the uttermost to stimulate his followers: they were met by those serried ranks, with which the Knights of St. John had so often before resisted the utmost efforts of the Infidel. Many a turbaned head lay low upon the breach, and fiercely still the battle raged around the spot; but not an inch was yielded; and when at length the defenders were joined by their comrades, flushed with the victory they had gained over Candelissa, and their swords still reeking with the slaughter of the enemy, the scale of victory once more turned decisively in their favor, and the discomfited foe were forced to retire from the scene of their failure.

Thus were the events of this great contest turned entirely in favor of the Christians, the assailants having been completely worsted at every point. The Turks lost between three and four thousand men; in addition to which, a feeling of despondency and terror began to insinuate itself throughout their army, at the desperate resistance with which they met on all sides. The loss, on the part of the Christians, amounted to two hundred men; which, though but small when compared to that of the Infidel, was still more than could be spared, especially as in that number were comprised several of the bravest of the knights. Amongst these were the commander Zanguerra, and the nephew of the Viceroy, who, unknown to La Valette, had accompanied the reinforcements from the Bourg, and had met his death wound upon the Spur of St. Michaels.

For upwards of a fortnight after his last signal failure, Mustapha attempted nothing further in the way of an assault, but contented himself with the construction of fresh batteries upon Mount Salvator; from which, and from those already existing, he poured forth an incessant discharge upon the points he had marked for the next attempt.—He now determined to attack the Bourg and Senglea simultaneously; trusting that by thus distracting the garrison, he might succeed in penetrating at one of the two points. The attack upon St. Michaels he reserved for himself,

and that upon the post of Castile, at that part of the land front of the Bourg, nearest to Mount Salvator, he entrusted to Piali.

On the 2nd August both attacks were made, and both were equally unsuccessful. It would weary the reader to enter into a detail of all the incidents, by which this, and other similar assaults were marked. Their general character was always the same. At the appointed signal, the assailants invariably rushed forward with shouts and yells of anticipated victory; the shrill notes of the atabal rang forth with inspiring vigour, and a dash was made at the gaping breach. But there they were met by a foe who cared but little, either for the notes of the atabal, or the shouts of the Moslem. Now ensued that fierce hand to hand encounter, in which the chivalry of St. John, clad in proof armour, and standing on the summit of the breach, universally proved superior to the assailants, struggling up its rugged side.—Less and less obstinately was the combat maintained, until the order for retiring was given; and the sound of the retreat, rising above the din of battle, announced one more failure to the Infidel host, and marked yet another triumph to the heroic garrison.

Still Mustapha persevered, and as he found it impossible to carry his point by a single successful effort, he determined to try the effect of wearing out the garrison with a constant succession of attempts.

Day after day, the combat was renewed, either at the post of Castile, or at St. Michael; and although every day it was successfully opposed, still the object of the Pasha was so far gained, that the garrison became harassed to the last degree, and their numbers greatly thinned by constant casualties.

Attempts were also made by the Ottoman leader, to gain his end by mining; and for this purpose, a shaft was sunk and a gallery driven beneath the post of Castile; the effects of which were nearly proving fatal to the defence. At the appointed signal the mine was fired, and a large portion of the rampart thrown down. An assaulting column, which had been told off in readiness, instantly rushed forward; and before the garrison could recover from their surprise and dismay, the summit of the new breach was crowded with the flowing garments of the foe, and the Infidel standard was floating in the breeze.— A general panic struck the defenders; and all appeared lost, till La Valette, hearing the din and confusion, rushed instantly to the scene of strife. His presence restored order to the ranks of the fraternity: gathering behind the retrenchments, which had been formed at this point, they speedily rallied from their disorder, and once more presented a firm front to their opponents. As the alarm spread throughout the town, fresh combatants came flocking to the spot; and ere long, the assailants were once more driven

from their vantage ground, their banners torn ignominiously from the points whereon they had been planted, and the breach once more cleared.

Thus did Mustapha continue to seek his object by a ceaseless system of attacks and alarms, until the garrison became exhausted and reduced to the last degree. Their ranks had been thinned by numerous losses, and many of the noblest knights had been either slain, or disabled by their wounds.—Still La Valette continued to preserve a cheerful bearing, and to encourage his followers to renewed exertions, both by precept and example; and yet he had been called on to sustain a blow, amongst these losses, which it required the utmost fortitude, even of his impassive character to sustain. During one of the sorties made by the besieged, his favorite nephew, a youth who had endeared himself to all his comrades by his high spirit and manly beauty, was slain, together with his intimate friend the Chevalier de Polastron. For some time, the possession of the two corpses, was the object of a fierce conflict between the rival forces, and a bloody struggle raged around the slain. At length however, the defenders succeeded in driving away the foe, and bore the remains of the unfortunate knights in sorrow back into the town. Keenly as La Valette felt this blow; all the love of his childless old age, all the hopes of his family pride, having been centred on the youth; still he felt that, were he

to display any signs of grief, it could not but be prejudicial to the spirits of those who beheld him. When therefore his friends commenced to condole with him in the calamity which had befallen him; "I think," said he, "no more of the loss of La Valette, then of any other of our brethren who have been slain before the enemy. All are alike my children, and all are equally dear to me." Thus did the stern old man sacrifice the natural feelings of affection to a rigid sense of duty; and hide the anguish of his soul under an appearance of indifference, the reality of which he could not feel.

Whilst the garrison were being thus reduced, the army of Mustapha was faring but little better. Encamped upon an arid rock, amidst the scorching heat of summer; deficient in stores and provisions; a fearful pestilence had for some weeks decimated their ranks, and caused a far greater havoc amongst them, than even the swords of the garrison. Their continued failures had rendered them desponding to the last degree; and the policy of Mustapha had gone far towards inducing a spirit of degeneracy amongst his bravest troops. He had proposed the expedient of giving a constant succession of assaults, without any real or determined effort at forcing an entrance, purely for the purpose of fatiguing the defenders with constant alarms; but the result of his policy had this evil effect on his own troops, that

they had become accustomed to yield before their antagonists; and it was now almost impossible to force them into any real or continued struggle. They repeatedly murmured aloud at the protracted nature of the siege, and demanded to be led away from the island, which they declared, it was clearly not the will of Heaven that they should succeed in taking.

A great and constant jealousy had, from the first, existed between Mustapha and Piali, the rival commanders of the Ottoman forces. So long as Dragut had remained alive, this feeling had been suppressed; and that freebooter had, by mutual though tacit consent, been permitted to take the lead in conducting the attack upon St. Elmo. But when his death had ended all need of any further disguise, the ill-will of the two commanders towards each other broke out with increased virulence. Each was more intent upon depriving his rival of the honor of success, than he was upon the main object of the expedition; and each felt that, if he was not himself to be the main instrument in the capture of the town, he would rather that the attempt should fail utterly, than that the other should reap the benefit of success.

Whilst such animosities as these were rankling in the breasts of the leaders, and such a spirit of degeneracy was depriving the prostrate army of all energy and discipline, it is not surprising that the end of August should have found them still no further ad-

vanced in their efforts, and the beleaguered city as far from their grasp as ever. Mustapha had indeed succeeded in reducing the garrison to the point he desired ; but now that the critical moment had arrived, when his prey seemed within his reach, he was no longer able to secure his conquest ; and his own force appeared in but little better case than their opponents.—Such was the state of the rival combatants after the siege had lasted for two months, that it required but little to turn the scale on either side.

La Valette had been urged by his council to abandon the Bourg and Senglea, and to retire to the Castle of St. Angelo, which would be more easily defended, and where he would be no longer harassed by attacks on so many different points ; but the intrepid chief declared he would not yield an iota, and that he would maintain every inch of his ramparts to the very last. Eagerly and anxiously had the garrison looked for assistance from Sicily throughout this weary period. Constantly had they received encouraging messages, and assurance of speedy succour from the dilatory Viceroy ; but the messages were delusive, and the succour came not. Day after day, week after week, glided by.—July had come and gone, August was following rapidly in its wake, and yet there was heard no sound of rescue, and they were still left to trust their safety solely to the

strength of their own right hands, and the determination of their own invincible spirits.

A large body of knights, who had been unable to arrive in time for the commencement of the siege, had assembled in Sicily, to the number of two hundred; and a considerable force of Spanish soldiery only awaited the order to embark, and hurry to the scene of action; but still their galleys lay inactively in the port of Syracuse, and no movement was made; although the protracted defence of Malta had already aroused the enthusiastic admiration of Europe.

At length, overcome by the remonstrances of the knights, Don Garcia gave the order of embarkation, and with an army of eleven thousand men, set sail from Syracuse on the twenty fifth of August. A violent storm unfortunately overtook his fleet, whilst on their short passage; and they were so much dispersed and damaged by its effects, that he was compelled to return to Sicily to refit. This was however promptly done, for all were eager to proceed, without delay, to the rescue of the heroic defenders of Malta; and on the sixth of September the fleet once more weighed anchor, and that same evening entered the port of Melleha, on the north of the island. Here the army was disembarked, and Don Garcia returned with his fleet to Sicily, to bring over a fresh reinforcement.

Mustapha had received intelligence that this aid

had been preparing for the garrison, but its lengthened delay had lured him into the hope that it would never really set sail. He had moreover decided in his own mind, that even if it did arrive, the efforts of its leader would be directed towards forcing the entrance of the great harbour; and against such a step he had taken ample precautions. What was his surprise and dismay therefore, when he learnt that an army had actually landed upon the island, and was marching rapidly upon the Bourg.—Rumour had, as is usual in such cases, greatly magnified the numbers of the advancing force; and the Turkish commander began to fear, lest he should be surprised in his entrenchments, and his entire army cut to pieces. He gave therefore an order for immediate embarkation. The artillery and stores were carried off, and throughout the night of the 7th September, his men laboured with far greater diligence and zeal in removing their guns, than they had originally shewn in their disembarkation. The sounds of departure were not lost upon the defenders, and with gladdened hearts they listened to the constant rumbling of wheels, which throughout the night marked the movement going on in the Turkish camp.

With the first dawn of day, they sallied forth, and took possession of the trenches and posts which had been abandoned by Mustapha. With willing hearts and eager hands they laboured at the demolition of

those batteries and lines, which it had cost the enemy such an expenditure of time and blood to erect; and in a few hours the labor of months was destroyed. The banner of St. John again waved over the ruined fort of St. Elmo, and every point of vantage ground which Mustapha had seized, was now once more in their hands.

It was not long however, before more correct intelligence, as to the numbers of the reinforcing army, reached Mustapha; and he was dismayed to find that he had acted with far too great precipitation, in abandoning his ground without an effort, to so small a force; an act which, on his return to Constantinople, would in all probability, place his head in the greatest danger. A consultation was held on board the Admiral's ship; where, by a small majority, it was decided that the army should once more disembark, and advance into the interior of the island, to meet their new foe.

This decision caused the greatest dismay and consternation amongst the disorganised army, who had trusted that their labors and perils were at last ended; and that, if they were debarred from reaping the glory, consequent on the capture of Malta, they might at all events ensure their safety by a prompt and timely retreat. With the utmost difficulty and reluctance, a body of about seven thousand men were landed in St. Pauls bay, whither the fleet had

proceeded, so soon as the re-occupation of Fort St. Elmo by the knights, had rendered the Marsa Muscetto no longer a safe harbor for them; and with this force Mustapha advanced to meet the enemy.

When the Viceroy had landed his army, he had placed them under the command of a Spanish officer, named Della Corna, second to whom was Alvarez de Sande, a knight of St. John, who had on former occasions greatly distinguished himself. The former officer, having received from La Valette timely notice that a body of Turks had re-landed, and were advancing against him, had entrenched his army on the crest of a hill near the Citta Notabile, in a very strong and difficult position, where he could with facility have resisted any attack on the part of the enemy. The knights however, who with their friends and followers had been formed into a battalion by themselves, were not prepared to abide by this judicious and cautious arrangement. They were burning with eagerness, at once to cross swords with their hated foes, and to avenge in the best blood of the Moslem, the loss of so many of their brethren, who had already fallen in the defence of Malta. No entreaties, no commands could restrain their impetuosity, and they openly declared that, if they were not promptly led to the attack, they would rush upon the enemy single handed, and endeavour to cut a passage through them to their friends in the Bourg.

Délla Corna perceived that he could not prevail against their impetuosity, and decided therefore upon taking the greatest possible advantage of the enthusiasm which fired his troops. No sooner did Mustapha's army make their appearance at the foot of the hill than a general advance was ordered. Down rushed the Maltese battalion, their White Cross banner waving in their front, and their brandished weapons gleaming in the sunshine, as though eager to be bathed in Infidel gore. The Turks, who had been brought to this point, only with the greatest difficulty, were struck with a panic at the first furious onset of the Christians, and scarce waiting to strike a blow, they turned at once, and fled with precipitation. In vain did Mustapha strain every nerve to rally his flying troops, and bring them once more to the fight; twice was he unhorsed, and more than once did he, with his own hand, cut down the foremost of the fugitives, in the vain endeavour to stem the torrent of flight. The general terror was too great and too universal for him to withstand; and he was himself carried away with the stream.

On came the Christians, heedless of aught but revenge, and marking their career by the corpses, whom they left strewn on their path. Every precaution was neglected, all order was lost; even their very armour was cast aside, that they might act with the greater vigour and promptitude against their

unresisting adversaries.—In tumultuous disarray they reached the waters side, and strove, if possible to prevent the embarkation of the Turks. Here however they were brought to a sudden check. Mustapha, before advancing into the Island, had left a body of harquebusiers, under the command of Hassem the Algerine corsair, to protect the point of embarkation, and this force had been so judiciously posted, that when the knights came streaming in confusion to the spot, they were received with such a discharge, as almost to threaten their annihilation. A combat ensued, in which they fared but badly: several were taken prisoners, and the remainder would in all probability have bitten the dust, had not Della Corna drawn in sight at this critical moment, with the remainder of his army in firm array. The prisoners were speedily retaken, the Janissaries driven on board their ships, and Malta at length cleared of the last of her foes.

The siege was now over: Mustapha, with the shattered remains of his army, was wending his way in disgrace and shame, to Constantinople, to meet the angry glances of his sovereign; who during a lengthened reign had, until this moment scarcely ever known defeat; and nothing was left to the victors, but at once to advance upon the town, and greet their friends in the Bourg.

A joyful meeting it was which then took place.

The haggard and almost ghastly countenances of the garrison, seamed with many a wound, and attenuated by hardships and vigils, were now lit up with a proud consciousness of the brilliant success they had attained. As friend met friend, and were clasped in each others arms, all felt that, on that day, one of the noblest feats of arms had been achieved, which the history of that age could record. The heroic spirits who conducted the defence of Malta, through all its difficulties and all its dangers, to so glorious a conclusion, have long since returned to that dust from whence they sprang ; the names even, of but too many of them, have been lost to the world ; still, the memory of their great deeds remains as fresh and as green as though it were a thing of yesterday ; and the name of Malta is never mentioned, even in this present age, without calling up a picture of the scenes enacted there during the summer of 1565.

The banner of St. John no longer floats over the ramparts of the island ; the fraternity itself is, if not utterly annihilated, at all events reduced to little more than a nonentity ; still there are none, amongst those who now occupy their place, who would refuse to yield their just tribute of admiration and applause, at the heroism and endurance, which had successfully sustained such mighty and protracted efforts, and had protected the home of their-

adoption from the polluting presence of the Infidel invaders.

English hearts and English swords now protect those ramparts which formerly glistened with the ensigns of the Order of St. John; and should occasion ever demand the sacrifice, the world will find that British blood can be poured forth like water, in the defence of that rock, which the common consent of Christianity has entrusted into her hands. On that day, the memory of this great siege will have its due effect, and those ramparts, already watered with so much noble blood, will once again witness deeds of heroism, such as shall rival, if they cannot excel the glories of the great struggle of 1565.*

* For a more detailed account of this great siege, the reader is referred to a "History of the Order of St. John," written by the author of this work; and which is now in the press, being published by Messrs. Longman and Co.

CHAPTER V.

Preparations for the commencement of a new town.—Its inauguration.—Scarcity of money.—A fictitious coinage is resorted to.—Transfer of the Convent to Valetta.—Apportionment of the ramparts to the different languages —Erection of the Auberges and St John's Church.—Inscription on the Tomb of La Valette.

THE army which Mustapha led against Malta, had originally consisted of thirty thousand men; which the subsequent reinforcements, brought by Dragut and Hassem, had swelled to about thirty eight thousand. Historians have differed as to the amount of loss which they sustained during their three months siege, but the most moderate computations have placed it at not less than twenty five thousand men; whilst that of the defenders was, in proportion, equally severe; two hundred knights, two thousand five hundred soldiers, and seven thousand inhabitants having lost their lives during the protracted struggle.

One great cause of the ill success which attended the efforts of the besiegers, was undoubtedly the jealousy which subsisted between the rival commanders Mustapha and Piali ; owing to which no cordial co-operation was ever maintained between them. Another cause was the defective generalship of the former, in permitting such frequent succours to reach the defenders unchecked ; by which means they were aided materially in protracting their resistance. The difficulty which the besiegers experienced in finding provisions and water on the barren rock where they were encamped, added materially to their miseries, and was the means of introducing that pestilence amongst them, from which they suffered far greater losses than from the swords of the defenders. Yet, after all due allowance has been made for these circumstances in favor of the garrison, the result must still appear marvellous, when the disproportion in the numbers of the respective armies is considered. It must be borne in mind moreover, that not only was the numerical superiority of the Turks so great, but also that their force was composed of the very flower of the Ottoman army, being principally Janissaries and Sipahis, all of them veteran troops, who had earned renown and discipline, in many a battle field, before they landed in Malta, only to be worsted beneath its ramparts.

The rage of Solyman at the defeat of his arms was

terrific, and he vowed a deep and bitter revenge on the fraternity who had so humiliated the glory of his reign. Preparations were at once set on foot in the dockyards and arsenals of Constantinople, for the fitting out of an expedition, on a far more stupendous scale than the one which had recently failed, and the aged monarch, impressed with the idea that his presence was absolutely necessary for the success of his arms, determined to proceed in person to the destruction of Malta.

La Valette received timely notice of these new preparations, from the spies whom he had maintained within the walls of Constantinople; and as he felt that in the present ruined state of his fortress, the exhaustion of his garrison, and the emptiness of his treasury, it would be impossible for him to sustain another siege, he had recourse to a very pardonable act of treachery, and by the same underhanded agency through which he was always supplied with intelligence, he caused the dockyard at Constantinople to be set on fire, and all the galleys and other materièl there collected to be destroyed. The explosion of the numerous magazines which stood within the range of the conflagration, spread the devastation far and wide, and postponed the possibility of any further attempt against Malta for an indefinite period. Before Solyman could repair the disaster, and redeem the vow he had made, he died; and thus

relieved La Valette from all further dread on his behalf.

That chief therefore, at once prepared to re-establish himself within his ruined bulwarks. In this decision he was at first warmly opposed by many of the most influential members of the convent : they argued that the experience of the late siege had taught them how exposed was their position in the Bourg. Overlooked from the Coradin hill on the one side, and Mount Salvator on the other ; with the vital point of Mount Sceberras most difficult to retain, owing to the narrow extent of ground at its extremity, on which to place a fort, they considered the site so defective, as to render it a work of impossibility to fortify it adequately and judiciously. They proposed therefore, now that they could do so without dishonor, whilst the fame of their recent victory was still ringing with loud acclaim throughout Europe, to abandon the island as untenable, and once again to retire to Sicily. To this design La Valette would not, for one moment, listen. His renown, and that of his Order were, he considered, inseparably connected with the island that had been the scene of their heroism ; and he determined to maintain his post, through every danger, and in spite of all difficulties.

In this design he was encouraged by all the monarchs of Europe, who were most desirous that so formidable a barrier, as Malta had already proved to

Infidel invasion, should still be retained and strengthened, as far as possible.—They had marked their sympathies with the Order and its Grand Master, in every possible way. At Rome, a general jubilee was held, and in all the crowded churches of that city, a public thanksgiving was offered up for the unparalleled success of the Christian arms. Pius the Fifth further sent La Valette a Cardinal's hat, as his predecessor had done, ninety years before, to D'Aubusson; but La Valette, who probably despised the proffer, as beneath his sovereign dignity of Grand Master, declined its acceptance, under the plea that it was not compatible with his other duties. Philip of Spain sent him, as a memorial of the event, a present of a magnificent sword and poignard, mounted in gold, and enriched with diamonds and other precious stones.

Encouraged by these tokens of admiration and sympathy, the Grand Master conceived that the present was a favorable opportunity for carrying out the project, which he had originally devised with the engineer Quinzan de Montalin, prior to the siege, but which had then been postponed from want of funds and time. The position of Mount Scerberras, with reference to the other portions of the harbor, was such, as to render its occupation and retention a matter of the most vital necessity. At the same time, it had already been proved by experience, that it

was impossible to construct a fort upon the limited space at its extremity, sufficiently extensive to maintain itself against the attacks of a powerful foe. In order therefore to obviate this difficulty, and also to prevent an enemy from taking up a position upon any part of the peninsula, he contemplated the occupation of its entire extent, by enclosing it within the limits of a stupendous work, whose land front should extend to the water on either side; and within the enclosure thus made, he proposed the establishment of a new town.

Envoys were dispatched to the various courts of Europe, to solicit aid in this gigantic undertaking, the exhausted condition of their treasury rendering it utterly impossible for the Order to execute the work without the most liberal assistance from all quarters.—La Valette had dispatched his emissaries at a most favorable juncture: the sympathies of the world ran strongly with him; and those monarchs who had anything to dread from the aggressions of the Moslem, were most ready to contribute towards any project, which should add to the general defence of Christendom. The King of France gave 46,000 crowns, * the Kings of Spain and Portugal each

* The Maltese Crown or Ecu is the present Scudo and amounts to two francs or about twenty pence of British currency. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries however its relative value was somewhat higher, being nearly equivalent to two shillings.

30,000, and the Pope 25,000, in addition to a Jubilee, which he proclaimed for the purpose, and which, although it only took effect in France, produced a considerable sum of money.

Pius also dispatched his chief engineer, Francesco Laparelli, to aid the Grand Master by his advice and professional skill. The design of most of the principal works of Valetta may be attributed to this engineer; the general idea only, having been sketched by La Valette. Matters being thus prepared for commencing operations, the 28th March 1566 was selected, as the day for laying the first stone of the new city, which La Valette designed, with pardonable vanity, should be called Valetta, adding to it, as was common in those days, the epithet "*Umilissima*". The Bourg was, in memory of the recent triumph enacted within its ramparts, to receive the proud title of the Citta Vittoriosa; and the Citta Notabile, the ancient capital of the island, was from this moment destined to yield its long established supremacy, and to sink into insignificance, under the somewhat contemptuous appellation of the Citta Vecchia.

The ceremony of the inauguration was performed with the utmost pomp. The entire extent of Mount Sceberras was covered with pavilions, whose snowy whiteness shone clearly in the bright sun light; and the gay pennons, which fluttered in the breeze from their summits, added to the liveliness of the scene.

From all quarters, strangers had flocked to the spot, eager to witness the ceremonial, who by the gayness and brilliancy of their attire, added materially to the general effect.

At an early hour, La Valette left the Bourg in solemn procession, accompanied by all the Grand Crosses, Bailiffs, and other dignitaries of the Order, then resident in Malta, and preceded by the clergy, at whose head was the Bishop, the leading ecclesiastical dignitary of the fraternity. Arrived at Mount Scerberras, the Grand Master took his station beneath an ample pavilion, erected for the purpose on the proper spot, and there performed the operation of laying the first stone at the corner of St. John's Bastion. The stone was duly lowered into its place, after the mortar had been spread beneath it by the honored hand of La Valette; and when it had been duly tapped with the mallet, and examined with the square, it was pronounced correctly laid.

Loud rang the notes of the trumpet, to announce the auspicious fact to the thousands who had crowded round the spot, but louder far than the shrillest notes of the clarion, burst forth the shout, with which that enthusiastic multitude hailed the event. Warm glowed the chivalric heart of La Valette within him, at this spontaneous note of acclamation; and well indeed might the noble veteran, and those around him, rejoice; for that shout was truly the

knell of all the hopes, which the Infidel might have entertained, of ever witnessing their banner floating over the captured fortress of Malta.—It was the inauguration of a new era, during which the island was to rise from a comparatively insignificant position, until it had attained a rank amongst the strongholds of Europe, equalled but by few, and excelled by none.

Beneath the stone which he had just laid, had been deposited a number of coins, in gold and silver, bearing on the one side a representation of the new city, with the motto *MELITA RENASCENS*,—and on the other, the date of the ceremony of inauguration. It is also recorded that a Latin inscription was affixed to the stone, to the effect that the Grand Master La Valette, in memory of the late siege, and for defence against future attacks, had determined to found a new city, which he had commenced on the 28th of March 1566. This inscription not being now visible, must have been fixed upon the inside face of the stone, but it was probably precisely similar to that which was subsequently placed over the *Porta Reale*; and which, on the occasion of the restoration of that gate in 1853, was carefully replaced on the new structure, as an interesting relic of the foundation of the city, although a sad drawback to the architectural beauty of its general design. This inscription is indeed, simply an extract from the records of the council, which bear the following entry.

Die XXII mensis Martii MDLXVI.

Fr. Joannes de Valletta Sacræ Domus Hosp. Hier. M. Magister periculorum anno superiore a suis militibus populoque Meliteo in obsidione Turcica perpersorum memor de condenda urbe nova eaque mœniis arcibus et propugnaculis munienda inito cum proceribus consilio die Jovis XXVIII Martii MDLXVI. Deum Omnipotentem Deiparamque Virginem numenque tutelare D. Jo. Baptistam Divosque cœteros multa precatus ut faustum fœlixque religioni Christianæ fieret ac Ordini suo quod inceptabat bene cederet prima urbis fundamenta in monte, ab incolis Xeberas vocato jecit eamque de suo nomine Vallettam, dato pro insignibus in parma miniata aurato leone, appellari voluit.

It may be interesting to add the names of the dignitaries of the Order, who were present on the occasion when this most important decree was registered: they were as follows,

Reverendus Dominus Magnus Magister Frater JOANNES DE VALLETTA.

Admodum Reverendus Dominus Episcopus Melitensis Frater DOMINICUS CUBELLES.

Reverendus Prior Ecclesiæ Dominus Frater ANTONIUS CRESSINUS.

Reverendus Maresciallus Dominus Frater GULIELMUS COPPIER.

Reverendus Hospitalarius Dominus Frater JACOBUS
DERQUEMBOURC.

Reverendus Magnus Conservator Dominus FRATER
PETRUS DE JUNYENT.

Reverendus Admiralius Dominus Frater LUDOVICUS
BROGLIA.

Reverendus Prior Sancti Cegidii Dominus Frater
LUDOVICUS DU PONT.

Reverendus Prior Alverniæ Dominus Frater LUDO-
VICUS DE LASTIC.

Reverendus Prior Campaniæ Dominus Frater JOAN-
NES AUDEBERT DIT LAUBUGE.

Reverendus Baiulivus Caspis Dominus Frater LUDO-
VICUS DE LALZEDO.

Locumtenens Reverendi Magni Commendatorii Frater
JOANNES DE MONTAGU.

Locumtenens Reverendi Turcopolerii Dominus Frater
OLIVERIUS STARCHI.

Locumtenens Reverendi Magni Baiulivii Alemanie
Dominus Frater CONRARD SCOUALBACH.

Locumtenens Reverendi Cancellarii Dominus Frater
DON FERDINANDUS D' ALASCON.

Locumtenens Reverendi Thesaurarii Dominus Frater
CAROLUS DE LA RAMA.

The record of the ceremony of the 28th March follows immediately after the above decree, and runs as follows.

Inchoatio Civitatis ad Montem Sancti Elmi. .

*Die XXVIII Mensis Martii MDLXVI fuit incepta et inchoata Civitas ad Montem Sancti Elmi, cuiquidem civitati Vallettæ nomen impositum fuit. Faxit Deus illud faustum et felix.**

There is something very grand and touching in the simplicity of this brief entry, so different from the pompous verbosity, customary in similar cases.—Doubtless the homely prayer with which it concludes, was earnestly rechoed within the breasts of all present upon that occasion.

A warm controversy has long raged in Malta, in connection with these and other cotemporary entries of the council, as to whether the name of Valette should be spelt with one, or with two *l's*. There is no doubt that these entries shew the letter doubled; but it should be borne in mind, that they were all written by a secretary, whose correctness in the matter cannot be assumed as incontrovertible; whereas in the signatures of La Valette in his own handwriting, which are still visible in the Record Office, the word is spelt Valette. It may therefore be assumed that, as the Grand Master probably knew the correct method of spelling his own name, the

* On the 28th day of the month of March 1565 a city was commenced and inaugurated on Mount St. Elmo; to which city the name of Valletta has been given. May God render it happy and prosperous.

word should be written in accordance with the practice he himself always adopted.

The foundation of the new city was not effected without considerable opposition ; and for some time afterwards, La Valette was frequently called upon to defend the prudence of the work he had undertaken. On the 3rd April in the same year, the Viceroy of Sicily, Don Garcia, arrived in Malta, accompanied by several engineers and other officers, whose judgment on such matters might be considered valuable. The opinion which they expressed was, that the step taken had been injudicious ; and that, as the project stood, it was far too stupendous ; that it should have been restricted to the enclosure of a much smaller space, intended only to cover the Fort of St. Elmo, and should have consisted of but three bastions towards the land side, instead of four, as proposed by Laparelli.

Their objections were however overruled by La Valette, who pointed out that, were the space within his proposed line of works more restricted, it would be impossible to construct a town, of the magnitude necessary for his requirements ; since he not only contemplated the transfer of the convent to that point, but also that a large portion of the inhabitants, who were now crowded into the Bourg and Senglea for the sake of protection, should establish themselves in the new city. The work now went bravely on:

ditches were sunk on all sides, where the natural configuration of the rock did not form an escarp of a sufficient height, and with the material thus raised, the ramparts were constructed. For the first year, nothing was attempted beyond the fortifications; no one being desirous of building within the city, until its defence had become somewhat assured. As already stated, the Papal engineer, Francesco Laparelli had the supreme control of the new works; being much assisted, in all matters of detail, by Jerome Cassan, the engineer attached to the Order.

La Valette watched the progress of his favorite design with the warmest interest, and the keenest anxiety. Day after day did he spend on the spot, amidst the workmen; directing, encouraging, and altering whatever he saw amiss. The dignitaries of the Order, anxious to follow the example of their chief, being themselves deeply interested in the matter, and perhaps not without a hope of currying favor by the exhibition of their zeal, were also constantly to be seen, wandering amidst the piles of stone with which the entire mount was strewn.—Artificers were imported from all the neighbouring countries, the island itself being unable to provide a sufficient number of skilled workmen; and for a long period, between eight and nine thousand persons were employed daily. The pay of this large body of men amounted to a thousand scudi a day; a sum which is recorded

as very stupendous by the writers of the time, but which would only have yielded an average of something about three pence a man. It may however be calculated that from one to two thousand of the laborers employed on the work were slaves, and this would somewhat reduce the numbers of those in the receipt of pay, and consequently swell the amount of their average. Still, even under the most liberal calculation, it is clear that the payment of skilled labor in those times was remarkably small, when compared to what it is at present.

Such a drain upon the treasury, as an outlay of a thousand scudi a day, could not be long maintained; and eventually La Valette was compelled to reduce his workmen to so considerable an extent, as only to expend that amount weekly. Even this payment could not be eventually kept up, as the contributions, which had been promised, came in but slowly. Many members of the fraternity, whose only means of aiding in the good cause, consisted in appropriating to that purpose, a portion of the annual revenues of their commanderies, could not make their payments as rapidly, as had been anticipated. It became therefore necessary, either to suspend the works altogether, or to provide some other temporary expedient for the supply of funds.

In this dilemma, it was proposed that a spurious money should be issued, at a fictitious value; to be

faithfully redeemed, so soon as contributions came in. The suggestion was adopted, and the experiment at once tried. A quantity of copper money was coined, bearing on one side, the effigy of two hands clasped in friendship, and on the other, the inscription, *Non æs sed fides*, "Not money but trust."—So high did the reputation of the Order stand, for honor and rectitude, that no difficulty whatever was experienced in the circulation of this money; and the reliance thus placed on their good faith, was amply justified by their subsequent conduct; all the fictitious coin thus issued, having been faithfully called in, as remittances were received from Europe.

During the remainder of the life of La Valette, the works were continued in with unabated vigor, nor did his death, which occurred in 1568, cause any relaxation in the general zeal. His successor, Peter De Monte, was as strongly impressed with the necessity of the work, as La Valette had been; and he no sooner assumed the reins of government, than he announced his intention of pushing forward, to a speedy conclusion, the labors of his predecessor.

Towards the end of 1570, the fortifications being then in a very advanced state, the engineer Lapparelli took his leave of the Grand Master, and left the further prosecution of the work to Jerome Cassan, the ordinary engineer of the fraternity, under the control of the Commander De la Fontaine, to whom

that branch of superintendance had been specially delegated.

It had been originally intended to have lowered the ridge of Mount Sceberras, so as to have formed a level plateau from end to end, upon which the town was to have stood ; but after some little progress had been made with this work, it was found that it would entail so vast an expenditure, both of time and money, that the idea was abandoned, and the town was built upon the natural inclination of the ground; thereby causing those steep hills, and numerous flights of steps, which have drawn down upon themselves the anathema of so many a weary pedestrian. The portion of the ridge, which was levelled before the work was stopped, was that where the Strada Reale now runs, and the Palace, Piazza San Giorgio, and other adjacent buildings stand.

So eager was De Monte to bring his new city into a forward condition, that, although it was still in a very unfinished state, even as regarded the fortifications, he determined to move the head quarters of his convent there, as soon as possible ; and on the 17th March, 1561, the transfer was effected, and the Order changed their residence from their old home in Vittoriosa, to the rising city, where they continued to dwell, until the period of their annihilation, at the end of the eighteenth century.

In order to encourage private building as much as

possible amongst the fraternity, De Monte caused a decree to pass the council, that any knight, who built a house for himself within the new city, should have the privilege of its disposal by will at his death; a power which he did not possess with respect to the rest of his property, all of which, excepting one fifth portion, merged at his decease into the public coffers. This boon greatly encouraged the constructive tendencies of the fraternity; and ere long, a series of magnificent mansions, as in those days they were justly considered, commenced to rise in all directions. It had been originally intended to build the Grand Masters palace upon the site where the Auberge de Castile now stands, but the nephew of De Monte having, at this period, erected a large pile of building in front of St. Georges square, which appeared better suited for the purpose, it was purchased from him, and appropriated as a palace. It is indeed most probable that, when the young De Monte commenced this work, he contemplated its purchase as a residence for his uncle; since it could hardly have been conceived that he himself would ever require so palatial and extensive a pile.

The celibacy of the knights has had a great effect upon the construction and arrangement of these houses. Whilst the reception rooms are numerous, spacious, lofty, and richly decorated, the sleeping apartments are few in number, cramped in space,

and, for the most part, bear an appearance of meanness, but little consistent with the grandeur that marks the remainder of the buildings. • Deprived of the blessings of domesticity, the knights required none of those comforts which adorn an English home, and lavished all their care upon such apartments as were destined for the reception of their friends.

When the line of fortifications had become sufficiently advanced, the usual division was made of posts for each language. The land front consisted of four bastions : St. Peter, made the post of Italy ; St. James, containing a cavalier which dominated over all the surrounding works, the post of France ; St. John, also containing a cavalier similar to that of St. James, the post of Provence ; and St. Michael, the post of Auvergne. To the right of this latter bastion, and overlooking the Marsa Muscetto, was St. Andrews bastion, which was appropriated as the post of Spain. The line of ramparts from that point to St. Elmo, facing the Marsa Muscetto, was the German post ; and that from St. Elmo to St. Peters bastion, facing the Grand Harbor, and completing the circuit, was made the post of Castile.—St. Elmo itself was garrisoned by detachments from all the languages, as also was St. Angelo, on the other side of the harbor : the old posts of the different languages, in the Bourg and Senglea, being still retained by them, in addition to their new lines of defence.

Each language also constructed for itself an Auberge, a building in which the Conventual Bailiff, or head of the language, resided, and where all its members, when resident in Malta, took their meals, and conducted their business. The Auberge of Provence stands in the Strada Reale, and is now a Club house. The Auberge of Auvergne is now a police office, and court of justice; also in the Strada Reale. The Auberge of France is in the Strada Mezzodi, and now contains the Commissariat establishment. The Auberge of Germany was pulled down some years since, and the Collegiate church of St. Paul erected on the site, through the munificent liberality of the Queen Dowager of England. The Auberge of Castile stands at the head of the Strada Mercanti, and is converted into an Officer's barrack.—This building possesses far more architectural pretensions than any of the others, and may be considered the most beautiful structure in Malta, its fine elevated site aiding materially to set off the grandeur of its general appearance. The Auberge of Italy stands by the side of that of Castile, and is now a Civil Arsenal; and the Auberge of Aragon, which stood near that of Germany, is now the residence of the Bishop of Gibraltar.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, when the Anglo Bavarian language was formed, a new Auberge was erected for their use, facing the Marsa Muscetto, near St. Elmo.—This structure, which

though extensive, is far plainer than any of the others, is now, like that of Castile, an Officer's barrack. A site at the head of the Strada Reale, now occupied by a number of mean buildings, is generally pointed out as the locality of the English Auberge, but it does not seem probable that any erection of the kind ever existed. The English language had been annihilated upwards of thirty years before the town of Valetta was commenced; and at the siege of Malta, as we have already seen, only one English knight is known to have been present: it was not therefore probable that any steps were taken towards providing an Auberge, farther perhaps than setting apart that site, in case the language should ever be revived.

The church of San Giovanni, which was erected by La Cassiere, the successor of De Monte in the magistracy, was made the Conventual church, in the place of that of San Lorenzo, which had enjoyed this pre-eminence, whilst the Order had resided in the Bourg. The side aisles of the new church were divided into chapels, one of which was appropriated to the use of each language, and here all the most celebrated members of the language were interred.

Within a crypt, below the church, are deposited the remains of L' Isle Adam, La Valette, and some of the other Grand Masters; and at the foot of the tomb of La Valette, lies Oliver Starkey, his faithful Latin secretary, the last Englishman who can be said

to have regularly held the dignities of that language, viz, the Turcopoliership and the Bailiwick of the Eagle.—The Latin inscription on the tomb of his chief is from the pen of Starkey.—

*“ Ille Asiæ Libiæque pavor, tutelaque quondam
Europæ, et domitis sæva per arma Getis,
Primus in hac alma, quam condidit, urbe sepultus
Valetta, æterno dignus honore, jacet.”*

CHAPTER VI.

Commencement of the Floriana—Objections to its trace—Visit of Fiorenzola—Commencement of the Margarita lines—The Cottonera lines—Erection of Fort Ricasoli—Improvements to St. Elmo and St. Angelo—State of the fortress at the close of the seventeenth century

FOR a period of seventy years after the first inauguration of the city of Valetta, no further additions were made to the fortress. The energies of the fraternity had been so completely devoted to the strengthening and adornment of their new home that, beyond its limits, all was neglected.

At length however, in the year 1635, the Grand Master, Anthony de Paule, being desirous of making the most effectual preparations to resist a rumoured invasion of the Turks, called in an Italian engineer, named Floriani, to inspect the existing fortifications, and to suggest such additions as he might consider necessary, to place them in a state of better defence.

On the 17th October in that same year, Floriani presented to the council, a project for a new enceinte, to enclose, not only the existing works of Valetta, but also a considerable space in its front ; his new line running across the peninsula of Mount Sceberras, nearly at the point of its junction with the main land.

This report was prefaced with a long list of the defects, under which he considered the defences of Valetta labored ; concluding with the remark that, although he had, during his professional career, been engaged in the fortification of many towns, and had consequently obtained a considerable amount of experience in the art, still he did not consider himself gifted with such high talents, as would enable him to convert a bad work into a good one ; and that he was compelled therefore to suggest the enclosure of the first line within a second, whose trace should be more in accordance with his ideas of perfection.

The Council were taken completely by surprise at this unlooked for report : they had been accustomed to regard the enceinte of Valetta as a most powerful front, with its deep ditch and stupendous escarp : the whole of the stone for the city having been quarried from the former, until it had attained a magnitude, greater than that of any other artificial ditch in Europe. They could not conceive that a work, which they had always regarded with such great

favor, could in reality be so defective as was reported by Floriani; and they therefore named a commission, to investigate the matter, and to report upon the new project prepared by that Engineer.

The opinion of these commissioners was diametrically opposed to that of Floriani. They considered that the existing land front of Valetta was excellent, and only required a few additions to make it perfect; whilst they, at the same time, found every possible fault with the proposed new enceinte. Amongst other objections, they urged that, whilst the centre of the trace was too strongly fortified, its flanks were extremely weak, and exposed to batter from the neighbouring heights.

Rendered uncertain, as to what steps he should take, in this diversity of opinion; De Paule, who entertained the highest possible regard for the talents and experience of Floriani, determined on dispatching an envoy into the various courts of Italy, with plans of the existing works, and proposed alterations; in order that he should consult the leading engineers of that country, and collect their various opinions on the matter. The Chevalier de Verteua was selected for this office, and he was expressly directed to visit the head quarters of the rival armies of France and Spain, who were at that time carrying on a war in Piedmont. From this mission, de Verteua returned on the 25th February 1636, and reported to the

council, that the general opinion of the engineers he had consulted, was decidedly antagonistic to the new project; and that they all preferred the addition of some fresh works to the existing enceinte.

Notwithstanding all these unfavorable reports, the project of Floriani was sanctioned, and commenced during the course of 1636. It is uncertain whether the Grand Master De Paule was still alive, at the moment when the work was inaugurated, since he died in the month of July 1636. He was succeeded in his dignity by Paul Lascaris, under whose rule the work was prosecuted with great vigor for two years, during which period, a large amount of money was expended, and the new enceinte much advanced.

In 1638, an ecclesiastic, named Father Fiorenzola, a monk of the Order of St. Augustin, visited Malta. Strange as it may seem, for so holy a man to have excelled in the art of fortification, it is nevertheless the fact, that the reverend father's talent in that line had gained him a very high reputation, and that his engineering labors materially aided him in attaining the dignity of a Cardinal, to which he was raised a few years subsequently. The report of Father Fiorenzola upon the fortifications, compiled at the urgent request of the Grand Master, was presented on the 28th September 1638. He highly commended the original trace of Valetta, which he considered well adapted to the site, and most

judiciously arranged: the only suggestion which he made, to increase the strength of this portion of the works, being the addition of three demilunes, or ravelins, to its three curtains; after which, he declared that the place might be considered impregnable. On the other hand, he objected entirely to the new work then progressing in the suburb, and already known as the Floriana, in honor of its designer. He considered that this enclosure occupied a soil so rocky, that it could never have been made use of by an enemy, to construct approaches to the place; whereas the new work would, if captured, be in itself a material assistance to the besiegers, in providing them with cover.—He also made the same objection that others had previously put forward, viz, that the centre of the line was encumbered with a vast quantity of useless work, whilst the flanks were too weak, and their bastions too acute. He wound up his remarks on this head, by stating that although a sum of 80,000 scudi had been already expended, it would be far better, at once to destroy the work, than to spend double that amount to complete it. •

The locality which Fiorenzola considered the most dangerous, and consequently the most vital point to secure, was the hill of Sta. Margarita, which dominated over the Bourg, and rendered its defence a matter of great difficulty. The harbor itself lay completely

open to fire from this point, which when occupied by an enemy, would prevent the retention of the smallest craft by the garrison, and thus, Valetta finding itself cut off from all assistance, would not hold not long, but would yield without difficulty, from the simple effects of a blockade.—A project was submitted by him, for the occupation of these heights by an enceinte, which should bring them within the limits of the works of the Bourg.

This new design met with very general approval on all sides: the Floriana was at once discontinued, and the works on the Margarita hill commenced. Three bastions, with their connecting curtains, were traced and completed; after which, from want of funds, no further progress was made, till the year 1716.

The Chevalier de Verteua, who in obedience to his instructions, had visited all the courts of Italy, had, amongst other places, presented himself at that of the Grand Duke, and after minutely informing him of the present state of the fortifications, and of the new project of Colonel Floriani, he requested his advice, and that of his leading engineers upon the subject. No answer was given to this request until the year 1639, when the Grand Duke wrote to Lascaris, sending him a plan of what he considered the most advantageous method of fortifying the Valetta front. This design was compiled from the joint suggestions

of John Medici, Marquis of St. Angelo, his general of artillery: of Francis Bracelli, commander of the forces at Leghorn: and of Captain Contagallina, a man of very high reputation as a soldier.

The report which accompanied this design, stated that the existing fortifications having been constructed at a time when the art was still in its infancy, and when but little experience had been gained, were no longer calculated to resist a determined attack, or to make a protracted defence; that Colonel Floriani had therefore been fully justified in proposing a new enceinte, larger and of greater capabilities than that of Valetta; but that the manner in which he designed to attain his object was faulty in the extreme: the centre being too strong, and the extremities too weak; the one being only covered by a little tenaille, thrown out in advance; and the other being so small, and so acute, that it could not possibly make a lengthened resistance. These defects had arisen from the fact, that the front had been traced upon a straight line. It was therefore much to be desired, that time and means should be forthcoming for carrying out the new design then forwarded, which would completely enclose the first; and the extremities of which, being retired behind the centre, would leave no option to an enemy, but force him to make his attack from the front.—As the details of this project were not preserved, and

no plan of it remains, it is not easy to trace its exact design; but it may be conceived to have partaken of the character of a large crown work, enclosing the entire Valetta front.

It was furthermore suggested that, if this project were considered too large and impracticable, at all events, four large counterguards should be added to the Valetta bastions, which, by the size of their flanks, would remedy the imperfection of those in the main line. These were at once commenced, in accordance with the plan forwarded, and were long afterwards known as the counterguards of the Marquis of St. Angelo.

In the following year, viz 1640, that officer paid a personal visit to Malta, to inspect the works, and suggest improvements. He urged that the lines, commenced by Cardinal Fiorenzola, should be at once completed, enclosing Burmola in its enceinte; and that the point of Corso should be occupied with a fort, of which he gave a trace. The main features of this design were adopted, when that work was executed in the year 1670.

The great preparations for war, made by the Turks in 1645, led the Grand Master to fear that this stupendous armament might affect his island; and in order to be better prepared for resistance, in case of the worst, he issued a general citation to his knights, to repair at once to the convent: at the same

time he demanded of all the princes of Europe, the assistance of men of talent and experience, who might assume the command of his troops, and take charge of the various works of defence. Amongst others, who responded to this call, was the Viscount d' Arpajou, who at once proposed the resumption and speedy completion of the Floriana, which had been, for some time discontinued.

The Count de Pagan, who arrived in Malta at the same time, made a lengthened report to the Grand Master, in the course of which he suggested that improvements should be made in the works of Valetta, Floriana, the Bourg, and the heights of Sta. Margarita. As regarded the Valetta front, he deemed that its principal defect was the smallness of its flanks, and their great height, which prevented a large portion of the ditch from being seen. This evil he proposed to remedy, by providing additional flanks on a lower level, and retiring them from view by means of orillons, or rounded flanks, to be thrown forward in their front. The suggestion was carried into effect, and left the trace of the Valetta front very much what it now is.—In order to remedy the principal defect of the Floriana, which, having been traced on a straight line, was very badly flanked at its extremities, and much exposed to the enemy's batteries, particularly on the side of the Marsa Muscetto, he was of opinion that the two curtains, to the

right and left of the centre bastion, should be retrenched, so as better to cover the ground, and at the same time to gain a flank from the interior. He also suggested that the Margarita lines should be forthwith completed, and that their trace should be so far extended, as to comprise the whole of Burnola within the enceinte; in order that they should completely cover the harbor from the heights, and, at the same time, provide a place of shelter for the inhabitants of the surrounding country, in time of danger.

The Chevalier de Clerville, one of the leading engineers of the King of France, coincided with the Count de Pagan in his opinion; but further suggested the construction of a horn work, outside the Porta Reale, which should see right and left. He also proposed to add some redoubts to the interior of the Floriana. The Chevalier Palaviciny, after recapitulating many of the same proposals, further urged the necessity of the occupation of the point of land at the entrance of the Grand Harbor, opposite to point Dragut, with a fort, of which he gave the trace, very similar to that originally designed by the Marquis of St. Angelo; but which was not executed until the year 1670.

It would have been imagined, that after so many reports had been made, and so much trouble taken, to obtain the opinions and advice of the leading en-

gineers of Europe, the works would have been prosecuted with the utmost vigor, and the energies of all directed towards the completion of those points which had been most generally considered defective; but such was far from being the case; for, the Turks having turned their arms against the island of Candia, and Malta appearing no longer directly menaced with an invasion, the convent relapsed into tranquillity, and no further steps were taken to increase their security. For upwards of twenty years, did the invasion of Candia extend, and during all that time, nothing was effected in Malta; but in the year 1670, that place having fallen, the old dread of a Turkish attack once more sprang up, and with the greater reason, since the enemy had obtained a point of appui, so close to the island.

The Grand Master, Nicholas Cotoner, partly with a view to adding further security to the convent, but more perhaps, with the hope of immortalising his name, by the construction of so stupendous a work, proposed the erection of a line of great extent, which should secure the harbors, strengthen the fronts of the Bourg and Isola, and give an extensive place of shelter for the inhabitants of the country, in case of a descent.—He called in Count Valperga, then the chief engineer to the Duke of Savoy, to consult with him upon his new design, and also to superintend the completion of the other unfinished works; more

especially the Floriana front, which was still in a very imperfect state.

Valperga arrived in Malta on the 9th of February 1670 ; and having carefully examined the site of the two towns, the heights of Sta. Margarita, and the surrounding country, formed the opinion that the security of the harbor imperatively demanded the entire occupation of those heights by a work of defence. He produced therefore a plan, not very different from that of Cardinal Fiorenzola, but more extended ; in which, having made use of that part already commenced, he added such portions as would connect the fronts of Isola and the Bourg. This project however, was, by no means, sufficiently grand and stupendous, to satisfy the magnificent ideas of the Grand Master, who was not to be contented with the completion of a work, designed by his predecessors, and he insisted upon the production of some new plan, far more extensive. Thus urged, Valperga was not long, ere he presented his Eminence with a second ; which, enclosing the whole of the Margarita heights within its limits, rested on the extremities of the ditches of Senglea and Vittoriosa. This new line consisted of eight large bastions, and two demi-bastions, forming together an enceinte, not far short of five thousand yards in length.

This project was precisely suited to the taste of the Grand Master, and he warmly approved of the

entire detail.—The other members of the Convent were however by no means so cordial in the matter, and a very strong feeling of dissent speedily manifested itself. Cotoner was possessed of sufficient influence in his council, to carry his point ; and the construction of the new lines being decided on, to the exclusion of all other works, the Grand Master laid the first stone, in the bastion of St. Nicholas, on the 28th August 1670, with the same pomp and ceremony, as that with which the city of Valetta had been commenced.

The Grand Master had no sooner inaugurated the new fortification, than he announced his project to all the princes of Europe ; trusting that they would be struck with its grandeur ; and perhaps also, not without hope that he might receive some assistance, in carrying out his stupendous undertaking. In both of these ideas, however, he was much mistaken, for he was favored in answer, with a series of objections and criticisms on his favorite project, which must have proved sorely trying to his temper. The King of France objected to the plan *in toto*, as being far too grand, and beyond the powers of the Order, either to construct, or to place in a proper state of defence, in case of an attack. General Berreta, the engineer of the States of Milan, was also not sparing in his remarks. In the first place, he stated that it did not appear to him how, in so irregular a surface as that

of Malta, any spot could be found, sufficiently level, to construct upon it a regular fortification, of so great an extent as that proposed by Valperga ; and that it would necessarily result, that in endeavouring to carry out this extreme regularity of design, some portions of the line would be far weaker than others. He thought that the engineer would have shewn far greater proofs of talent and capability, had he endeavoured to suit his design to the ground, instead of striving to force nature into following his lines ; which he sneeringly stigmatized as a simple game of rule and compass.—He further remarked, that the lines of defence being too short, it had become necessary to multiply the number of bastions; which would act most prejudicially on the ravelins, making them too confined. He also disapproved of the ditches being parallel to the faces of the bastions, as proposed by Valperga ; this method of tracing them having the disadvantage of preventing their being seen by the whole of the opposite flanks, unless they were made so extensive as to become highly objectionable.

It may be remarked, with reference to these observations, that the original project for the Cotonera lines, as they were called, in honor, of the Grand Master, under whose auspices they were commenced, provided for ravelins in each front, which works however, have never been executed. In fact the trace,

as proposed, was in precise accordance with, what is now termed, Vaubans first system, as then practised by that great engineer, who was, at that time, rising into eminence, and whose method was almost universally adopted in all fortifications of the period.

The Count de Verneda, chief engineer to the republic of Venice, was also far from complimentary to the new design. In his report to the Grand Master, which is dated the 30th July 1671, he records a series of objections to the work as it then stood, of which the following were the principal. He stated that the space included in the new lines appeared to him very small, when compared to the great length of the work; and that, with the same eight bastions and two demi-bastions, it would be easy to enclose, not only the Great Harbor, Isola, and the Bourg, but also Mount Salvator, and Renella Cove, which could be done by giving rather more extent to the lines of defence, as he shewed in a plan, which accompanied his report.

Whilst upon the subject of the extent of ground enclosed in the Cotonera lines, it may be remarked that it has always appeared singular, that the Coradin hill, a most salient and vital point, should have been excluded from the enceinte, when a slight extension of the trace could easily have brought it within the circuit.—There exists however, in the palace of Malta, a picture of the Grand Master

Cotoner, painted during his life time, in which he is represented, holding a plan of his new lines ; and in this plan, which is very distinct, the works are made to embrace the Coradin hill. This evidence of the original intentions of Cotoner, cannot be taken as at all conclusive ; still, in the absence of any more authentic proof, it may suffice to raise a doubt whether, after all, it had not been his original design to include that dominant point.

Verneda further objected strongly to the cavaliers, which were proposed for the centre of each bastion, somewhat similar to those already constructed in the Valetta front, within the bastions St. James and St. John. He conceived that they could be breached by the same batteries which played upon the bastions, or destroyed by the same mine ; and that they would entirely prevent the construction of those retrenchments, which would become necessary, to check the attack, so soon as a practicable breach had been established in any of the faces. He objected warmly to the ditches being parallel to the faces of the bastions, but on the other hand approved of the use of *fausse-brayes*, which he considered excellent defences for the ditches ; confirming his opinion by several examples, which had occurred in Candia, during its late siege, where he had been the chief engineer in charge of the defence. He also disapproved of the other works which Valperga had

designed; especially a horn work, enclosed within a crown work, which that officer had proposed in the Floriana front, to provide a more extensive flank fire, and to enable the defenders to see into the valley which runs in advance of those works:— Verneda considered that the front of this work was far too small for its amount of projection; and that it was consequently incapable of much defence.

Valperga had designed a small fort for the island in the Marsa Muscetto, as also one for the point of Corso; to both of which Verneda objected, as being too small, and but ill adapted to their sites. The former of these works was never undertaken, but the latter had been already commenced, owing to the liberality of the Chevalier Francesco Ricasoli, who contributed the sum of 30,000 scudi for its construction. The Grand Master in consequence, decreed that, in commemoration of this munificence, and to stimulate others to similar acts, the fort should take the name of its founder, and it has ever since been known as Fort Ricasoli. The date of its commencement was 1670. Although this work was executed from a design given by Valperga, yet, as that engineer closely followed the trace of a project originally submitted by the Marquis of St. Angelo, its merits and defects belong chiefly to the latter officer, although they have been undoubtedly endorsed by the former.

Notwithstanding the violent opposition, which his favorite design had thus encountered, Cotoner was not to be deterred from its prosecution; and an enormous outlay was made annually on the rising bulwarks. Four commissaries were appointed, who were charged with the responsibility of providing every thing requisite for carrying on the work with vigor, and for whose accomodation, houses were built in the gorges of the bastions; so that they should be enabled to remain continually upon the works. All the artificers in the island were assembled on the spot, and others were brought over from the neighbouring sea-ports: bakeries and cisterns were established for their convenience, and every effort was made to secure the utmost promptitude in the prosecution of the work.

During all this time, Count Valperga was busily engaged in tracing the lines of his new fortification and in superintending its progress. At length, having seen it fairly advanced, and no longer in need of his presence, he handed over its further direction, to the Chevalier Blondel, with a revised plan for the Horn work and Crown work at Floriana, which were constructed in accordance with this design, in 1682.—For ten years the works of the Cotonera were carried forward with extreme vigor, under the eye and encouragement of the Grand Master, who felt his honor intimately bound up with the fortification

to which he had given his name; and during this time, a vast amount of expenditure was incurred. At his death, which took place in 1680, the ramparts had, throughout, been raised to the height of the cordon, although none of the outworks or ditches had been commenced; and as, by this time, the treasury had become almost completely exhausted, his successor Carraffa, who had always been an opponent to the project, gave directions that its further prosecution should be suspended.

He was himself, indeed, intent upon carrying on new works, on his own account, and had immediately upon his accession to the supreme dignity, turned his eyes towards the completion of the Floriana front; which, in spite of the enormous outlay that had, from time to time, been made upon it, was still in a very unfinished state. He therefore wrote to Don Carlos de Grunemberg, engineer to the king of Spain in Sicily, requesting him to visit Malta at his earliest convenience; with which invitation that officer promptly complied, and arrived in the island on the 14th March 1681.

Following the example of his predecessors, a lengthened report was, as usual, presented to the Grand Master, containing all his views on the works as they existed, and his propositions for their improvement. His attention appears on this occasion, to have been principally directed towards Fort Ri-

casoli, which he considered far too feeble for the important site which it occupied, and he proposed several additions and improvements to its trace, which however were never carried out.

In 1686, he paid a second visit to Malta, and on this occasion he not only proposed, but carried into execution, several works of considerable magnitude. In the castle of St. Angelo he constructed the four batteries, which rising, tier above tier, protect the entrance of the harbor. The lowest of these four, which is "*a fleur d' eau*" has been several times destroyed by the violence of the sea. It has now been decided, that it shall not again be placed in a state of repair, having been shattered during the gregalé of 1851.—It is a curious sight, and one which well marks the extraordinary power of the waves, to examine the huge masses of masonry, containing many thousand cubic feet of stone, which have been uprooted from their foundations, carried far away from the spot where they stood, and heaped on each other in the most extraordinary state of confusion.—The remainder of the batteries are however still bristling with guns, and form one of the most powerful defences to the harbor, that could possibly have been constructed.

Having thus added so materially to the security of this point, Grunemburg next turned his attention towards St. Elmo, with a view to greatly strength-

ening that post. Hitherto it had remained very much in the same position in which it had been left at the death of La Valette; consisting merely of the star fort, now turned Upper St. Elmo, with its cavalier. Grunemberg however, in 1687, commenced the construction of the surrounding works;—by means of which that fort is completely isolated, and raised to the importance of an inner keep. He enclosed the entire point with a bastioned line, which adds materially, not only to the defence of the fort, but also to that of the entrance to the harbor. Two of these bastions have become the last resting places, one of Captain Ball, who first governed the island, after its occupation by the British, and the other, of the celebrated Sir Ralph Abercrombie. They have, in consequence, been since respectively designated as Ball's and Abercrombie's bastions. Grunemberg further proposed the erection of a fort in the island of the Marsa Muscetto, but that design was postponed, and was only carried into execution forty years later.

Meanwhile, the fortifications of the Cotonera had been slowly progressing, under the charge of the Commander Blondel, to whose care they had been entrusted, at the departure of Valperga.—This knight appears to have been far more of an architect than an engineer, and lavished all his time, and the public money, on the construction of seven ornamental entrances into the enceinte, to the great detriment

of the rest of the work. Most of these elaborate gateways have never been made use of, but have always remained blocked up. Notwithstanding his extreme shortcomings as an engineer, Blondel remained in charge of the works for a period of thirty years, until his death, when his place was filled by the Commander de Vergnon. Doubts having arisen as to the competency of this officer also, the Grand Master, Raymond Perellos, called in Monsieur de Cologne, who had long acted as an engineer in the French armies, having served his apprenticeship in that science, under the celebrated Marshal Vauban. Although Cologne made many new projects and suggestions, it does not appear that any of his designs have been carried into execution, as he died almost immediately after his visit to Malta.

Such then, was the state of the fortress of Malta at the close of the seventeenth century. Valetta had been completed, and St. Elmo surrounded with an outer enceinte. The Floriana, though not perfected, was still sufficiently advanced for purposes of defence, and its horn and crown works were constructed.* The Cotonera lines had risen, throughout

* An aqueduct had been introduced into the city by Alof de Vignacourt, in the early part of the century. This work, which is nearly nine miles in length, brings water from a source in the Bengemma hills, into the heart of the town. For the first part of its course, the aqueduct is subterranean, but for the last four miles it is

their extent, to the height of the Cordon; and the remainder of the works of the Bourg, (now known by the name of Vittoriosa,) Isola, and St. Angelo, were much in the same position as they are to be seen at present. Fort Ricasoli had been built and occupied, and several towers had been constructed round the coast.

It might have been thought, that sufficient had now been done to ensure the security of the convent; the more so, as the Turkish empire, the sworn and natural foe of the Order, no longer menaced their existence with such constant alarms. The sixteenth century had witnessed the culminating point in the glory of that empire, under the sway of Solyman the Magnificent; and after his death, it commenced slowly but surely to decline. Throughout the seventeenth century, the onward course of this degeneracy had been steady, and almost uninterrupted; so that at its close, the Order felt themselves relieved from the almost incessant dread of invasion, under which they had previously labored.—Still their fortifications continued to multiply. Every succeeding Grand Master determined to add his quota to the general pile; and we shall find, during the eighteenth century, as great a mania for the construction of

carried upon arches, and has always proved of the utmost possible benefit to the inhabitants; far more so, than many of the stupendous and useless works of later days.

fresh ramparts, as had been necessary two centuries before, and wherever an unoccupied spot could be discovered, there the indefatigable fraternity continued to labor at the erection of some new, and often unnecessary work. Engineers were always to be found, ready to suggest the necessity of fresh bulwarks; and designs were speedily forthcoming, to tempt the ambition of successive Grand Masters, whenever they displayed the slightest tendency to a mania for construction; so that the fortress continued gradually to extend itself, long after all dread of an attack from the Ottoman empire had ceased to exist.

CHAPTER VII.

Arrival of Tigné and Mondion in Malta.—Estimate of works still considered necessary.—Erection of Fort Manoel.—Fresh arrivals of engineers and artilleryists from France.—Their pay and allowances.—Proposed armament for Malta.—Manufacture of gunpowder.—Construction of Fort Tigné.

THE first great event in the history of the Fortress, which marked the early part of the eighteenth century, occurred in 1715. The Grand Master, Raymond de Perellos, had long besought the King of France to dispatch some competent engineers to his assistance; the building mania having taken as strong a hold on his mind, as on those of his predecessors. For a long time Louis had been unable to accede to his demand; his own numerous wars having found ample occupation for all his engineers: at length however, in the commencement of 1715, the request of Perellos was complied with; as may be seen by a perusal of the two following letters on the subject. The first is from Perellos to his ambassador at Paris.

“Most Venerable dear and well beloved Brother.

“You wrote to us some time since, that it would be impossible for us, to obtain a good engineer, so long as the war lasted, and that Monsieur de Pelletier, who is the responsible minister, had promised that, so soon as peace should be proclaimed, he would direct one of the highest rank to come hither, although he would only be permitted to remain for some months in Malta, and then to return to France: wherefore, now that peace has been signed, we have decided upon writing to request that you should remind him of his promise, and at the same time beg him to choose a person, from whose designs we may be enabled to complete and perfect our fortifications. We trust that he will select some one who has had the chief direction of a siege, or who has conducted a defence with honor; and as soon as he has been nominated, you will pay him, by the hands of the receiver, whatever may be necessary for his voyage as far as Marseilles; and when he shall have arrived here, we will recompense his services, and will not allow him to depart without ample gratification. You may rest assured that we are well pleased with you, and we pray God that he may have you in his holy and worthy keeping.”

(Signed) PERELLOS.

“Dated at Malta on the 28th October 1714.”

In consequence of this letter, the following dispatch

was forwarded to Malta from Louis XIV, together with the two French engineers. Mons. de Tigné and Mons. Gion de Mondion.

“Letter from the King to His Highness the G. M. of Malta.

“My Cousin.—Although I can entertain no doubt, but that Messieurs de Tigné and Gion de Mondion, the engineers who are proceeding to Malta for the service of your Order, will receive every mark of your approval, particularly when you have discovered that they are as capable and talented, as they are zealous for your weal, I am nevertheless desirous of recommending them to you once again, and of informing you, that having been always well satisfied with their services myself, I consider, that in selecting them for the purposes for which you have requested assistance, I have fulfilled your wishes in the best possible manner. You may also rest assured, that being equally desirous of giving to your Order marks of my protection, and at the same time, of shewing the esteem which I entertain for yourself in particular, I shall do the same with pleasure on all future occasions. Upon which I pray God that he will have you, my Cousin, in his holy and worthy keeping.”

“Given at Versailles this 28th January 1715.”

(Signed) LOUIS,

(Countersigned) COLBERT.*

* The originals of these two letters are both written in French.

The engineers, alluded to in this letter from the Grand Monarque, arrived in Malta in the early part of 1715, and at once commenced a careful inspection of the fortress. On the 14th September, that same year, they submitted a joint report, in which they entered into very minute detail, as to what they proposed for the completion of the works. Tigné then left the island, and entrusted the execution of the project to Mondion, who remained in Malta for that purpose.

In the following year however, the Grand Master renewed his solicitations for a second visit from Tigné; and his request being granted, that officer again returned, and on the 15th September 1716, he submitted a second report, accompanied by an estimate of what still remained for execution.—It will perhaps be the easiest manner of explaining the views of Mons. de Tigné as to the fortifications of Malta, and at the same time, of shewing their position in the early part of the eighteenth century, if this estimate be annexed. It will also be interesting, as shewing the extraordinary difference in the cost of such works at that time, from what it would be at present. The total estimate only amounts to £35,000 and it is not too much to say, that the same amount of labor and material could not now be obtained for much less than £500,000. In the original estimate the sums are entered in scudi, but they are here

converted into English money, for the convenience of the reader.

ESTIMATE

Of the works necessary, and indispensable to complete the fortifications of Malta.

THE CITY OF VALETTA.

To render the powder magazines in the cavaliers near the Porta Reale bomb proof.	£ 200
To restore and renew the banquettes and parapets round all the fortifications, but particularly on the land front.....	„ 200
To restore the retired flanks on the bastions St. James & St. John.....	„ 50
To repair the communications in the ditches, counterguards, &c.	„ 60
To construct caponieres in the ditches, to communicate with the counterguards ...	„ 60
To form ramps in the counterscarps of the counterguards	„ 60
To restore the interior of the counterguards...	„ 40
To make caponieres in the ditches of the counterguards	„ 60
To restore the covert way throughout the enceinte.	„ 300
To complete the defective portions of the glacis.	„ 300
Total for the city of Valetta...	£1330

FLORIANA.

To make the necessary communications along the flanks, covered from the Coradin hill and the Marsa Muscetto island.....	£ 100
To make the proposed retrenchment in the bastion of Provence.....	„ 1000
To complete the parapet on the Salvator curtain.,,	50
To complete the centre bastion.....	„ 200
To construct banquettes throughout the front. ,,	30
To make the proposed retrenchment behind the Capuchin convent	„ 500
To make bomb proof magazines in the Salvator bastion, and in the Capuchin bastion. ,,	500
To make several traverses and caponieres in the ditches	„ 100
To make the proposed new gate with the lunette in front.	„ 500
(This is the Porte des Bombes, completed five years later.)	
To make two bomb proof magazines in the interior of Floriana.....	„ 300
To complete the interior of the Horn work ... ,,	50
To complete the Crown work.	„ 100
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Total for Floriana“... ..	£3430

To construct the proposed fort, on the island in the Marsa Muscetto.....	£2500
(This is the Fort Manoel, built ten years later.)	
To construct a large battery, closed at the gorge, upon point Dragut.	„ 300
	<hr/>
Grand total for the Valetta side...	£7560

SENGLEA.

To casemate the flanks of the small bastion, on the right of the island, exposed to the Coradin hill.....	„ 100
To bring the ditch in front of the gate under the fire of the Bourg.	„ 20
To make a covert way along the head of the work.....	„ 70
To construct the proposed retrenchment before the magazines, including the purchase of the necessary houses.	„ 500
	<hr/>
Total for Senglea...	£ 690

THE BOURG or VITTORIOSA.

To construct a covert way along the front....	£ 500
To restore the parapets of the Couvre Porte...	„ 20
To continue the covert way as far as the Co- tonera.	„ 50
To complete the new post of Castile.....	„ 150

To repair the two advanced bastions of the Post of Castile.....	£ 50
To renew the small tenaille at the foot of the Port.....	„ 20
To excavate the ditch of the retrenchment, and form a counterscarp.....	„ 60
To repair the bastions throughout the front from sea to sea.....	„1000
To restore portions of the counterscarp.....	„ 60
To form parapets where deficient.....	„ 60
To form a lower flank to bastion San Lorenzo, the higher flank not being in a state to carry guns.....	„ 50
To make the proposed retrenchment in the Salvator bastion.....	„ 400
	£2420

FORT SANTA MARGARITA.

To complete the glacis and covert way before the three bastions at the head of the fort.	£1000
To form ramparts in the interior of the fort...	„ 600
To make the communications from the fort to the Bourg.....	„ 500
To make the communication from the fort to Senglea, in accordance with the last pro- ject.....	„6000
	£8100

• THE COTONERA LINES.

To complete the parapets which have been commenced, and of which two thirds remain to be done	£ 600
To make a communication at the foot of the ramparts for the passage of troops.....	„ 100
To make three powder magazines in the form of retrenchments, in the gorges of three of the bastions.....	„ 900
To make three more powder magazines, in three of the other bastions.....	„ 600
To make a tenaille in front of one of the gates.	„ 50
To construct a counterscarp in those parts of the ditch where there is no rock	„1000
To level the ditches throughout the enceinte.	„1500
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Total for the Cotonera...	£4750

—————
FORT RICASOLI.

To reform the covert way, to construct places of arms and traverses.....	£ 100
To make a demi counterguard to the left side of the fort, which is too exposed to both sea and land.....	„ 200
To do away with the steps in the salient angles of the covert way, and to place them in the re-entering angles.....	„ 20

To make two Caponieres of communication, from the fort to the ravelins, and six traverses in the ditch	£ 40
To construct a large traverse under the right bastion	,, 15
To repair the parapets and banquettes of the fort	,, 20
To construct the proposed retrenchment from sea to sea.....	,, 600
To construct the large circular battery to defend the entrance of the harbor.....	,, 100
	<hr/>
Total for Ricasoli...	£1095

RECAPITULATION.

Valetta.....	£1330
Floriana.....	,, 3430
Island of Marsa Muscetto:	,, 2500
Battery on Point Dragut...	,, 300
Senglea	,, 690
The Bourg.....	,, 2420
Sta. Margarita	,, 8100
Cotonera	,, 4750
Ricasoli.....	,, 1095
	<hr/>
Total...	£24,615

In the report, to which this estimate is annexed, are several observations on the state of the works, some of which are rather applicable, even in the present time ; or at all events were so, until very lately. The following instance, amongst others, may be taken. The Chevalier states : “ The bastions are, “ many of them, in a very bad state ; they have “ been, for a length of time, handed over to the occu- “ pation of private individuals, who dwell there, and “ for their own convenience, have made little gardens, “ planted trees, and built small houses, destroying “ the platforms, the merlons, and the embrasures.”*

The works which Tignè, and his assistant de Mondion, had designed, were carried on with great spirit, until the year 1720, when Perellos died ; after which they were discontinued, until six years later, when Manoel de Vilhena determined to carry out the project, so often brought forward, of erecting a fort upon the island in the Marsa Muscetto.

The necessity of a work of this description had been constantly urged by all the engineers who visited Malta, and by none more strongly than Tignè. He has left behind him a most voluminous report upon this subject, in which he handles the subject with much judgment. He points out that it is

* How admirably would this description have suited the state of the Sa Maison counterguard ; formerly the residence of Lady Julia Lockwood, until it was cleared out in the year 1853-54.

useless to continue strengthening the land defences of Valetta and Floriana, as long as there remains so vital a point as the whole length of the Marsa Muscetto, almost unprotected. As the fortress stood, at the time Tigné wrote, it certainly was in a most dangerous position on this side, and would have afforded great facilities to a besieger. The absence of a ditch with counterscarp and glacis, left the ramparts exposed to breaching, even to their very foot. In close proximity, there stood the points of Tasbieg, the island, and point Dragut; where batteries might, with every facility, have been constructed, the fire from which would speedily ruin the walls in every direction, when nothing would remain, but for the assailants to cross the harbor in boats, in a similar manner to that which they had adopted in their first assault on the Spur bastion at St. Michaels, during the siege of 1565.—By thus forcing their way into the very heart of the town, all the elaborate defences, constructed at such vast expenditure of time and money, on the two land fronts, would be turned, and consequently lost.

In order to prevent such a consummation, Tigné proposed the establishment of a considerable fort upon the island, which would not only secure that point from occupation by the besiegers, but also see in reverse the point of Tasbieg, and prevent the establishment of either trenches or batteries on that

spot.—He, at the same time, had proposed the erection of a casemated redoubt, in the form of a lunette, upon Point Dragut, which in connection with the larger work, would, in his opinion, render the Marsa Muscetto quite secure.

Owing to the peculiar nature of the ground on the island, Tigné found himself compelled to restrict his trace to a square, but he proposed several outworks, which have never been carried out. At the point where the bridge connects the island with the main land, he designed the erection of a demilune battery of considerable strength; and half way between this point and the main work, a square redoubt, connected with both by a covered communication. Close in front of the main work he also proposed to throw out a small lunette, so that, according to his intention, the entire island would have been occupied.

Some idea of the cheapness of labor and materials may be gathered from the fact, that even including these three works, the entire estimate for the fort was only £2,500. Whether, as is so often the case in modern estimates, this sum was exceeded in actual execution, it is impossible to say; still the fact that so small an amount was put forward, proves what facilities the Order enjoyed for the erection of their bulwarks. The fort, when completed, received the name of the Grand Master, under whose auspices it had been raised, and was called Fort Manoël.

The addition of this work to the general defences was the only step taken in that direction, by Manoel; and for many years, nothing further was commenced. Occasional rumours indeed still sprang up of expeditions and invasions on the part of the Turk, but they gradually diminished in frequency, and were less and less heeded, as the degeneracy of that empire became more marked and apparent.

In the year 1749 however, an attempt was made to add to the security of the island of Gozo, and a new fort was commenced near the landing point from Malta.—The insignificant ramparts which surrounded its chief town Rabato, were with justice considered as unequal to any serious defence; whilst its position in the centre of the island ensured the capture of any garrison who might attempt to maintain it. The site selected for the new work however, was such, that its abandonment could be followed by the retreat of the garrison to Malta. It was never known who was the author of the design of the fort, even at the time of its execution. It had been discovered in an old plan, without date or signature, and must have been the work of one of the numerous engineers who, at different times, had been called in to inspect the works of Malta: general opinion has attributed it to Tigné. It was erected chiefly at the expense of the Bailiff de Chambray, and in consequence received his name.

At this time Emanuel Pinto was occupying the dignity of Grand Master, a post which he filled for thirty three years. During his rule, a fearful conspiracy was discovered amongst the Mahometan slaves, retained in the island, which was fomented by the Turkish Pasha of Rhodes, then residing as a prisoner of war at Malta, and in aid of which a Turkish fleet was to have visited the island. The discovery of this plot once more raised the old alarm of Ottoman invasion, and a new inspection of the fortifications was decreed.—As usual, the French government were solicited to dispatch engineers to Malta, and a party was promptly selected, who arrived in the island in 1761.—It may perhaps not prove uninteresting to detail the pay and allowances given to these officers and their subordinates, during their sojourn in Malta.

The chief engineer, named Pontleroy, and the chief artillery officer, named Louvicon, each received £16 per month, with 15 rations of bread, valued at one penny each, and 8 rations of forage, valued at seven pence half penny each. The three assistant engineers, and the two captains of artillery each received £12 a month, 8 rations of bread, and 4 of forage. The two lieutenants of artillery received £8 a month each, with the same rations as the captains. One draughtsman was attached to each branch, who received £ 4 a month, without rations or forage.

The inferior branches were paid by a daily rate, which ran as follows. They were divided into three classes; viz, Gunners, Bombardiers, and Miners; each class having several grades.—The three serjeants at the head of the classes, received each a trifle over ten pence per day. The corporal of Bombardiers received eight pence, whilst the corporals of the Gunners and Miners were only paid seven pence halfpenny. The ampressade of the Bombardiers drew sixpence halfpenny; of the Miners five pence halfpenny; and of the Gunners four pence halfpenny: the simple Gunners drew three pence halfpenny, the Bombardiers ranged from six pence to three pence, and the Miners from five pence to three pence halfpenny.—This pay was established on the basis of that which they had been receiving in France.

Numerous lengthy reports were made by these officers, on the various branches submitted for their inspection. In the way of fortification little was elicited, beyond a recapitulation of that which had been so often previously enumerated. We find however many details of the Artillery; some of which it may not prove uninteresting to annex.—After a careful inspection, the following was submitted as a proper armament for the fortress and island generally,

Fort Ricasoli.....	{	12	24	pounder Guns.
		5	8	”
		2	6	”

St. Angelo.....	{	36	24	Pounder Guns
		3	8	"
		3	6	"
Senglea.....	{	6	24	"
		6	18	"
Left flank of St. Peters bas- tion	{	3	12	"
		3	6	"
St. Christophers bastion & Slaves barrack.	{	3	24	"
		3	18	"
		3	12	"
Hospital curtain, St. Lazarus bastion, & St. Ubaldesque curtain.	{	8	24	"
		4	12	"
		3	8	"
From the Ubaldesque cur- tain to the bastion St. George inclusive.	{	17	24	"
On the face above the Jews sally port.	{	8	24	"
On the left face of the same bastion, to sweep the part between Point Dragut and Fort Manoel.	{	4	12	"
On the small flank of the same bastion, which sweeps the entrance of the harbor.	{	2	24	"
On the right flank of St. Salvator bastion.	{	1	24	"
On the left flank of the same bastion.	{	2	6	"
		4	4	"

On St. Andrew's bastion and over the Marsa Muscetto gate.	{	2	18	Pounder Guns.
		3	12	„
		3	8	„

The above list, amounting to 149 guns, were specially required for the defence of the harbors, with the addition of eight 12 inch mortars at St. Elmo, and four at Ricasoli. The following is the demand considered necessary for the land defences.

The Cotonera.....	{	20	12	Pounders.
		54	8	„
Fort Ricasoli on the land side.	{	3	24	„
		3	16	„
		3	12	„
		10	8	„
		4	4	„
Fort St. Salvator.....	{	8	16	„
		4	8	„
		3	4	„
Fort Santa Margarita.....	{	18	24	„
		10	12	„
		20	8	„
		15	4	„
Senglea.....	{	8	12	„
		4	8	„
		4	4	„
The front of the Bourg, in- cluding the post of Castile.	{	10	24	„
		10	16	„
		6	8	„
		4	4	„

The land front of the castle of St. Angelo.	}	6	12	pounders.
Fort Manoel.....	}	12	24	„
		6	16	„
		6	12	„
		12	8	„
		6	4	„
For the fronts of Valetta and Floriana, including the bat- teries which face the Cora- din and Misida.	}	60	24	„
		30	16	„
		50	12	„
		60	8	„
For field service		40	4	„
Reserve guns.....	}	8	36	„
		2	33	„

Making a total of 445 guns of different calibres.

For the defence of the island in the various outstations, towers, &c.	}	81	24	pounders.
		47	18	„
		88	12	„
		137	8	„
		38	6	„
		4	4	„

together with forty two 12 inch mortars.

The following therefore becomes the gross recapitulation of the artillery required for the whole island.

8	36	pounders.	208	12	pounders.
2	33	„	323	8	„
272	24	„	48	6	„
58	18	„	84	4	„
57	16	„			

Making a grand total of 1060 guns, ranging from 36 pounders to 4 pounders; the favorite sizes however being 24 pounders, 12 pounders, and 8 pounders.

The following is the scale of ammunition considered necessary for the above armament.

<i>Guns</i>	<i>Shot</i>	<i>Powder in lbs.</i>
36 pounders	4,800	60,000
33 ,,	1,200	13,800
24 ,,	72,720	618,120
18 ,,	4,640	29,380
16 ,,	34,200	193,800
12 ,,	61,000	264,300
8 ,,	87,960	234,560
6 ,,	2,880	5,800
4 ,,	61,440	92,160

Making a total of 330,840 shot, and 1,511,920 lbs. of powder. For the mortars there were required 70,500 shells, and 289,700 lbs. of powder.

Also 120,000 grenades requiring 35,000 lbs of powder, 800 rampart muskets or wall pieces, requiring 1,200,000 bullets, and 60,000 lbs. of powder.

For musketry 1,335,000 lbs of powder, and for mines and other purposes 145,000 lbs.

The grand total of powder required for the fortress was therefore 3,876,620 lbs.

For the muskets there were necessary 2,700,000 lbs of lead.

For the guns 800,000 lbs of mitraille.

For the wall pieces 1,600,000 stones.

The above calculations are made for a siege of 150 days; and the powder allowed for each gun, has been calculated at the rate of one third the weight of the shot.

Before leaving this branch of the question, it may be well to say a few words on the subject of the manufacture of powder. The Order generally made their own gunpowder; and for this purpose there were two mills; one in the heart of Valetta, close to the hospital, and overlooking the Marina; the other in Floriana. Owing to the dangerous position of the former, the only branch of the manufacture carried on there, was the refinement of saltpetre; the remainder of the process being performed at the mill in Floriana.

These mills were capable of producing 8 quintals* of powder per week, at the following cost:—

TO REFINE THE SALTPETRE.

	†Sc.	tar.	gr.
8 quintals of unrefined saltpetre, at 38			
scudi per quintal.....	304	0	0
6 Quintals of wood, at 6 tarins, 10 grains			
per quintal	3	3	0

* A quintal is 176 lbs avoirdupois.

† A scudo is worthy 20 pence, the tarin, of which 12 go to a scude is worth about a penny and eight twelfths, and a grain is the 20th part of a tarin.

2 Rotoli of alum, at 6 tar. per rotolo. † ...	1	0	0
Labor of artificers	3	0	0
Cost of slave labor, and other minor ex- penses	1	9	0
Total... Sc.	313	0	0

From this outlay were produced 6 quintals of refined saltpetre.

TO MANUFACTURE GUNPOWDER.

	Sc.	tar.	gr.
6 Quintals of refined saltpetre, as above.	313	0	0
Labor of fabrication.....	56	0	0
1½ Quintal of charcoal at 4 sc. 6 tar. the quintal	5	4	0
¼ Quintal of sulphur at 3 sc. 6 tar. the quintal	3	4	0
Total... Sc.	377	8	0

Thus 8 quintals of powder, suitable for musketry, cost 377 scudi, making the price something under five pence halfpenny per lb.

When the above supply of 8 quintals weekly did not prove sufficient, the Order purchased their further requirements in France.—This however, at the time we are now writing of, viz 1760, was seldom, if

† A Rotolo is 1½ lbs avoirdupois.

ever necessary ; the old warlike spirit of the fraternity having completely died out, and the only use, to which gunpowder was put, being for salutes, about which they were always very particular.

Little now remains to tell of the fortress of Malta, save that crisis which transferred the island from the possession of its former masters to the British empire; and which expelled the knights of St. John from the home, where for two centuries and a half they had dwelt, with honor to themselves, and incalculable benefit to the maritime interests of Europe.

One last addition was however still made to the works, ere the fraternity were driven from the spot, and that was in the year 1793, when the Grand Master, Emanuel de Rohan, constructed a fort on Point Dragut, which has received the name of Fort Tigné, from the engineer who designed it. The same engineer, the Chevalier Tigné,* had some years previously, designed a treble range of casemates within the fort of St. Elmo, then intended either as magazines, or as a place of shelter for the inhabitants during a siege. These casemates now form the barracks of lower St. Elmo.

Such then was the position of the fortress, when the political and social convulsion, which burst forth

* This Chevalier Tigné must not be confounded with the engineer of that name, previously alluded to.

in France at the close of the eighteenth century, threw all Europe into confusion, and swept away the now useless fraternity, who still lingered on the scene ; a relic of the chivalry of olden times, though sadly degenerated from their former virtues. They were indeed only to be likened to the decayed bough which still remains upon the tree, but which the slightest blast is sufficient to snap. The shock which they were called on to sustain, was in truth a fearful hurricane ; and little is it to be wondered at that, ripe for falling as they were, they should have yielded without resistance to its first gust.

CHAPTER VIII.

Views of the French republic respecting Malta.—State of the fraternity in 1798.—Arrival of Bonaparte off the island.—Declaration of war and commencement of the siege.—Treason within the town and incapacity of Hompesch.—Surrender of the island to Bonaparte.

ONE of the first steps, taken by the revolutionary party in France, after their attainment to power, was the confiscation of the property of the French languages of the Order of St. John: a decree, which at one fell swoop, annihilated more than half of the entire revenue of the fraternity.—That revenue had, even prior to this event, been falling off for many years; and the public expenditure within the island of Malta had become gradually more restricted than of old. The fearful loss, in which they now found themselves involved, by this decision of the French assembly, necessitated a new and far greater curtailment of their expenditure; to such an extent indeed, as materially to distress the population of the island, who had long been taught to regard the Order, as

the source from whence their sustenance was to be derived.

The universal distress, which from this cause was generated throughout the population, was speedily followed by a strong spirit of disaffection to the fraternity. The philanthropic and seductive doctrines, promulgated by the leaders of the revolutionary party, attracted the hopes and aspirations of many amongst the more youthful and ardent members of the community; and ere long, the seeds of discontent germinated into a strong and uncontrollable revolutionary element.

For many years, the island of Malta had been a point of desire to the French government: the strength of its fortifications, and its position in the centre of the Mediterranean, rendered it a most desirable acquisition to a nation, anxious to obtain a naval supremacy in that sea; and steps had been taken, during a lengthened period, to attain that consummation. Probably however, it would never have been in the power of the effete monarchy of France to have wrested the fortress from the sway of the Order of St. John; that step was left for the young, vigorous, and unscrupulous republic to accomplish, and sagely did their emissaries lay the train for the success of the undertaking.

The principles of the new doctrines had spread rapidly amongst the French knights who still resided

in Malta, and the majority of the members of those languages were prepared for any step, tending to bring the island under the dominion of the republic. By them, and by the numerous emissaries, dispatched for the purpose by the French directory, the discontent of the Maltese was fostered and encouraged; and they were gradually led to regard the transfer of the island to the French, as a step likely to end all their miseries, and to be the commencement of a new era of general liberty, prosperity, and happiness. Strong therefore, though the bulwarks of Malta were, the Directory felt, that whenever they chose to throw off the mask, and to appear in open hostility against the island, they would be warmly seconded from within, not only by the Maltese inhabitants, but even in the midst of the fraternity itself, by those members, who were prepared to forget the vows they had pledged to their Order, whilst remembering only the attachment they still retained for their native land, in this new phase of its government.

The denouement was not long in arriving, and the last act of the drama was speedily played out.— In the early part of 1798, the world was thrown into general alarm, by the rumours, which spread every where, of an extensive armament preparing in the French arsenals of the Mediterranean, the destination of which was as yet unknown. The restless spirit of aggression, with which the infant

republic was embued, rendered every nation suspicious and uneasy, on the score of this vast armament, and preparations were on all sides set on foot for resistance, if necessary.

One power alone continued careless and inactive in the midst of the general alarm. Whilst the note of preparation arose in every other country of Europe, the island of Malta remained in a state of supine and indolent security. Warnings had been dispatched to the Grand Master, but they were unheeded. An ill placed, and most incomprehensible confidence on his part, joined to the most palpable treachery on that of his advisers, led to the engendering of a fatal sense of security, from which he did not awake until the enemy was at his door.—He had even received the most distinct notice of the destination of the French fleet from the Balliff de Schenau, the ambassador of the Order at the congress of Rastadt. That dignitary had written to him in the following terms.

“I warn Your Highness, that the expedition now preparing at Toulon, is intended against Malta and Egypt.—I have my information from the private secretary of Mons. Treilhard, one of the ministers of the French republic. You will most certainly be attacked: take therefore all necessary measures for defence. The ministers of all the powers, in alliance with the Order, who are now here, have received the

same information as myself, but they know that Malta is impregnable, or at all events in a position to offer a resistance of three months duration. Let your Eminent Highness therefore be on your guard. Your own honor, and the preservation of your Order are concerned in the matter. If you yield without a defence, you will be disgraced in the eyes of all Europe.—I may add that this expedition is looked upon here, as likely to prove a disgrace to Bonaparte. He has two powerful enemies in the directory, who have taken this opportunity of getting rid of him; Rewbell and Larevillière-Lepaux.”

Such a letter as this, must, one would imagine, have placed the Grand Master on his guard; but this was not the case.—Ferdinand de Hompesch, the only member of the German language who ever attained to the supreme dignity, was at this time holding that position, having succeeded Emmanuel de Rohan on the 17th July 1797. This prince conceived himself so secure in the friendly disposition of the French republic, that he scorned all preparations for resisting an invasion, which he felt assured was not intended against his fraternity, and the terror of which was, he conceived, merely a bugbear existing in the agitated minds of nervous and timid politicians.

Such then was the position of Malta, when on the sixth of June 1798, a French fleet, consisting of seventy transports, laden with troops, and convoyed

by two frigates, appeared before the island. Permission was demanded for a few of the vessels to enter the harbor and water, which was granted; two of the transports being admitted for that purpose. They gave out, that the object of their expedition was the attack of Alexandria, and conquest of Egypt; and that they were then awaiting the arrival of general Bonaparte, the commander in chief of the expedition, who was to join them off Malta with a large fleet.— On the ninth of June that officer made his appearance, and the whole French fleet, under admiral Brueys, lay off the port, in an attitude so evidently hostile, that a general panic and consternation instantly spread throughout the island.

The French consul Caruson, at this juncture, called upon Hompesch, with a letter from Bonaparte, demanding permission for the whole of the fleet to enter the harbor, and for his troops to be permitted to land. Such a request proved of itself, the object which the French general had in view; and to have yielded permission would have been simply to surrender the island without an effort.—Hompesch, by the advice of his council, returned for answer, that it was against the rules of his Order, and the treaty which they had made with France, Spain, and Naples in 1768, to permit the entry of more than four ships of war at a time. This rule he was not prepared to abrogate, but any assistance which he

could render to the sick, would be tendered with the utmost pleasure and promptitude. His letter concluded with the hope, that he might still trust to the loyalty and good faith of the French nation, with whom his Order had always lived in peace and harmony.

This refusal was taken on board the French flag ship, *L' Orient*, by Caruson, who at the same time informed Bonaparte that treason was rife within the town; tendering him a list, containing the names of four thousand persons, who were prepared to join the French party at the first signal of the commencement of hostilities. Bonaparte had long before, arranged his course of action; and this intelligence, so favorable to his views, rendered him the more prompt in carrying his plans into execution. Caruson did not again land in Malta, but forwarded the following letter to Hompesch, on behalf of Bonaparte, who did not deign to correspond personally with the Grand Master.

9th June 1796.—“Your Highness.

“Having been nominated to proceed on board the admirals vessel, with the answer which your Eminence made to my request, for permission to the squadron to water in your port, the commander in chief Bonaparte is highly offended that such permission should have been restricted to four vessels at a time; for how long it would not take for five hun-

dred sail at this rate to procure water, and such other necessaries as they are much in want of? This refusal has the more surprised general Bonaparte, since he is not ignorant of the preference which you have shewn to the English, and the proclamation issued by the predecessor of Your Eminence. General Bonaparte has resolved to procure by force, what should have been granted to him of free will, in accordance with the principles of hospitality which form the basis of your Order.—I have seen the stupendous armament which is under the command of Bonaparte, and I foresee that it will be perfectly impossible for the Order to make any effectual resistance.—It was much to have been desired therefore, that under such circumstances, Your Eminence, for the love of your Order, your knights, and the whole population of Malta, had proposed some measures of accomodation. The general has not permitted me to return into a town which he considers himself entitled to regard as an enemy, and which has no hope save in his mercy. He has however given strict orders that the religion, the property, and the customs of the people shall not be interfered with.”

It is asserted that when Caruson urged upon Bonaparte to permit him to return to the town, under the fear lest his family should be maltreated, the General replied “ If any thing happens to them, I will hold the Grand Master personally responsible.

He has refused me the water I demanded, and I will go and take it myself. Let us see whether he will be able to prevent me."

War was thus openly declared, and Bonaparte at once commenced to land his troops in St. George's Bay, having previously made himself master of the tower which protects that point of debarkation, and which yielded to him without a struggle.

The garrison, at this time, consisted of the following forces. First, 332 knights; of whom however, fifty were too aged to be available for any active service, and two hundred of the remainder, French knights, the majority of whom, either openly or secretly, favored the views of the invaders, and could therefore scarcely, be considered as of any value to the defence. Secondly the troops of the island; composed as under.

The Maltese regiment	500
The Grand Masters guard	200
The battalion of the men of war.....	400
The battalion of the galleys.....	300
Artillery men	100
Militia, formed into a regiment of Chasseurs...	1200
The crews belonging to the men of war and galleys	1200
The local Militia	3000
	Total... 6900

and this number could have been still further swelled by the enrolment of all the able bodied Maltese, who were bound to serve, if required, for the defence of their island, Had the same feeling of loyalty been present on this occasion, as that which actuated the garrison during the siege by the Turks, it would not have been in the power of the French general, so easily to wrest the fortress from the hands of the fraternity: but unfortunately, from the very commencement of hostilities, treason and disaffection had made themselves but too painfully apparent.

Within the council, no one talked openly of surrender, but no prompt measures of defence were taken. Hompesch himself was little better, under the circumstances, than a drivelling idiot; unprepared indeed, to yield, but unable to take the most ordinary precautions for the general safety.—Without the walls of the palace, treason stalked openly and undisguisedly. The emissaries of the republic were to be seen every where, discouraging the loyal, seducing the vacillating and wavering, and pointing out to all, the folly of attempting a resistance, when no preparations had been made for such a course, and when the feelings of the garrison were so divided upon the point.

Without the circuit of the fortifications, scarce an effort was made to resist the advance of the French; and all the towers and retrenchments, constructed

for the express purpose of impeding the approach of an enemy, were tamely yielded without a blow. By noon every point in the island, except the town and the Fort Rohan, now called St. Lucian's tower, at Marsa Scirocco, had surrendered to Bonaparte. This last post indeed, held out in a most gallant and determined manner, and only surrendered at last, after the little garrison had been for thirty six hours without either food or water. The French lines were drawn close round the Cotonera, and they would at once have penetrated within that work, but that they were impeded from the want of artillery, which had not yet been landed.

Meanwhile the tumult and disorder within the town hourly increased ; the general feeling of uncertainty and panic spread rapidly, and none could tell what measures were to be taken to avert the impending calamity. Rumours were bruited abroad that the town was to be bombarded, that the artillery of the whole French fleet was to open upon it, and that it was to be utterly destroyed. The body of the people, who, till this time, had had no underhanded communications with the enemy, were led to believe that their commanders were playing the traitor. Those who had been most busily engaged in exciting the tumult, and aiding the French cause, were foremost in accusing others of communicating with the enemy, and the most zealous and loyal of

the knights were denounced to the infuriated populace, only too eager for victims, on whom to wreak their blind rage.

The result of this step was, that ere long, the streets of Valetta were the scene of a series of massacres, perpetrated by the mob, at the instigation of the conspirators; the victims being such amongst the fraternity, as had shewn themselves the most staunch in preparing for resistance. Amongst this number may be enumerated the Chevalier de Vallin, who after being stabbed, was thrown into the sea; the Chevalier de Montazet, who was assassinated by the troops of Benissa Point; the Chevalier d'Ormy; the Chevalier d'Andelard, who was slain in the vain endeavour to save a comrade for the fury of the populace, and many others.

In the midst of all these alarms and tumults, the general question arose; where is the Grand Master? Instead however of shewing himself to the people, and endeavouring to quiet their alarm, and quell the sedition, which the French partisans were so busily engaged in fomenting, the supine dotard was buried in his palace, attended by a single aide de camp, utterly bewildered, and unable either to act or think for himself in the perilous crisis, which his own obstinate blindness had gone far to bring on. No orders were issued; no steps were taken, to check the revolt: blood was spilt in all directions: the



faithful members of the fraternity were struck down at their posts ; and there were none to defend them, or even to avenge their foul murder.

The night of the tenth of June was spent amidst scenes of the wildest confusion, and the most universal consternation. All the efforts made by the loyal to restore order, and to maintain the defence of the fortress, were rendered nugatory by the treason of the disaffected. Instructions were not transmitted, or if given were not obeyed: the magazines of powder were found to be damaged and useless, at the moment when they were most required. Nothing is short was as it should be, and nothing was done.

Meanwhile, the enemy were completing their preparations for attack. Artillery had been landed, and the army was drawn closer and closer round the devoted town. Early on the morning of the tenth, a sortie had been attempted by the Maltese battalion ; but at the very first glimpse of the French tirailleurs they turned and fled, leaving their standards in the hands of the enemy. At the same time the Chevalier de Soubiras made a diversion with a small fleet of galleys and boats, with which he left the grand harbor, and on approaching the spot where the French were still continuing their disembarkation, he opened fire upon them. He was however speedily forced to retire, without having

rendered any effectual opposition to the landing of the French.

These two weak and futile sallies were the only attempts made by the garrison to resist the enemy ; and their ill success had added to the general feeling of consternation and dismay. During the course of the 11th, a deputation from the inhabitants proceeded to the palace, and besought the Grand Master to consult the safety of the people, by proposing terms of surrender to Bonaparte. A council was assembled, and the matter warmly debated ; but it was determined that the defence, if defence it could be called, was to be continued.

Thus wore on the day, and, as the shades of evening fell, the rioters prepared to take advantage of the coming night, to bring their plots to an issue. About nine o'clock a fresh deputation from the malcontents made their way into the presence of Hompesch ; and having announced the fact that they had ceased to place any confidence in the protection of the Order, and that they had signed a paper before the Dutch consul, intimating their resolution of submitting to the French, they insisted upon the immediate re-assembly of the council. Hompesch, whose bewilderment and fears had by this time reached their climax, was only too happy to throw upon the council that onus which he was unwilling to take upon himself, and messengers were sent in all directions,

at that unseasonable hour of night, to summon the members to the Palace.

The sitting was a mere form: the matter had been determined on before hand, and there were none in the assembly sufficiently powerful to oppose the treason with which they were surrounded. It was decreed that an armistice should be demanded, as a preliminary step to a surrender, and a deputation was nominated to proceed to the French camp for the purpose.

Bonaparte, who had all along, been kept acquainted with the course matters were taking within the town, had awaited with impatience for this moment. He was so assured that his friends would secure the surrender of the place, without any efforts on his part, that he had done little or nothing towards the actual prosecution of the siege. He had, it is true, landed a few pieces of artillery, and had commenced the construction of some batteries, but this was merely to terrify the inhabitants, and not with any view to actual use.—Indeed, it is asserted, and on very high authority, that he possessed instructions from the French directory who had decreed the expedition, not to prosecute his plan against Malta, if he met with any determined resistance. They feared, and with reason, that the safety of the expedition might have been compromised, had he been detained for any length of time before the walls of Malta, and

that the dreaded English fleet would be upon their track. Anxiously therefore had he looked for the first proffers of surrender, which his emissaries within the town had assured him would not be long delayed.

Not a moment therefore was lost, after the arrival of the deputation, in securing the object of the mission. General Junot, the aide de camp to the commander in chief; M. Poussielgue, in charge of the commissariat chest; and the commander Dolomien, an old knight of St. John, who had accompanied the French expedition from scientific motives, as a mineralogist, were nominated to treat of the surrender, and at once returned into the town for that purpose.

Hompesch received them in due state, surrounded by his council, and prepared to open the proceedings with all the customary formalities. When however the secretary demanded of the Grand Master, what preamble he should draw up, Junot rudely interrupted him, exclaiming; "What preamble do we want; four lines will settle the entire business, and those Poussielgue will dictate." It was evidently the intention of the French envoy to carry every thing with a high hand, nor was there any one present who dared to oppose him.

The following armistice was therefore agreed to.—
Art. I. A suspension of arms for twenty four hours, (to count from six o'clock this evening the 11th of June till six o'clock to morrow evening), is granted

between the army of the French republic, commanded by general Bonaparte, represented by brigadier general Junot, aide de camp to the said general, on the one side, and His most Eminent Highness, and the Order of St. John on the other side.

Art. 2. Within these four and twenty hours, deputies shall be sent on board the *Orient*, to arrange a capitulation.

Done in duplicate at Malta, this 11th of June, 1798.

(Signed.) JUNOT. HOMPESCH.

The last scene of this disgraceful drama was not long in being enacted. A deputation was named, upon the part of the Order, consisting of the Bailiff de Turin Frisari, the Commander Boisredont de Ransijat, Baron Mario Testaferrata, Doctor Nicholas Muscat, Doctor Benedict Schembri, and Councillor Bonnani, who at once proceeded on board the *Orient*; and early on the 12th of June 1798, the following capitulation was signed, sealed, and delivered.—

Art. 1. The knights of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem shall deliver up to the French army, the city and forts of Malta; they shall renounce, in favor of the French republic, all rights of sovereignty and property which they possess, not only in that island, but also in Comino and Gozo.

Art. 2. The French republic shall employ its influence at the congress of Rastadt, to secure for the Grand Master a principality, equivalent to the

one he surrenders; and the said republic, in the meanwhile, engages to pay him an annual pension of three hundred thousand francs. He shall also receive, in addition, the value of two years pension, as an indemnity for his personal property. He shall continue to receive the usual military honors during the remainder of his stay in Malta.

Art. 3. The French knights of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem actually residing in Malta, if acknowledged as such by the Commander in Chief, shall be permitted to return to their own country, and their residence in Malta shall be considered in the same light as though they had lived in France.

Art. 4. The French republic shall pay an annual pension of seven hundred francs to each knight now resident in Malta, and a thousand francs to such as are above sixty years of age.—It shall also endeavour to induce the Cisalpine, Helvetian, Ligurian, and Roman republics to grant the same to the knights of their respective countries.

Art. 5. The French republic shall employ its credit with the different powers, that the knights of each nation may be allowed to exercise their right over the property of the Order of Malta, situated in their dominions.

Art. 6. The knights shall not be deprived of their private property, either in Malta or Gozo.

Art. 7. The inhabitants of the islands of Malta

and Gozo shall be allowed, as of old, the free exercise of the Catholic, Apostolic, and Holy Roman religion; their privileges and property shall remain inviolate, and they shall not be subject to any extraordinary taxes.

Art. 8. All civil acts, passed during the government of the Order, shall still remain valid.

Signed on board the *Orient*, off Malta, on the 24th Prairial, the 6th year of the French republic (12th June 1798).

The Commander Boisredont de Ransijat.

Baron Mario Testaferrata.

Dr. G. Nicholas Muscat.

Dr. Benedict Schembri.

Councillor V. F. Bonnani.

The Bailiff of Turin Frisari.

“ without prejudice to the rights of dominion which belong to my sovereign the King of the Two Sicilies.”

The Chevalier Philip de Amat.

Such were the terms of the capitulation, by virtue of which the fortress was transferred from the power of the Order of St. John, to that of the French republic. Little more than two centuries had elapsed, since the heroic La Valette had maintained his rights, and those of his fraternity, over this island stronghold, against the utmost efforts of the Ottoman empire. Then the place was but insignificant in its strength, and, but for the indomitable spirit which

pervaded the garrison, it must have speedily fallen an easy prey to the attacks of Mustapha. • Now however, fresh bulwarks had arisen on every side. Not a point of vantage ground had been left to an enemy ; and yet, secure though he might have felt in the impregnability of the most noble fortress in Europe, the weak and vacillating Hompesch suffered himself to be overawed by the turbulence of the disaffected, and his dread of the French ; and tamely surrendered his power and his home without a struggle.

The star of Bonaparte was, at that moment, in the ascendant ; and fortune seemed, as though she could never weary of showering her brightest gifts upon him. The capture of the island of Malta, and the expedition into Egypt, had been proposed by his enemies, as a trap, where non-success might most certainly ensure his disgrace ; but the cowardice of Hompesch, and his own keen foresight turned the scale completely in his favor ; and when Europe heard with astonishment that Malta had been captured in two days, a fresh laurel was twined in that chaplet of glory which already encircled his brow. He was indeed, at that moment, the favored child of fortune ; and it was not without reason that he exclaimed to his staff, as he entered the city, and perceived the stupendous defences with which it was surrounded : “ It was fortunate for us that

there were those within, ready to open the way for us ; for had the place been empty we should have had far more difficulty in obtaining an entrance."

What a slur was this on the fair fame of the cowardly chief, under whose weak rule the island was torn from the Order of St. John ; and what a reproach was it to those treacherous members of the fraternity, who had thus sacrificed the duties and obligations of their profession, to a false sense of patriotism and a foolish leaning to those novel doctrines of liberty, with which the leaders of the French revolutionary party had seduced the romantic and the unwary, into a blind obedience to their behests, until they became the unwitting tools of a despotism, as rigid as that which they had so lately overthrown.

CHAPTER IX.

Revolt of the Maltese.—Arrival of the Portuguese and British squadrons.—Commencement of the blockade.—Sortie on Casal Zabbar.—Plot in the town.—Its discovery and suppression.—Prices of provisions.—Scale of mortality.—Loss of the *Guillaume Tell* and two frigates.—The capitulation.—Conclusion.

FOR many years, a feeling of dissatisfaction and insubordination had been growing up between the inhabitants of Malta and the government of the Order of St. John. The new and enticing doctrines, promulgated by the revolutionary party in France, had enlisted in their favor a great number of the more youthful and enthusiastic of the Maltese. They had been insensibly attracted by the hopes and aspirations which the new regime professed to realise, and they were too distant from the scene of action, and too ill informed as to the fearful details of those events, which, had, for some years past, deluged France with a sea of blood, to discover the futility and absurdity of these professions.

A very short experience however, of the blessings of republican domination, speedily taught them a bitter lesson on this head. The White Cross banner of St. John had been lowered from the standard, where it had, for so many years, waved in proud and conscious security, and in its place had been reared the tricolor emblem of liberty, equality, and fraternity. The despotism, (for despotism it undoubtedly had been), of the Grand Masters was changed for the government of republican France. A commission was formed to carry on the duties of administration, of which a *ci-devant* knight of St. John, named Ransijat, was nominated president; and the inhabitants now looked with confidence for the realization of those hopes, in which they had been taught to indulge. The time had arrived, for which they had so earnestly craved, and they were at length called upon to enjoy the fruits of their labors.

Bitter then was the disappointment, when they found that the liberty, the equality, and the fraternity for which they had so fervently prayed, were practically nonentities: that these high sounding titles of philanthropy were but the cloaks to a despotism and a tyranny, compared with which, the rule of the Grand Masters appeared mild indeed. The French had made themselves masters of Malta through the friendly efforts of a large portion of the inhabitants, and they returned the kindness by the

infliction of a rule, whose tyranny and iniquity were unbearable.

Ransijat himself, though a Frenchman, and warmly attached to the new order of things, of which he indeed was one of the prime movers, in his capacity as president of the government, has enumerated a list of the grievances under which the Maltese labored, during the few months immediately succeeding the expulsion of Hompesch; and this list, the product of one by no means likely to exaggerate the evil, shews in itself the lengths to which the system of extortion was carried.—Chief amongst these grievances may be enumerated the following :

1st. When Bonaparte, after having established a provisional government in Malta, and having nominated general Vaubois as commandant, sailed for Egypt, he carried away a considerable number of Maltese sailors, to swell the crews of his fleet: engaging, on behalf of the French government, that during their absence, a certain sum should be paid monthly to their families. This engagement was never fulfilled, and the unfortunate women and children, deprived as they were of the support which they had been accustomed to obtain from the head of the family, were plunged into a state of starvation.

2nd. Amongst the articles of the capitulation of Malta; was one which provided for the immediate

payment of six hundred thousand francs to the Grand Master, as an indemnification for the loss of his personal effects, which were confiscated to the French government. The payment of a large portion of this sum was kept back, ostensibly to liquidate the debts which Hompesch had incurred in Malta, but those debts were never paid by the French directory, and the unfortunate creditors were the losers. Many of the other knights, who were expelled from the island, were also debtors to a considerable amount to the inhabitants. None of these liabilities could be recovered from the knights, who were driven homeless and penniless from Malta.

3rd. All the pensions, which during the previous administration, had been granted, either for long and meritorious service, or from other causes, were suspended by the French, and the holders left without any redress.—Many charities, formerly provided by the treasury, were in like manner stopped.

4th. The payment of the interest of moneys, lent to the treasury of the Order by the Maltese, was at once suspended, and the claim repudiated by their successors.

5th. The quartering of the officers of the garrison upon the families of the Maltese, intruding upon their privacy, was looked upon with a very jealous eye, and gave rise to the utmost dissatisfaction; as also did the levying of a tax for the defraying of the

expense of the soldiers barracks, which the Maltese considered to be in direct contravention to that article in the capitulation, which specified that no fresh taxes were to be imposed.

These were some of the grievances of which the inhabitants complained, but there were many others, which though in themselves trifling, aided to swell the general discontent. Still, the new regime might have succeeded in awing the disaffected, and maintaining their sway over the island, had they not insulted the feelings of the people on a point where they were most sensitive.—Had the French refrained from interference with the religion of Malta, and left their churches intact, they might probably have carried their other acts of spoliation with a high hand; but they committed a grave error of policy, when they allowed their rapacity to carry them so far as to plunder the churches of those valuable offerings and decorations, in which the natives cherished so great a pride. From the moment when they commenced these sacrilegious depredations, all sympathy between themselves and the inhabitants was broken off. These latter regarded, with a sense of horror and detestation, a nation who, openly regardless of all religion themselves, could be guilty of such acts of wanton desecration; and the spirit of discontent, which had hitherto merely found vent in a few idle murmurs, was now aroused to so great an extent,

that, ere long, it broke out in acts of open rebellion.

In pursuance of their short sighted policy, the government had advertised the sale of some tapestry and other decorations, from a church in the Città Vecchia; and the assembly, consequent on this sale, was the first signal of revolt.—This event took place on the 2nd September 1798, and brought on a riot amongst the excited people, of so serious a nature, that the sale was of necessity postponed; a step which temporarily quelled the disturbance.

The commandant, Masson, at once dispatched a message to general Vaubois in Valetta, announcing the fact, and praying for reinforcements; his own garrison at Città Vecchia only amounting to sixty men. This letter did not reach the general till eight o'clock in the evening; so that he was unable to send any assistance till the next morning. This delay was probably one of the main causes of the loss of Malta. In the afternoon, the riot which had been suppressed, once more broke out; the garrison, including their commandant, were massacred, and the town fell into the hands of the insurgents.

The example thus set was speedily followed by the other neighbouring casals, and before night the revolt had spread far and wide. Ignorant of this fact, early on the morning of the 3rd September, Vaubois dispatched a body of two hundred men to the assistance of Masson; but before they had pro-

ceeded far on their route, they were assailed on all sides, and met with so obstinate a resistance, that they were forced to retreat with all haste into the town, with the loss of several of their number, who were cut off by the insurgents.

The rebellion had now spread over the entire island, and the French were blockaded within their lines by the people of the country, who enclosed them on every side. Even within the limits of the works, the same spirit manifested itself; but here the superior power of the garrison enabled them to check the outbreak, and a few summary executions of the ringleaders speedily reduced the remainder to a state of sullen submission.

It is not improbable that these vigorous acts of the Maltese had been much encouraged, if not indeed originally prompted, by the intelligence, brought five days previously by the French line of battle ship, the *Guillaume Tell*, and the two frigates, the *Diane*, and the *Justice*, which had succeeded in effecting their escape from the battle of the Nile, where the French fleet had been utterly destroyed by the British force under Nelson.—These three vessels indeed, were the sole relics of that glorious contest; and had fled to Malta for protection, immediately after the issue of the conflict, so disastrous for the French cause, became decisive. It was therefore with very gloomy forebodings, that Vaubois beheld

himself, blockaded within his lines by the revolted inhabitants of the island, at the very time when the utter annihilation of the French fleet in the Mediterranean, had cut him off from all hopes of succour from France.

A strict examination was at once instituted into the resources of the fortress, when it was found that thirty six thousand salms of grain were contained within the stores ; a supply, considered sufficient for the whole island for seven months, but for the town only, for a considerably longer time, should the country remain in a state of revolt. Every effort was nevertheless made to recal the insurgents to their allegiance, but in vain. Amnesty was offered, even to the ringleaders, still the Maltese were not to be cajoled and sternly rejected all efforts at a compromise.

On the 18th September, a Portuguese squadron, consisting of four vessels of the line, and two frigates, made their appearance off the port, and commenced the blockade on the sea side. These were joined, on the 24th September, by the British fleet, consisting of fourteen sail, in a very shattered condition ; having undergone no repairs since the desperate battle in which they had been engaged in Aboukir bay. After a lengthened consultation between the admirals of the two squadrons, the British fleet proceeded to Naples to refit, leaving the Portuguese to continue the blockade till they returned.

Prior to their departure however, a summons was dispatched to general Vaubois, on the part of the two admirals, to surrender the fortress, and a second on the part of the revolted Maltese, signed by their two leaders, Emmanuel Vitale, and Xavier Caruana. This summons was rejected in very laconic terms by Vaubois, who had determined to hold his own to the very last; and who trusted to be relieved long before his provisions should fail him.

On the 5th October, the French effected a sortie in the direction of *casal Zabbar*, and succeeded in making themselves masters of a portion of the place; but they were so firmly and boldly met by the inhabitants, that they were forced to retire, without having obtained any advantage, or secured those provisions, for the sake of which the attempt had been made; having moreover incurred a loss of eight killed and thirty two wounded. Vaubois perceived that he could not afford to sacrifice his garrison by any similar attempts in future; and from that time determined to confine himself strictly to defensive operations within his lines.

It has been a subject of much disputation whether the revolt of the Maltese inhabitants was favorable to the retention of the fortress by the French, or the reverse.—On the one side it is argued, that had the entire population remained faithful to their new government, the provisions of the island would have

been exhausted within six or seven months, instead of holding out, as they did, for two years; and that the revolt was therefore an event most highly favorable to the garrison. On the other hand, it is clear that had the French remained masters of the whole island, and maintained friendly intercourse with the inhabitants of the country, they would have received a great addition to the supplies of the town, particularly in the way of meat and poultry. All the harbors of the island would also have been open for the admission of vessels bearing provisions, and the duties of the blockading squadron would necessarily have been rendered far more severe. Indeed, as it was, the utmost vigilance on the part of the British and Portuguese could not prevent the entry of a considerable number of small craft, which gradually found their way into the port during the dark nights, and the supplies contained in which, assisted materially in enabling the garrison to protract their defence. On the whole therefore, it appears probable, that had the island remained friendly, the French would have succeeded in continuing their resistance, even for a longer time than, under the circumstances, they were enabled to do.

The narrative of this blockade presents few points sufficiently salient and interesting to bear a detailed description. The journal of Ransijat, which contains a very full and minute account of all that took place,

from the commencement of the blockade till the surrender of the island to the British, is throughout a mere repetition of the same scenes within the town. A total dearth of intelligence from France, which in those eventful times must have been most trying; a constant dread of bombardments, which were ever and again threatened by the besiegers, but which were never carried out with any vigor; a series of summonses from the hostile admirals, invariably rejected with contempt; and every now and then, the arrival of some small vessel, laden with corn, wine, oil, or brandy; these were the sole incidents by which the blockade was marked.

It would however, be a great wrong to the heroic garrison, to omit a record of the patience and endurance, with which they continued, during two years, to maintain the tricolor flag on the walls of Malta. Though they were called upon to endure the most intolerable hardships, without pay, and at last, almost without provisions, not a murmur was heard. The elasticity of the French temperament supported the soldiers, even amidst all these trials, and their enthusiasm for the cause of that republic which was so shortly to succumb beneath the despotism of the empire, led them to endure, without repining, all those miseries and privations, which their isolated position entailed upon them. Throughout that lengthened and weary period, very few deser-

tions took place; and until the very last moment, the private soldiers were as averse to a surrender as their chiefs. Nothing in fact, but actual starvation could overcome their constancy, and when at length they succumbed to that irresistible foe, they had the proud gratification of feeling, that they had gained as great honor and renown by this second defence of Malta, although it was unsuccessful, as had fallen to the share of the equally indomitable garrison of La Valette.

An almost similar amount of credit is due to the Maltese revolvers, who had originally, without assistance from foreign sources, risen against their oppressors, and blockaded them within the walls of their fortress. Much suffering and many privations had fallen to the lot of these brave patriots, and in spite of every effort made by the British to aid them, their misery was very great. Still they swerved not from the line of conduct which they had adopted from the commencement, and the undying hatred which three months of tyranny and misrule had sufficed to engender, supported them through all their trials, and nerved them to continue the struggle, until eventually it was crowned with success.

Batteries were erected on all sides, from which they continually annoyed the garrison, Valetta itself not unfrequently becoming the target of their practise. Fort Manoel and Fort Tigné were much ex-

posed to the fire of these batteries, and marks still remain in plenty at the former place, which show the accuracy of the fire, and the unpleasant propinquity of the foe.—The inhabitants of the town had not openly joined in the insurrection, which was entirely carried out by the village population of the country; still there were many amongst them, by no means unfavorable to the cause, and who, in their hearts, sympathised far more warmly with the gallant spirits, who were striking a desperate blow for liberty and patriotism, than with the French, from whom they had as yet received nothing but contumely and insult, in spite of the glowing and brilliant promises which their partisans had held out.

Amongst these, a plot gradually became hatched, which, at one time, bid fair to curtail the tedious duration of the blockade, and to achieve, by one blow, that triumph, which they had hitherto only anticipated from the effects of starvation. It was arranged, that the chief conspirators were each to lead a body of some fifty or sixty men, to the attack of the principal posts within the city. It had been observed that the sentinels commonly performed their duties with great negligence, and it was hoped that they could be easily surprised and poignarded, before they could give any alarm. A Corsican, named Guglielmo, who had been a colonel in the Russian service, was at the head of the plot; and he under-

took to surprise the Grand Masters palace, then the head quarters of general Vaubois. An ex-officer of chasseurs under the late regime, named Peralta, was to seize upon the Marina gate ; Damato, a farrier in the Maltese regiment, was to lead a party against the Porta Reale, the main gate of the town ; and a barber, called Pulis, another against the Marsa Muscetto gate. Other detachments were to seize St. Elmo, and the Auberge de Castile. The assaults were all to have been made simultaneously, on the night of the 11th January 1799, and were to have been aided by a general attack from without, on several points of the enceinte, by which means the attention of the garrison would be distracted, and the conspirators gain greater facilities for carrying their point.

The discovery of this plot was purely accidental, and was in no way caused by treachery on the part of any of those, engaged in the design. On the morning of the 11th, a vessel had made its way into port, bringing intelligence of very important successes of the French, against Piedmont and Naples. General Vaubois determined to mark the event by an extraordinary performance in the theatre, which, as the day chanced to be a Friday, would not, on ordinary occasions, have been open. The commandant of Fort Manoel, and one of his officers obtained leave to attend this representation ; and at its close proceeded

to the Marsa Muscetto gate, to return to their post. Whilst embarking at that point, the commandant was attracted by a light, and by the sound of whispered conversation under the rocks.—He took no notice of these suspicious circumstances at the time, being quite helpless, but he had no sooner reached Fort Manoel, than he dispatched an officer with a small body of men, to investigate the matter. These speedily discovered a number of Maltese from the country, who were crouching amidst the rocks beneath the ramparts, awaiting the signal of onslaught, and the opening of the gate. The alarm was at once given, the plot was discovered, and the entire design rendered abortive. Forty four of the ringleaders, including Guglielmo, were executed; and the terror which this unfortunate issue of the undertaking inspired amongst the inhabitants, relieved the garrison from all fears of a repetition of the event.

As time wore on, and the scarcity of provisions became more and more felt, large bodies of the population left the town, and sought refuge amongst their fellow countrymen, without the lines. These migrations were much encouraged by Vaubois who laid no embargo upon the departure of any, save those, who from their wealth or political influence, were likely to be serviceable to his views. Ransijat, in his "*Siège et Blocus de Malte*," gives some very interesting statistics, with regard to the price of

provisions within the town at different periods during the siege, and also of the mortality, both of the garrison and population, during the same time.

During the month of February 1799, the following was the tariff at which provisions were procurable in the market.

Fresh pork	£ 0 2 10	per lb.
Cheese	„ 0 2 6	„
Rabbits	„ 0 6 0	each
Fowls	„ 1 4 2	„
Pigeons	„ 0 5 0	„
Wine	„ 0 2 6	per bottle
Eggs	„ 0 0 4	each.

These prices however soon rapidly increased; and in the month of August, after the blockade had lasted for a year, they reached the following scale.

Fresh pork	£ 0 6 0	per lb.
Salt meat.....	„ 0 2 1	„
Common cheese	„ 0 7 4	„
Fish	from „ 0 2 2	to 3s 2d per lb.
Fowls	„ 2 8 0	each
Pigeons	„ 0 10 0	„
Rabbits	„ 0 9 2	„
Eggs	„ 0 0 8	„
Common wine.....	„ 0 3 4	per bottle.
Vinegar	„ 0 3 4	„
Brandy.....	„ 0 6 8	„
Sugar	„ 0 17 6	per lb.*
Coffee	„ 1 0 10	„

From this point they continued still to increase, until at length, many of them ceased to be procurable, even at any cost ; and for many months before the surrender, the garrison were forced to content themselves with little more than the reduced rations which were issued to them. Towards the middle of 1800, the few articles of food still for sale, had risen to the following prices.

Fresh pork	£ 0	7	2	per lb.
Oil	„	1	3	4 per bottle.
Sugar	„	2	0	0 per lb.
Coffee	„	2	8	4 „

Rats and other vermin were now recognised articles of consumption, and those that had been found in the granaries and bakehouses, were, from their superior size and plumpness, much sought after.

In order to eke out their scanty rations, the soldiers had, from an early date in the siege, commenced the cultivation of gardens, in the various ditches and other localities, suitable for such operations, and had added greatly to their means of subsistence. So long as their oil and vinegar lasted, the salads which they thus procured reconciled them to the loss of meat, which was latterly issued in very small quantities. Indeed, throughout the siege, it is marvellous to perceive the cheerfulness, with which the troops underwent hardships and privations, sufficiently severe to have induced the most bitter discontent, if

not actual mutiny, amidst their ranks. So far from such having been the case, they aided their superiors by every means in their power, and to the last moment, the cry of "No surrender," was constantly to be heard.

It is sad to reflect that so much cōnstancy was wasted upon a cause, which was, from the first, utterly hopeless. The French fleet in the Mediterranean was annihilated at the battle of the Nile, beyond all hope of recovery; the English were left undisputed masters of that sea; and years must, even under the most favorable circumstances, have elapsed before a fresh fleet could be equipped, capable of once more meeting their ancient and victorious foe with the smallest chance of success. The loss of Malta was therefore inevitable, and became from the first, a mere matter of time. The revolt of the inhabitants, by facilitating the blockade, aided to ensure the result, and much unnecessary suffering would have been saved, both to them and to the garrison, by an earlier surrender.

The following table shews the mortality throughout the siege. It will be perceived that the numbers were far higher during the first year, than the second: this was principally owing to the fact, that the population was very much larger during that period, than it became afterwards; nearly thirty thousand inhabitants having abandoned the town, during the course of the blockade.

	<i>Garrison.</i>	<i>Inhabitants.</i>
September 1798	8	108
October „	14	108
November „	20	107
December „	25	160
January 1799	35	213
February „	20	200
March „	37	230
April „	40	319
May „	98	338
June „	131	311
July „	79	233
August „	48	131
September „	33	102
October „	30	100
November „	19	99
December „	11	60
January 1800	23	44
February „	13	42
March „	6	30
April „	14	27
May „	6	19
June „	3	16
July „	7	25
August „	5	22
Total...	725	3,044

At one period, the soldiers suffered severely from what is called moon blindness, losing their sight during the bright moonlight nights of summer, but recovering it again in the morning.*

Up to a late period in the siege, a company of Italian comedians had continued to reside in the town, and the theatre was constantly opened for the amusement of the garrison. The unfortunate actors had frequently besought permission to leave the town with the other inhabitants; but, until near the close, they were not permitted to do so, their services being considered as too valuable. At length however, even the little food necessary for their support, was too valuable to be bestowed upon non combatants; and they were granted the long sought for permission: their places being afterwards filled by amateurs from the garrison, who continued to keep the theatre open till the very last.

It was now clearly evident that in a very short time a surrender must be effected, and prior to taking this step, general Vaubois made one last effort to save the line of battle ship, and the two frigates, the sole relics of the battle of the Nile, which had taken refuge in the port of Malta.—The

* This disease is by no means uncommon in the warmer latitudes, and many instances are recorded of its occurrence, whilst the British army were in Egypt. It was also not unknown in the Crimea.

Guillaume Tell was consequently fitted out, and took its departure on a dark night, under the command of vice admiral Deeres. There were however keen eyes watching for such a step, on all the neighbouring heights, and the vessel was at once discovered, the signal given, and the British fleet placed on the alert. The result was that she was pursued, and after a most desperate and heroic defence, in which the French lost two hundred and seven men killed, and a vast number wounded, amongst whom were the admiral and the captain, she was captured, and brought back to Malta in triumph. A similar attempt was made to save the frigates *Diane* and *Justice*, but with equal unsuccess; as they both fell into the hands of the English, who thus accomplished the destruction of the last relics of that proud fleet, with which Bonaparte had contemplated the reduction of Egypt.

Nothing now remained but to capitulate, and a council of war was assembled to deliberate on the measure. It was then found that their provisions could not extend beyond the 8th September, and it was decreed that terms of surrender should be offered five days before that date. On the morning of the 3rd September 1800, general Vaubois wrote to general Pigot, offering to capitulate; upon which, two British officers, major general Graham, and commodore Martin, (in command of the fleet,) were nomi-

nated to arrange terms of surrender. These were speedily agreed to, and on the 5th, the capitulation was duly signed, and the fortress transferred to the possession of the British.

The 1st article demanded that the garrison should march out with all the honors of war; which was granted. The 2nd secured the personal property of the garrison and officials to their owners. The 3rd was an amnesty to all who had borne arms in favor of the French. The 4th and 5th articles related to the method of embarkation of the garrison. The 6th demanded the free departure of all French vessels from Malta, which was refused. The 7th referred to the sick necessarily left in Malta. The 8th demanded an amnesty for such Maltese as had assisted the French, without having borne arms. This was considered as not coming within the terms of a military capitulation. The 9th referred to the property of the French inhabiting Malta. The 10th demanded permission to notify the capitulation at once to the French government. The 11th arranged the method of surrender. The 12th demanded the ratification of all sales and transfers of property, effected whilst the French were in Malta. The 13th was an amnesty for the agents of the republic. The 14th demanded that all vessels appearing before the port, bearing French colors, for the first twenty days after the capitulation, should be permitted to depart unmo-

lested: this was refused. The 15th related to the embarkation of the commander in chief and his suite. The 16th demanded that all prisoners, made during the siege, should be treated like the garrison, and be landed in France. The 17th ensured the absence of reprisals. The 18th demanded that where any difficulty might arise with regard to the terms of the capitulation, they should be interpreted in the sense most favorable to the garrison.

This capitulation, which was dated on the 5th September 1800, was signed by general Vaubois, rear-admiral Villeneuve, major general Pigot, and captain Martin, commodore of his Britannic Majesty, and the allied fleet before Malta.

Thus, after a brief sway of two years, were the French ejected from Malta, and in the first year of a new century the island passed under the dominion of Great Britain. In the short lived treaty of Amiens, signed soon afterwards, it was decreed that the Order of St. John were to return to their old homes, under a new footing; and captain Ball, the first governor of Malta, was directed to prepare for the transfer of the island to the fraternity. It speedily however, appeared manifest that this treaty would not remain long in force and that the surrender of the island to the Order would ensure its once more falling within the grasp of the French. Governor Ball therefore, acting in concert with admiral Nelson, delayed

effecting the transfer so successfully, that war once more broke out, and the fatal measure was avoided.

One of the articles of the treaty of Paris in 1814 decided the fate of Malta, by securing it to the possession of England in perpetuity; and that this article may remain long in force, must be the earnest wish, not only of every Englishman, but also of all those, amongst the native population, who would desire to secure to themselves, the blessings enjoyed by all who possess the inestimable privilege of calling themselves British subjects.

The condition of Malta at the present moment, as compared with what it was fifty years since, marks well the beneficial effect of British domination; whilst a thriving population, a crowded port, and an ever increasing mercantile traffic, are the satisfactory results to which England can point, in proof that she has maintained the trust imposed upon her, with honor to herself, and benefit to all connected with her.

THE END.

ERRATA.

<i>Page 2,</i>	<i>line 5,</i>	<i>for</i>	<i>gazing read</i>	<i>who gazes</i>
„ 5	„ 2	„	their	„ this
„ 6	„ 11	„	the	„ when the
„ 14	„ 27	„	last	„ least
„ 19	„ 8	„	stop	„ spot
„ 24	„ 21	„	1208	„ 1308
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„168	„ 24	„	£35,000	„ £25,000





