

The average time between Malta and Alexandria and the coast of Syria, is, say, four days or ninety-six hours, (though this perhaps is somewhat more than the reality,) as nearly as possible equal to that between Malta and Gibraltar; thus Malta is manifestly the middle point between the two extremes of the Mediterranean. From Malta to London, again—(the focus of the political and commercial world)—at present occupies, on the average, seven days, or one hundred and sixty-eight hours, so that her position in this point of view may not appear to hold good exactly. However, the French railroads—the ‘Paris and Calais’ and the ‘Paris and Lyons’ lines, which are in a rapidly progressive state—will partially rectify this; and if there be a continuation of the rails from Lyons to Marseilles, (and which there is but little doubt of their being made in due time, when once the other two lines are finished,) one continuous line from Marseilles will be available, in length between ten and eleven hundred miles, which is equal to, say, two days or forty-eight hours, at the rate of only twenty-five miles per hour. The whole time of transit of intelligence between Malta and London, would thus at once be reduced from seven to five days, on an average; but, most likely special or swift trains would be started on these important occasions, which would accomplish the distance several hours earlier—say, at the rate of twenty-eight, instead of twenty-five miles per hour, and the whole time occupied between Calais and Marseilles becomes no more than thirty-eight or thirty-nine hours; in addition to this, were iron steamers, similar to “the Iron Duke,” which at present carries the mails on the Dublin and Liverpool line, substituted for those which are seventy hours, or three days between Malta and the port of Marseilles, they would reduce the time at sea to about two days and a half or sixty-one hours, on an average; and thus would a reduction of about seventy hours on the whole time, as at present, bring Malta within about the same distance of London as she now is of Alexandria. This would be the line of “Latest intelligence between the United Kingdom, Malta, and the East;” while the direct water communication by the Peninsular and Oriental Company’s vessels will continue to be the route of the majority of the passengers with whom the remaining in England till the latest day is a matter of no consequence; to include the transfer of merchandise would perhaps be useless, as heavy packages always take the cheapest mode of conveyance; whereas, in the case of passengers and news, expense becomes a secondary consideration. Independent of the above comparatively circumscribed view, though by no means the less surely connected therewith by the results or effect produced, this island is made the head quarters

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