

order, however, was dissolved by Henry VIII., and its property in Britain confiscated. Each of these branches had immense possessions in the different countries of Europe, and much of their revenue was spent in Malta. This will account for the enormous forts, the subterranean excavations, and the splendid palaces which remain in the island to attest the wealth and enterprise of the knights. Each *langue* had its separate palace in Valetta, and these splendid edifices constitute the principal charm of the city. These abodes of luxury were occupied by the knights until 1798, when the fleet of Napoleon, on its way to Egypt, appeared before the harbour, and the degenerate descendants of L'Isle Adam and La Valette gave up their stronghold without striking a blow. This was the virtual end of the order; the knights were scattered over Europe, and the island was retained by the French for a year and a half, when they, in their turn, surrendered it to the English, after a most pertinacious and heroic resistance. By the Treaty of Amiens, the English government engaged unequivocally to restore the independence of the island; but it was too important a post to be easily parted with, and the government determined to break its promise. The best English authorities have condemned this breach of treaty; but the great advantage to England of possessing such a fortress in the Mediterranean is too powerful for her sense of conventional honour, and the island still remains under her dominion. The mildness and equity of her administration, together with a great increase of population and wealth, have reconciled the inhabitants to her sway; and civilization in the East may yet be largely indebted to the English occupation of Malta.

But to return to Valetta. The principal street of the city is the Strada Reale, which runs along on the summit of the ridge or promontory between the two harbours, from Fort St. Elmo to the chief gate leading out into the interior of the island. It is a very fine street. The building material is the light yellow limestone of the island. The governor's residence, situated in the Strada Reale, and formerly the palace of the grand master, is a spacious and imposing building. In the same street are the exchange, the library, and the principal hotels and shops. The other streets of the city run parallel to this, and are connected with it by various flights of stone steps, the ascent being too steep on either side to allow of a carriage way.