

The Protection of the Grand Harbour at Malta.



PREPARATIONS FOR CLOSING THE HARBOUR.

THE device of placing huge spars or chains across the mouth of a harbour to prevent the entrance of the enemy is of ancient date, and nowadays it is very important that dangerous small craft should be deterred from getting into a harbour, such as that at Malta, and destroying ships or dock gates, etc. As spars have been proved to be unreliable, it being possible for a fast pinnace or torpedo-boat to jump them, some experiments have been tried with two very strong

wire hawsers, which may be seen in the second illustration stretched across, and supported at intervals by pontoons and gun-boats, which latter would of course also make it hot for the enemy with their small-arm fire. The first illustration shows the preparations in progress. In order to test the arrangements thoroughly, Admiral Lloyd caused the harbour to be actually closed, as in war time. Means of exit and entrance for our own vessels would of course be provided for.

