



Photo. R. Ellis, Malta.

MARCHING DOWN STRADA LEVANTE.

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Hamilton, chief of the staff, as brigadier, being first drawn up in line of quarter columns to receive the admiral, who, after the usual salute and inspection, took up his position at the saluting point, and witnessed the march past in three formations—open column, in mass, and finally in line of quarter columns, as will be seen by reference to the first illustration. In the next illustration the brigade is returning after the march past, to form up in review order, preparatory to marching straight up to the saluting point. Finally, the brigade again passed the saluting point when marching off the ground on their return, but this time in fours, with fixed swords, this being the usual and more convenient formation in route marching, as presenting the smallest front. The third illustration represents a battalion marching off in this fashion, preceded by the band. A glance at the above picture will serve to explain at once the necessity of marching with a small front, especially when the route lies through streets. A battalion of the Naval Brigade is here represented marching down Strada Levante, one of the thoroughfares of Valetta, and they pretty well fill up the street, even in this formation. On emerging into open ground the front can be increased in a moment to that of a full company by a simple manœuvre, on the order "front form companies," and this, of course, would invariably be done on active service, so as to have the force available for extension as skirmishers, should occasion arise; for a company or battalion in fours would be simply a prey to the enemy's fire. The battalions, on passing down Strada Reale, again encountered the admiral by the Opera House; and on such occasions the orthodox salute is given by calling each company in turn to "shoulder arms" as it passes the chief.