seas.

**the shipmen deemed**] What  
gave rise to this suspicion? Probably the  
sound (or even the apparent sight) of  
breakers. “If we assume that St. Paul’s  
Bay, in Malta, is the actual scene of the  
shipwreck, we can have no difficulty in explaining

what these indications must have  
been. No ship can enter it from the east  
without passing within a quarter of a mile  
of the point of Koura: but before reaching  
it, the land is too low and too far from the  
track of a ship driven from the eastward, to  
be seen in a dark night. When she does  
come within this distance, it is impossible  
to avoid observing the breakers: for with  
north-easterly gales, the sea breaks upon it  
with such violence, that Capt. Smyth, in his  
view of the headland, has made the breakers  
its distinctive character.” Smith, p. 79.—I  
recommend the reader to study the reasonings

and calculations by which Mr. Smith  
(pp. 79—86) has established, I think satisfactorily,

that this **land** could be no other  
than the point of Koura, east of St. Paul’s  
Bay, in Malta.

**28. fathoms**] The measure here rendered

*fathom* is described as  
being the length of the outstretched arms,  
from finger to finger. It is therefore very  
nearly our fathom, which is six feet.—  
Every particular here corresponds with the  
actual state of things. At twenty-five  
fathoms’ depth (as given in evidence at the  
court-martial on the officers of the Lively,  
wrecked on this point in 1810), the curl  
of the sea was seen on the rocks in the  
night, but no land. The twenty fathoms  
would occur somewhat past this: the  
fifteen fathoms, in a direction W. by N.  
from the former, after a time sufficient to  
prepare for the unusual measure of anchoring

by the stern, And just so are the  
soundings (see Capt. Smyth’s chart, Smith,  
p. 88), and the shore is here full of **rough  
places**, mural precipices, upon which the  
sea must have been breaking with great  
violence.

**29. out of the stern**] The  
usual way of anchoring in ancient as well  
as in modern navigation, was *by the bow*.  
But under certain circumstances, they  
anchored *by the stern*; and Mr. Smith has  
shewn from the figure of a ship which  
he has copied from the “Antichità de  
Ercolano,” that their ships had hawseholes

aft, to fit them for anchoring by the  
stern. “That a vessel *can* anchor by the  
stern is sufficiently proved (if proof were  
needed) by the history of some of our own  
naval engagements. So it was at the battle  
of the Nile. And when ships are about to  
attack batteries, it is customary for them  
to go into action prepared to anchor in this  
way. This was the case at Algiers. There  
is still greater interest in quoting the  
instance of the battle of Copenhagen, not  
only from the accounts we have of the  
precision with which each ship let go her  
anchors astern as she arrived nearly opposite

her appointed station, but because  
it is said that Nelson stated after the battle  
that he had that morning been reading  
Acts xxvii.” Conybeare and Howson, ii. p.  
414. We have an instance in Cæsar’s  
commentaries where his ships were anchored

by *four* anchors each, to provide  
against the violence of a storm. “The  
anchorage in St. Paul's Bay is thus described

in the Sailing Directions: ‘The  
harbour of St. Paul is open to E. and  
N.E. winds. It is, notwithstanding, safe  
for small ships; the ground, generally,  
being very good: and while the cables  
hold, there is no danger, *as the anchors  
will never start*.’” Smith, p. 92.

**wished for the day**] Uncertain, whether  
their ship might not *go down at her  
anchors* : and, even supposing her to ride  
out the night safely, uncertain whether the  
coast to leeward might not be iron-bound,  
affording no beach where they might land  
in safety. Hence also the ungenerous but  
natural attempt of the seamen to save their  
lives by taking to the boat. See Smith,  
p. 97.

**30.**] “We hear, in a case  
mentioned by Appian, of anchors being