

an enemy, affecting a landing on the Barbary coast
might without difficulty batter the town to pieces by
a regular bombardment, as the houses are built
immediately adjoining the works instead of being out of the
reach of shells. The chief advantage to us would be giving
the entire command of the straits, & therefore, presents
opportunities of annoying or destroying the enemies' trade
& preventing any fleet passing without our observation. for
this purpose some light vessels should constantly cruise
in the middle channel, & even without this it is proper to look
out in height at the signal stations there is little fear of
an enemies' fleet passing, without being seen by one side
or the other, and former times the French always sailed
along the African shore, & this the distance was so small
often escaped through in a thick fog. This was particularly
the case in the fleet which Lord Nelson pursued to the
West Indies. They passed during a fog along the opposite shore
and when our fleet came in & enquired if they had seen
them they replied they had not passed through & our Admiral
directed his course towards Malta where he found he
mistake. This single instance is sufficient to prove it was
with regard to large squadrons & it equally applies to single
ships & frigates. another great advantage is the fertility
of the soil & its production. like Gibraltar as a single rock
jutting out into the sea & protected from all attempts by sea
by the rocks which surround it & by land by a fortified shore.
it differs as ours is a barren and rock without any natural
production. & except in parts where ground is artificially
made at great labour & expense entirely uncultivated, but
on the contrary immediately it emerges from the sea, like
the Coral Islands in the South Pacific Ocean is turned into
a fruitful soil. The rock alone serves for a foundation
& protect it from the violence of the sea & attempt of its enemies.
This secured by a singular beauty of nature the remainder