

West wind made our reaching any part of America almost hopeless, and also the great probability there was of our meeting some of our numerous ships of war or merchant vessels in the vicinity of Bermuda. Paxton however was an experienced seaman, and, under all the circumstances of our situation, I deemed it prudent to yield to his judgement, though it eventually proved my own was the most correct.

As early as the 20th my fears were verified, by the wind changing to N.W. On the 22nd we got the sweep secured as a mainmast, with the bonnet of the jib altered for a sail; but we could not make it answer well, and it was of little or no use. Being a fine day, we opened the main hatches and searched, but in vain, for some onions, a quantity of which I believed to be on board. We however discovered two casks of beet roots, and though many of them were quite rotten, the remainder proved tolerably good, and were most acceptable, as the little provisions we had, though used with the greatest frugality, were nearly expended. We also found another small cask of water in the fore-peak, of which we resolved to be as careful as possible. This night it blew very hard from N.N.W., and the sweep, which was very weak, was carried away in a heavy squall.

We found the rudder-head split through the centre, as low down as the upper pintle, which was occasioned by the strain of the tiller when the schooner was on her broadside. This gave us constant trouble, and nearly mastered all our contrivance to keep it together. We could not, in consequence, keep the helm a-lee so as to make her lie close to, owing to which she fell off so often that the sea constantly struck us, and,