

scuttled the wardroom-deck and hove overboard about fifty tons of the kentledge.

It was a bright night, with all the stars shining, and there was no use disguising the matter: the *Hornet* was continually dropping back. The seventy-four fired a gun and signalled, but Biddle did not respond. Like Hull, who brought the *Constitution* successfully away from a superior force, by pluck and attention to duty, knowledge and seamanship, he determined to leave nothing untried that would tend to increase the rate of his vessel's sailing.

At two in the morning the *Hornet* tacked to the southward and westward, and immediately the enemy astern did likewise. At daylight the line-of-battle ship was within gunshot on the *Hornet's* lee quarter. At seven in the morning the English colors were displayed at the peak of the Britisher, and a rear-admiral's flag was flown at his mizzen-topgallant mast-head. At the same time he began firing from his bow guns—it must be assumed more as an imperious order for the *Hornet* to show her colors and heave to than with an idea of crippling her, for the shot overreached her about a mile.

Biddle paid no attention at all, but having ascertained that the lightening of his ship made her much faster, he went at it again, cutting away the remaining anchors, and letting every foot of cable go overboard. Then he broke up the launch and left the débris in the wake. Even the provisions were broken into, and barrels of salt-horse and bread