

coincidence of favourable circumstances mine had become thirty-eight tons net between Dover and been taken for a sailing what to do for a reasonable ability. This all my capital required for cop for the contemplated dollars; leaving invested in the here of my friends them engaged to thousand dollars equally the profits having become profit with all additional about one thousand dollars, beat suited to me, was purchased and five hundred dollars go amount to four not probable that furnish another expense being fitted and

of unconditioned independence, version to responsibility, no other limits to itself, reconciled and privations, a considerable consequence, rather than to comfort and responsibility, which belonging to another

persons, not familiar with commerce who will view this from sea risk, and respect of emolument, am able, to do by stating the object of the voyage to the vessel a great deal requisite for the passengers and of France and built expressly have been more beautifully finished to be more common many vessels of small freightage little time to sailing than the I had no doubt for more than and it to be more

advantageous to employ her in freighting between the islands. In either event, I felt entire confidence in being amply remunerated for the time and risk. On the cargo, composed of such articles of my late experience as had proved to be most in demand, I had no doubt of making a profit of from fifty to one hundred per cent. on its cost. The proceeds of vessel and cargo, invested in the produce of the island, and shipped to Europe or the United States, would, at that time, have yielded a clear gain of thirty-three and one third per cent. Thus, in the course of the year, I should make two hundred per cent. on the original capital; a result which might be considered abundant compensation for the time I would consume, and should take from the enterprise the character of quixotism with which it had been stigmatised.

As soon as it became known at Havre that my destination was the Isle of France, some of my friends, anxious for my safety, and perceiving in the enterprise only the ardour and temerity of inexperienced youth, endeavoured to dissuade me from it, by pointing to me, in glowing colours, the distress and probable destruction I was preparing for myself and men. But, however friendly and considerate the advice, I felt myself more competent to judge of the risk than they were, and, consequently, disregarded them.*

The vessel being all ready for sea on the 20th of September, 1797, was detained several days by the difficulty of procuring men. Those who were engaged one day would desert the next; and the dangerous character of the enterprise having been discussed and admitted among the seamen in port, I began to be seriously apprehensive that I might not succeed in procuring a crew. At length, however, with much difficulty, and some additional pay, I succeeded in procuring four men; and, having previously engaged a mate, our number was complete.

To delay proceeding to sea a moment longer than was necessary, would have been incurring a risk of the loss of my men, and the pay I had advanced them. Hence, I was induced to sail when appearances were very unpropitious. A strong north wind was blowing into the bay with such violence as already to have raised a considerable sea; but I flattered myself, that, as the sun declined, it would abate; that, if we could weather Cape Barfleur, we should make a lee wind down channel; and that, if this should be found impracticable, we could, at all events, return to Havre Roads, and wait there a more favourable opportunity.

With such impressions we sailed from Havre, on the 25th of September. A great crowd had

* In conformity with a condition in the contract for the vessel, she was called the *Caroline*. We navigated with such papers only as our foreign consuls were, at that period, in the habit of giving on similar emergencies; the bill of sale and consular certificate attached, which were respected by the belligerents.

assembled on the pier-head to witness our departure, and cheered us as we passed. It was about noon, and we were under full sail; but we had scarcely been out two hours, when we were obliged to reduce it to a double-reefed mainsail, foresail, and second-sized jib. With the sail even thus diminished, the vessel, at times, almost buried herself; still, as every part of the equipment was new and strong, I flattered myself with being able to weather the Cape, and pressed forward through a sea in which we were continually enveloped, cheered with the hope that we had nothing worse to experience, and that we should soon be relieved by the ability to bear away and make a free wind. I was destined, however, to a sad disappointment; for the wind and sea having increased towards midnight, an extraordinary plunge into a very short and sharp sea completely buried the vessel, and, with a heavy crash, snapped off the bowsprit by the board. The vessel then luffed into the wind, in defiance of the helm, and the first shake or the foresail stripped it from the bolt rope.

No other alternative now presented, than to endeavour to regain the port of Havre; a task, under existing circumstances, of very difficult and doubtful accomplishment. The sea had increased in so great a degree, and ran so sharp, that we were in continual apprehension of having our decks swept. This circumstance, combined with the sea-sickness, which none escaped, retarded and embarrassed the operation of wearing round on the other tack. The violent motion of the vessel had also prevented the possibility of obtaining sleep; indeed, no person had been permitted to go below before the disaster, and none had the disposition to do so afterwards; but all were alert in the performance of their duty, which had for its immediate object the getting of the vessel's head pointed towards Havre.

This was at length effected; but, as we had no spar suitable for a jury bowsprit, we could carry only such part of our mainsail as was balanced by a jib, set in the place of a foresail. With this sail we made so much lee-way, that it was evident, as soon as daylight enabled me to form a judgment, that we could not reach Havre; nor was it less evident, that nothing but an abatement of the gale could save us from being stranded before night. With the hope of this abatement, the heavens were watched with an intensity of interest more easily imagined than described; but no favourable sign appeared, and before noon we had evidence of being to leeward of the port of Havre. We now cleared away the cables and anchors, and secured with battens the communications with the cabin and fore-castle. While thus engaged, the man at the masthead announced the appalling, but expected intelligence, of "breakers under the lee."

This information had the effect of an electric shock to rouse the crew from that apathy which was a natural consequence of twenty-four hours,