

Though after a storm there may appear to be many grand conceptions connected with it, yet, at the time of its occurrence, there are too many inconveniences to allow one to think of its poetry. The rolling of the ship, the creaking of the masts, the confinement in the cabin, the shout of command heard above the whistling of the wind, and the sickness of yourself and companions, all serve to present a picture, widely different from the poetical.

The next day, *Friday*, the wind continued to blow a heavy gale, though not so severe an one as the night before. With hardly any canvass up, the ship scudded before the wind, seven knots an hour, and by eight at night, we reached the light house, called Double-headed Shot Keys. During this night, it rained incessantly; the reader can readily imagine how uncomfortable it must have been for the passengers, cooped up, as we were, in a cabin, about as large as a good sized pantry, with all doors and windows closed. We were now within seven hundred miles of Mobile, with the expectation of reaching there in reasonable time. On *Saturday*, we again crossed the Gulf stream, and by four o'clock in the afternoon, came in sight of the shores of Florida. When approaching the coast we could tell our proximity to it, by the greenish tint of the ocean, unlike the deep blue we had been traversing, since entering the Gulf stream off Cape Hatteras. Our approach to land was indicated by flocks of birds, which were making their way from the mainland to Cuba. One of these, a tiny creature, was caught by the helmsman, without injuring a feather on its body. It flew into his hands, without any effort to release itself. At eight the same night, the light at Key West came in view. On *Sunday*, morning about ten, we passed Tortugas, the extreme point of Florida, distant about four hundred miles from Mobile.

This Sabbath was more agreeable than the last, inasmuch as there was a good breeze, carrying us along seven knots and a half an hour, with every prospect of reaching land by Wednesday. On the morning of the same day, my attention was called by the helm's-man to a shark, which was reconnoitering at a short distance from the ship. The accounts so common in relation to this animal, made me shudder at the sight of his jaws. Many a time, during the days we were becalmed, I almost felt tempted to bathe in the quiet water, but the bare thought of the shark was sufficient to dispel all such inclinations. Sunday night, we experienced another heavy gale, accompanied with rain. It continued until the next morning. Previous to this storm, I thought it in no way difficult to sleep in the berths, but this night my opinion underwent a decided change. It was with the utmost difficulty I could prevent myself from being pitched upon the floor. The next day the Captain observed, that the waves rolled higher the night previous than

he had ever seen them. During *Tuesday*, we had but a repetition of wet weather, occasionally diversified with gales of wind, lasting several hours, Tuesday night we came to a full stop for about four hours owing to the gale that was blowing.

All sail was down and the helm lashed, so that we did nothing but drift about the Gulf. Usually, a ship is said to "lay to" in a gale of wind when all sails are carefully furled, with the exception of those that are necessary to enable her to present her head to the sea, in which case she surmounts the surges, instead of being swept by them. On *Wednesday* the waves rolled high, and, with a head wind, we were left to work our way slowly into port, with such speed as caused us all to despond of ever reaching the desired haven.

Though, in the latitude of Abaco, almost every morning flying fish are to be found upon the deck of the ship, in our case it was different. We often saw them skimming over the waves, so near us as to afford a good view of their extended wings. My fellow-passenger was very desirous to obtain one to take with him home, to satisfy the curiosity of friends; in this he was nearly being disappointed. All hope of one of them finding his way on deck was given up, when, on *Thursday* night, one was found jumping about, seemingly not content with his new quarters. The Captain, who was on deck at the time, immediately brought it into the cabin, and though it was in *media nocte*, we willingly got up to examine the curiosity. "It is a beautiful silvery fish, having delicate, gauze-like wings, that appear like enlarged fins, with which he rises from the sea, and skims along with a kind of tremulous vibration, to a distance of thirty or forty yards, when his wings beginning to grow dry, he is compelled to fall into the ocean again." They vary in their size, some measuring twelve or fifteen inches, while others are extremely diminutive; the larger kind are furnished with a pair of extra wings. The one caught by us was of the medium size. On *Friday* night, during the mate's watch, the Captain was called upon deck, to decide whether the light in view was the one at Pensacola, or on Sand Island. Though he had never before been to this part of the Gulf, he knew from description that this must be the Pensacola light. During the remainder of the night we sailed along towards the east, and early on *Saturday* morning, we were boarded by a pilot.

When I went on deck that morning, and saw the coast, stretching as far as the eye could reach, my feelings could not easily be described. The sight was too joyful for utterance. Had we reached land as soon as was expected, without any storm intervening, my feelings would have been different; at least the sense of joy would have been less intense; but my patience was so completely worn out, that, for a day or two previous, I had lain in my berth, thinking over all indescribable things. From the pilot we learned many