

then we left the land astern. The Discovery, by being at some distance to the North, was never near the land; nor did we see her till eight o'clock.

1778.
December.

On this occasion, I cannot help observing, that I have always found, that the bolt-ropes to our sails have not been of sufficient strength or substance. This, at different times, has been the source of infinite trouble and vexation; and of much expence of canvas, ruined by their giving way. I wish also, that I did not think there is room for remarking, that the cordage and canvas, and indeed all the other stores made use of in the navy, are not of equal goodness with those, in general, used in the merchant service.

It seems to be a very prevalent opinion, amongst naval officers of all ranks, that the king's stores are better than any others, and that no ships are so well fitted out as those of the navy. Undoubtedly they are in the right, as to the quantity, but, I fear, not as to the quality of the stores. This, indeed, is seldom tried; for things are generally condemned, or converted to some other use, by such time as they are half worn out. It is only on such voyages as ours, that we have an opportunity of making the trial; as our situation makes it necessary to wear every thing to the very utmost*.

* Captain Cook may, in part, be right in his comparison of some cordage used in the King's service, with what is used in that of the merchants; especially in time of war, when part of the cordage wanted in the navy is, from necessity, made by contract. But it is well known, that there is no better cordage than what is made in the King's yards. This explanation of the preceding paragraph has been subjoined, on the authority of a naval officer of distinguished rank, and great professional ability, who has, at the same time, recommended it as a necessary precaution, that ships fitted out on voyages of discovery, should be furnished with no cordage but what is made in the King's yards; and, indeed, that every article of their store, of every kind, should be the best that can be made.