

bably captured, Captain Warrington determined to proceed on the original cruise, with the remaining vessels. They sailed, accordingly, on the 13th of April, having remained at the island the time directed in the instructions of Commodore Decatur.

While making the best of their way towards the Indian seas, on the morning of the 27th of April, the two ships then being in lat. $38^{\circ} 30'$ S., long. 33° E., the Peacock made the signal of a stranger to the southward and eastward. Both the sloops of war made sail in chase. Though the wind was light, before evening it was found that the stranger was materially nearer. It now fell calm, and the chase was in sight in the morning. The wind coming out at N. W., the ships ran down before it, with studding-sails on both sides, the stranger hauling up, apparently, to look at them. The Peacock was the fastest vessel, and being two leagues ahead at half past 2, P. M., she was observed to manifest some caution about approaching the stranger, when the Hornet took in her starboard light sails, and hauled up for her consort. It was now thought, on board the latter ship, that the stranger was a large Indiaman, and that the Peacock was merely waiting for the Hornet to come up, in order to attack her. But an hour later Captain Warrington made a signal that the vessel in sight was a line-of-battle ship, and an enemy. The Hornet immediately hauled close upon the wind, the stranger then on her lee quarter, distant not quite two leagues, the Peacock passing ahead and soon getting clear of him.

It was now seen that the English ship sailed very fast, and was unusually weatherly. The Hornet being more particularly in danger, about 9 P. M., Captain Biddle felt it necessary to begin to lighten, his vessel being crowded with stores taken from the Penguin. Twelve tons of kentledge, a quantity of shot, some heavy spars, and the sheet anchor and cable, were thrown overboard. By 2 A. M., the enemy had drawn forward of the lee-beam, when the Hornet tacked to the westward, the enemy immediately following. At daylight on the 29th, the English ship was on the lee quarter of the American, and within gun-shot. At 7 o'clock she had English colours flying, with a rear-admiral's flag abroad, and she commenced firing. The shot passing over the Hornet, the launch was cut up and gotten rid of, the other anchors and cables, more shot, as many heavy articles as could be come at, and six of the guns were also thrown overboard. By 9 o'clock, the enemy had dropped so far astern that he ceased firing, the concussion produced by his guns having deadened the wind.

By 11 A. M., however, it was found that the enemy was again closing, when the Hornet threw overboard all the remaining guns but one, the boats, most of her shot, all the spare spars, and as many other articles from off deck and from below, as could be got at. She also cut up her topgallant fore-castle, and threw the pieces into the ocean. At meridian, the enemy had got within a mile, and he began again to fire, his shot flying far beyond the ship. Fortunately but three struck her. One passed through her jib, another plunged on her deck, glancing and lodging forward, and a third also hulled her.

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