

Falling on my knees, I could only articulate, "A sail! a sail!" for many minutes, when a flood of tears gave me relief; and we thanked God, as sincerely, perhaps, as wretched mortals ever did, for our apparently certain and speedy preservation.

The vessel was a schooner, and not being more than a mile distant, we were convinced must see us, and would come to our assistance as soon as a breeze sprung up, which did about nine A.M.; but after a couple of hours spent in painful suspense, we were nearly distracted to find the stranger was rapidly leaving us to our fate.

What a sad reverse! we could hardly speak to each other when we found ourselves thus abandoned, as it were, to destruction. We lost sight of this vessel early in the afternoon, steering E. by N., and I resolved to keep the same course, if possible. If bound to Bermuda, which I thought probable, the chance that she might heave-to in the night, and so enable us to come up with her, afforded us some consolation; and in our calamitous situation it was very natural for us to cherish even the shadow of hope. It now occurred to us that the dread of our being an American privateer caused the stranger to avoid us, and we therefore determined not to show the ensign again. Paxton was very ill and unable to do anything, so that Brown and myself had to relieve each other to steer the schooner, which we did after dark by a star, having a fine breeze from the Southward which lasted all night.

Daylight on the 21st January again cheered us with the sight of two vessels, a large ship and a schooner, six or seven miles to windward, but after the painful disappointment of yesterday, we hardly dared to anticipate anything favourable.