

would do us more harm than good, and proposed throwing it away, which was soon agreed to, and done accordingly. The American ensign also floated up, and we displayed its stars downwards as a signal of distress, about twelve feet above the deck, on a small spar fixed on one of the pumps, if happily any vessel might pass near enough to see it. But I was well aware we were far outside the usual track of our cruisers on the coast, and at least 270 miles from the nearest land.

I had examined the schooner's papers before our calamity, and by them learned that part of the cargo consisted of Spermaceti oil, in eighty large casks ; but it did not occur to any of us until we opened the hold, on the 22nd, that this article saved us from sinking. While the vessel remained full of water, we feared her hull must be so much strained by the weight of the masts (which were very large for her size) when on her beam-ends, that she would eventually open and break up.

On the 14th, still blowing nearly as hard as ever, the wreck of the foremast parted from the bowsprit. We were beginning to suffer much from thirst, and the dread of what we might yet have to undergo added to our misery.

15th December. The storm appeared to be more violent, and, during the night, I repeatedly thought all was over and the wreck going down.

Alas ! how unequal to the task of describing the protracted horrors of our awful situation must be the utmost effort of my feeble pen. Now the fourth day without tasting anything but the spoiled brandy—sleepless, and thoroughly wet—and no place of shelter except where we had to lie, with the water actually washing upon and under us ; a very slender pro-