

consider a defect, for two reasons: first, the small ones not discharging as much water as the large; secondly, having to use pump-boxes of different sizes in the same ship, where from accident to one set, the other cannot be used to make up the deficiency. As the sequel proved, the ship leaked considerably the moment we got a breeze which drove us through the sea; not only through her water-ways, upper works, and decks, but through the eyes of her combings, I presume through the scarf in the stem,—at all events, running by buckets-full down the apron into the store-room, forcing such quantities of water on her berth-deck, that I found it necessary to scuttle it to carry the water off.

The chain-cables of the ship I rowed out of the lockers at sea, examined the shackles, and found it necessary in two of the cables to have almost every shackle put in the forge. So completely had the bolts rusted in, that they could not be started until fire had done its work upon them, and even then some of them had to be cut entirely out. While thus making an overhaul below, I examined the pump-well, and to my utter surprise and astonishment, found all the iron bands on the two after pumps, below the berth-deck, in the state of the one I now send to you for inspection; and from the fact of one of them having entirely rusted off, and found lying in pieces at the bottom of the well-room, it may fairly be inferred they were not examined at all after the arrival of the ship at Norfolk. I had the two pumps, from which the bands had dropped off, well woulded at sea, and from the appearance of soft spots about them, am fearful when taken out, (which must be done at Rio,) we will find them rotten.

I should have recommended taking them out here, but in consequence of having to raise up a portion of the spar-deck for that purpose, think we may venture to delay it until our arrival at that port. I have also to state that the bibbs of both the fore and main-masts have started and canted three-quarters of an inch forward, and work considerably while at sea. This we shall remedy by raising our lower rigging, tops, and trestle-trees, and endeavour to get them back in their places, and secure them with extra bolts. I have stated but a few of many defects, and can only say that I have, during my service, assisted in the fitting out of many vessels, and regret, under all the circumstances of the case, to be compelled to add, that, taken as a whole, the Peacock has been fitted out, (so far as the navy-yard was concerned,) with less regard to safety and convenience, than any vessel I have ever had any thing to do with.

Respectfully, &c.,  
(Signed) W. L. HUDSON,  
Commanding U. S. Ship Peacock

CHARLES WILKES,  
Commanding Exploring Expedition.