

Flying-Fish made the signal "in want of assistance;" and on coming within hail, reported that her mainmast was sprung. Carpenters were at once sent on board, who reported that the mast was quite sound: the vessels were reduced to easy sail for the night in order to keep in company, as I intended in the morning, when the sea should have decreased, to have a farther examination of it.

I had now the prospect of another obstacle, in the delays this vessel must occasion me with a sprung mast, if such should prove to be the case, which I could, however, scarcely bring myself to believe. In order to secure an examination of the Sooloo Sea, which was a part of my original instructions, I determined to give Mr. Knox orders to act by himself, in case I found it necessary to push at once to Manilla and avoid detention, directing him to touch at Strong's and Ascension Islands, and to part company if she proved to be sound in her spars after a few days' trial, which the sea and wind then prevailing would fully prove. As soon as I came to this conclusion, Mr. Knox was sent for, Assistant-Surgeon Whittle, a carpenter, and two extra men ordered to join the tender, and my instructions relative to his proceedings, which will be found in Appendix XI., fully explained to him. On the 30th, we parted company with her, being in the latitude of Maloon's Island, and one hundred and ten miles due east of it: I steered a west course through the night under easy sail. At daylight sail was again made, and by noon we found the ship, by good observations, in latitude $19^{\circ} 19' N.$, longitude $165^{\circ} 25' W.$ The supposed position of the island being in latitude $19^{\circ} 20' N.$, and longitude $165^{\circ} 20' W.$, we had consequently passed directly over the place, with the weather so clear as to render all objects within a radius of fifteen miles perfectly distinct, and with two look-outs at the masthead, yet no signs of land were visible. I continued in its latitude until we had passed seventy miles to the westward, when we steered for another island, laid down in Arrowsmith's charts in longitude $166^{\circ} 48' W.$, and latitude $19^{\circ} 17' N.$ On its parallel, we ran for sixty miles east and west of the assigned place; but in like manner, there was nothing perceived that indicated any proximity to land.

On the 3d of December, we ran over the locality of a shoal, lying in $170^{\circ} 30' W.$, and latitude $18^{\circ} 20' N.$ This was likewise searched for, over a space of sixty miles east and west of its supposed locality.

Jane's Island, supposed to be in longitude $173^{\circ} 15' W.$, latitude $16^{\circ} 10' N.$, was next searched for. In doing this, I was greatly surprised to find that we had entered a strong current setting to the northward and westward. Our difference of latitude showed 24', and we were at once compelled to haul up to the southward, to reach the supposed