great speed. As soon as one of them discovered a blockade runner during daylight, she would attract other cruisers in the vicinity by sending up a dense column of smoke, visible for many miles in clear weather. A cordon of fast steamers stationed ten or fifteen miles apart, inside the Gulf Stream, and in the course from Nassau and Bermuda to Wilmington and Charleston, would have been more effective in stopping blockade running than the whole United States Navy concentrated off these ports. It was unaccountable to us why such a plan did not occur to good Mr. Welles, but it was not our business to suggest. I have no doubt, however, that the fraternity to which I then belonged would unanimously have voted thanks and a service of plate to the Honorable Secretary of the United States Navy for this oversight.

"I say inside the Gulf Stream; because every experienced captain of a blockade runner made it a point to cross the Stream early enough in the afternoon if possible to establish the ship's position by chronometer, so as to escape the influence of that current upon his dead reckoning. The lead always gave indication of our distance from the land, but not, of course, of our position; and the numerous salt works along the coast, where evaporation was produced by fire, and which were at work night and day, were visible long before the coast could be seen. Occasionally, the whole inward voyage would be made under adverse conditions. Cloudy, thick weather and heavy gales would prevail so as to prevent any solar or lunar observations, and reduce the dead reckoning to mere guesswork. In these cases, the nautical knowledge and judgment of the captain would be taxed to the utmost. The current of the Gulf Stream varies in velocity and, within certain limits, in direction; and the Stream itself, almost as well defined as a river within its banks under ordinary circumstances, is impelled by a strong gale towards the direction in which the wind is blowing, overflowing its banks, as it were. The counter current, too, inside of the Gulf Stream is much influenced by the prevailing winds.

"Upon one occasion, while in command of the *R. E. Lee,* formerly the Clyde built iron steamer *Giraffe,* we had experienced very heavy and thick weather, and had crossed the Stream and struck soundings about midday. The weather then clearing, so that we could obtain an altitude near meridian, we found ourselves at least forty miles north of our supposed position, and near the shoals which extend in a southerly direction off Cape