

wing, with an off-shore breeze, would be very apt to be blown out to sea. The most remarkable instance I have known of an insect being caught far from the land was that of a large grasshopper (*Acrydium*), which flew on board, when the "Beagle" was to windward of the Cape de Verd Islands, and when the nearest point of land, not directly opposed to the trade wind, was Cape Blanco on the coast of Africa, 370 miles distant.¹

On several occasions, when the "Beagle" has been within the mouth of the Plata, the rigging has been coated with the web of the Gossamer Spider. One day (November 1, 1832) I paid particular attention to this subject. The weather had been fine and clear, and in the morning the air was full of patches of the flocculent web, as on an autumnal day in England. The ship was sixty miles distant from the land, in the direction of a steady though light breeze. Vast numbers of a small spider, about one-tenth of an inch in length, and of a dusky red color, were attached to the webs. There must have been, I should suppose, some thousands on the ship. The little spider, when first coming in contact with the rigging, was always seated on a single thread, and not on the flocculent mass. This latter seems merely to be produced by the entanglement of the single threads. The spiders were all of one species, but of both sexes, together with young ones. These latter were distinguished by their smaller size and more dusky color. I will not give the description of this spider, but merely state that it does not appear to me to be included in any of Latreille's genera. The little aëronaut as soon as it arrived on board was very active, running about, sometimes letting itself fall, and then reascending the same thread; sometimes employing itself in making a small and very irregular mesh in the corners between the ropes. It could run with facility on the surface of water. When disturbed it lifted up its front legs, in the attitude of atten-

¹ The flies which frequently accompany a ship for some days on its passage from harbor to harbor, wandering from the vessel, are soon lost, and all disappear.