into the well; and if it had not been for the chain, I should have been drowned. Such has been the chain of events, all because I wanted to eat an apple.

"However, I have got rid of the farmer, and the dog, and the bull, and the bees—all's well that ends well; but how the devil am I to get out of the well? All creation appear to have conspired against the rights of man. As my father said, this is an iron age, and here I am swinging to an iron chain."

We have given the whole of Jack's soliloquy, as it will prove that Jack was no fool, although he was a bit of a philosopher; and a man who could reason so well upon cause and effect, at the bottom of a well, up to his neck in water, showed a good deal of presence of mind. But if Jack's mind had been a little twisted by his father's philosophy, it had still sufficient strength and elasticity to recover itself in due time. Had Jack been a common personage, we should never have selected him for our hero.

CHAPTER VII

In which Jack makes some very sage reflections, and comes to a very unwise decision.

AFTER all, it must be acknowledged that although there are cases of distress in which a well may become a place of refuge, a well is not at all calculated for a prolonged residence—so thought Jack. After he had been there some fifteen minutes his teeth chattered, and his lips trembled; he felt a numbness all over, and he thought it high time to call for assistance, which at first he would not, as he was afraid he should be pulled up to encounter the indignation of the farmer and his family. Jack was arranging his jaws for a halloo when he felt the chain pulled up, and he slowly emerged from the water. At first he heard complaints of the weight of the bucket, at which Jack was not surprised; then he heard a tittering and laughing between two parties, and soon afterwards he mounted up gaily. At last his head appeared above the low wall, and he was about to extend his arms so as to secure a position on it, when those who were working at the windlass beheld him. It was a heavy farming man and a maid-servant.

"Thank you," said Jack.

One never should be too quick in returning thanks; the girl screamed and let go the winch, the man, frightened, did not hold it fast; it slipped from his grasp, whirled round, struck him under the chin, and threw him over it headlong, and before the "Thank you" was fairly out of Jack's lips, down he went again like lightning to the bottom. Fortunately for Jack, he had not yet let go the chain, or he might have struck the sides and been killed; as it was, he was merely soused a second time, and in a minute or two regained his former position.

"This is mighty pleasant," thought Jack, as he clapped his wet hat once more on his head; "at all events, they can't now plead ignorance, they must know that I'm here."

In the meantime the girl ran into the kitchen, threw herself down on a stool, from which she reeled off in a fit upon sundry heaps of dough waiting to be baked in the oven, which were laid to rise on the floor before the fire.

"Mercy on me, what is the matter with Susan?" exclaimed the farmer's wife. "Here—where's Mary—where's John. Deary me, if the bread won't all be turned to pancakes."

John soon followed, holding his under-jaw in his hand, looking very dismal and very frightened, for two reasons; one, because he thought that his jaw was broken, and the other, because he thought he had seen the devil.

"Mercy on us, what is the matter?" exclaimed the farmer's wife again. "Mary, Mary, Mary!" screamed she, beginning to be frightened herself, for with all her efforts she could not remove Susan from the bed of dough, where she lay senseless and heavy as lead. Mary answered to her mistress's loud appeal, and with her assistance they raised up Susan; but as for the bread, there was no hopes of it ever rising again. "Why don't you come here and help Susan, John?" cried Mary.

"Aw-yaw-aw!" was all the reply of John, who had had enough quite of helping Susan, and who continued to hold his head, as it were, in his hand.

"What's the matter here, missus?" exclaimed the farmer, coming in. "Highty-tighty, what ails Susan? and what ails you?" continued the farmer, turning to John. "Dang it, but everything seems to go wrong, this blessed day First, there be all the apples stolen; then there be all the hives turned

topsy-turvy in the garden; then there be Cæsar with his flank opened by the bull; then there be the bull broken through the hedge and tumbled into the saw-pit; and now I come to get more help to drag him out, I find one woman dead like, and John looks as if he had seen the devil."

"Aw-yaw-aw!" replied John, nodding his head very significantly.

"One would think that the devil had broke loose to-day. What is it, John? Have you seen him, and has Susan seen him?"

"Aw-yaw."

"He's stopped your jaw, then, at all events, and I thought the devil himself wouldn't have done that—we shall get nothing out of you. Is that wench coming to her senses?"

"Yes, yes, she's better now. Susan, what's the matter?"

"Oh, oh, ma'am! the well, the well——"

"The well! Something wrong there, I suppose; well, I will go and see."

The farmer trotted off to the well; he perceived the bucket was at the bottom and all the rope out; he looked about him, and then he looked into the well. Jack, who had become very impatient, had been looking up some time for the assistance which he expected would have come sooner; the round face of the farmer occasioned a partial eclipse of the round disk which bounded his view, just as one of the satellites of Jupiter sometimes obscures the face of the planet round which he revolves.

"Here I am," cried Jack, "get me up quick, or I shall be dead;" and what Jack said was true, for he was quite done up by having been so long down, although his courage had not failed him.

"Dang it, but there be somebody fallen into the well," cried the farmer; "no end to mishaps this day. Well, we must get a Christian out of a well afore we get a bull out of a saw-pit, so I'll go and call the men."

In a very short time the men who were assembled round the saw-pit were brought to the well.

"Down below there, hold on now."

"Never fear," cried Jack.

Away went the winch, and once more Jack had an extended horizon to survey. As soon as he was at the top the men

hauled him over the bricks and laid him down upon the ground, for Jack's strength had failed him.

"Dang it, if it bean't that chap who was on my apple-tree," cried the farmer; "howsomever, he must not die for stealing a few apples. Lift him up, lads, and take him in—he is dead with cold—no wonder."

The farmer led the way, and the men carried Jack into the house, when the farmer gave him a glass of brandy; this restored Jack's circulation, and in a short time he was all right again.

After some previous conversation, in which Jack narrated all that had happened, "What may be your name?" inquired the farmer.

"My name is Easy," replied Jack.

"What! be you the son of Mr. Easy, of Forest Hill?"

"Yes."

"Dang it, he be my landlord, and a right good landlord too—why didn't you say so when you were up in the apple-tree? You might have picked the whole orchard and welcome."

"My dear sir," replied Jack, who had taken a second glass of brandy, and was quite talkative again, "let this be a warning to you, and when a man proposes to argue the point, always, in future, listen. Had you waited, I would have proved to you most incontestably that you had no more right to the apples than I had; but you would not listen to argument, and without discussion we can never arrive at truth. You send for your dog, who is ripped up by the bull; the bull breaks his leg in a saw-pit; the bee-hives are overturned, and you lose all your honey; your man John breaks his jaw; your maid Susan spoils all the bread—and why? because you would not allow me to argue the point."

"Well, Mr. Easy, it be all true that all these mishaps have happened because I would not allow you to argue the point, perhaps—although, as I rent the orchard from your father, I cannot imagine how you could prove to me that the apples were not mine; but now, let's take your side of the question, and I don't see how you be much better off. You get up in a tree for a few apples, with plenty of money to buy them if you like—you are kept there by a dog—you are nearly gored by a bull—you are stung by the bees, and you tumble souse into

a well, and are nearly killed a dozen times, and all for a few apples not worth twopence."

"All very true, my good man," replied Jack; "but you forget that I, as a philosopher, was defending the rights of man."

"Well, I never knew before that a lad who stole apples was called a philosopher—we calls it petty larceny in the indictments; and as for your rights of man, I cannot see how they can be defended by doing what's wrong."

"You do not comprehend the matter, farmer."

"No, I don't—and I be too old to learn, Master Easy. All I have to say is this, you are welcome to all the apples in the orchard if you please, and if you prefers, as it seems you do, to steal them instead of asking for them, which I only can account for by the reason that they say, that 'stolen fruit be sweetest,' I've only to say that I shall give orders that you be not interfered with. My chaise be at the door, Master Easy, and the man will drive you to your father's—make my compliments to him, and say that I'm very sorry that you tumbled into our well."

As Jack was much more inclined for bed than argument, he wished the farmer good-night, and allowed himself to be driven home.

The pain from the stings of the bees, now that his circulation had fully returned, was so great, that he was not sorry to find Dr. Middleton taking his tea with his father and mother. Jack merely said that he had been so unfortunate as to upset a hive, and had been severely stung. He deferred the whole story till another opportunity. Dr. Middleton prescribed for Jack, but on taking his hand found that he was in a high fever, which, after the events of the day, was not to be wondered at. Jack was bled, and kept his bed for a week, by which time he was restored; but during that time Jack had been thinking very seriously, and had made up his mind.

But we must explain a circumstance which had occurred, which was probably the cause of Jack's decision. When Jack returned on the evening in question, he found seated with his father and Dr. Middleton a Captain Wilson, a sort of cousin to the family, who but occasionally paid them a visit, for he lived at some distance; and having a wife and large family, with nothing but his half-pay for their support, he could not afford to expend even shoe-leather in compliments. The object

of this visit on the part of Captain Wilson was to request the aid of Mr. Easy. He had succeeded in obtaining his appointment to a sloop of war (for he was in the king's service), but was without the means of fitting himself out, without leaving his wife and family penniless. He therefore came to request Mr. Easy to lend him a few hundred pounds, until he should be able, by his prize-money, to repay them. Mr. Easy was not a man to refuse such a request, and always having plenty of spare cash at his banker's, he drew a cheque for a thousand pounds, which he gave to Captain Wilson, requesting that he would only repay it at his convenience. Captain Wilson wrote an acknowledgment of the debt, promising to pay upon his first prize-money, which receipt, however binding it may be to a man of honour, was, in point of law, about as valuable as if he had agreed to pay as soon "as the cows came home." The affair had been just concluded, and Captain Wilson had returned into the parlour with Mr. Easy, when Jack returned from his expedition.

Jack greeted Captain Wilson, whom he had long known; but, as we before observed, he suffered so much pain, that he soon retired with Dr. Middleton, and went to bed.

During a week there is room for much reflection, even in a lad of fourteen, although at that age we are not much inclined to think. But Jack was in bed; his eyes were so swollen with the stings of the bees that he could neither read nor otherwise amuse himself; and he preferred his own thoughts to the gabble of Sarah, who attended him; so Jack thought, and the result of his cogitations we shall soon bring forward.

It was on the eighth day that Jack left his bed and came down into the drawing-room. He then detailed to his father the adventures which had taken place, which had obliged him to take to his bed.

"You see, Jack," replied his father, "it's just what I told you, the world is so utterly demoralised by what is called social compact, and the phalanx supporting it, by contributing a portion of their unjust possessions for the security of the remainder, is so powerful, that any one who opposes it must expect to pass the life of a martyr; but martyrs are always required previous to any truth, however sublime, being received, and, like Abraham, whom I have always considered as a great philosopher, I am willing to sacrifice my only son in so noble a cause."

"That's all very good on your part, father, but we must argue the point a little. If you are as great a philosopher as Abraham, I am not quite so dutiful a son as Isaac, whose blind obedience, in my opinion, is very contrary to your rights of man; but the fact, in few words, is simply this. In promulgating your philosophy, in the short space of two days, I have been robbed of the fish I caught, and my rod and line; I have been soused into a fish-pond; I have been frightened out of my wits by a bull-dog; been nearly killed by a bull; been stung to death by bees, and twice tumbled into a well. Now, if all that happens in two days, what must I expect to suffer in a whole year? It appears to be very unwise to attempt making further converts, for people on shore seem determined not to listen to reason or argument. But it has occurred to me, that although the whole earth has been so nefariously divided among the few, that the waters at least are the property of all. No man claims his share of the sea—every one may there plough as he pleases, without being taken up for a trespasser. Even war makes no difference; every one may go on as he pleases, and if they meet, it is nothing but a neutral ground on which the parties contend. It is, then, only upon the ocean that I am likely to find that equality and rights of man, which we are so anxious to establish on shore; and therefore I have resolved not to go to school again, which I detest, but to go to sea, and propagate our opinions as much as I can."

"I cannot listen to that, Jack. In the first place, you must return to school; in the next place, you shall not go to sea."

"Then, father, all I have to say is, that I swear by the rights of man I will not go back to school, and that I will go to sea. Who and what is to prevent me? Was not I born my own master?—has any one a right to dictate to me as if I were not his equal? Have I not as much right to my share of the sea as any other mortal? I stand upon perfect equality," continued Jack, stamping his right foot on the floor.

What had Mr. Easy to offer in reply? He must either, as a philosopher, have sacrificed his hypothesis, or, as a father, have sacrificed his son. Like all philosophers, he preferred what he considered as the less important of the two, he sacrificed his son; but—we will do him justice—he did it with a sigh.

"Jack, you shall, if you wish it, go to sea."

"That of course," replied Jack, with the air of a conqueror;

"but the question is, with whom? Now it has occurred to me, that Captain Wilson has just been appointed to a ship, and I should like to sail with him."

"I will write to him," said Mr. Easy mournfully, "but I should have liked to have felt his head first;" and thus was the matter arranged.

The answer from Captain Wilson was, of course, in the affirmative, and he promised that he would treat Jack as his own son.

Our hero mounted his father's horse, and rode off to Mr. Bonnycastle.

"I am going to sea, Mr. Bonnycastle."

"The very best thing for you," replied Mr. Bonnycastle.

Our hero met Dr. Middleton.

"I am going to sea, Dr. Middleton."

"The very best thing for you," replied the doctor.

"I am going to sea, mother," said John.

"To sea, John, to sea? no, no, dear John, you are not going to sea," replied Mrs. Easy, with horror.

"Yes, I am; father has agreed, and says he will obtain your consent."

"My consent! Oh, my dear, dear boy!" and Mrs. Easy wept bitterly, as Rachel mourning for her children.

CHAPTER VIII

In which Mr. Easy has his first lesson as to zeal in his Majesty's service.

As there was no time to lose, our hero very soon bade adieu to his paternal roof, as the phrase is, and found his way down to Portsmouth. As Jack had plenty of money, and was very much pleased at finding himself his own master, he was in no hurry to join his ship, and five or six companions, not very creditable, whom either Jack had picked up, or had picked up Jack, and who lived upon him, strongly advised him to put it off until the very last moment. As this advice happened to coincide with Jack's opinion, our hero was three weeks at Portsmouth before any one knew of his arrival; but at last

Captain Wilson received a letter from Mr. Easy, by which he found that Jack had left home at the period we have mentioned, and he desired the first lieutenant to make inquiries, as he was afraid that some accident might have happened to him. As Mr. Sawbridge, the first lieutenant, happened to be going on shore on the same evening for the last time previous to the ship's sailing, he looked into the Blue Posts, George, and Fountain Inns, to inquire if there was such a person arrived as Mr. Easy. "Oh yes," replied the waiter at the Fountain, "Mr. Easy has been here these three weeks."

"The devil he has," roared Mr. Sawbridge, with all the indignation of a first lieutenant defrauded three weeks of a midshipman; "where is he; in the coffee-room?"

"Oh dear no, sir," replied the waiter, "Mr. Easy has the front apartments on the first floor."

"Well then, show me up to the first floor."

"May I request the pleasure of your name, sir?" said the waiter.

"First lieutenants don't send up their names to midshipmen," replied Mr. Sawbridge; "he shall soon know who I am."

At this reply the waiter walked upstairs, followed by Mr. Sawbridge, and threw open the door.

"A gentleman wishes to see you, sir," said the waiter.

"Desire him to walk in," said Jack; "and, waiter, mind that the punch is a little better than it was yesterday; I have asked two more gentlemen to dine here."

In the meantime Mr. Sawbridge, who was not in his uniform, had entered, and perceived Jack alone, with the dinner table laid out in the best style for eight, a considerable show of plate for even the Fountain Inn, and everything, as well as the apartment itself, according to Mr. Sawbridge's opinion, much more fit for a commander-in-chief than a midshipman of a sloop of war.

Now Mr. Sawbridge was a good officer, one who had really worked his way up to the present rank, that is to say, that he had served seven-and-twenty years, and had nothing but his pay. He was a little soured in the service, and certainly had an aversion to the young men of family who were now fast crowding into it—and with some grounds, as he perceived his own chance of promotion decrease in the same ratio as the

numbers increased. He considered that in proportion as midshipmen assumed a cleaner and more gentlemanly appearance, so did they become more useless, and it may therefore be easily imagined that his bile was raised by this parade and display in a lad who was very shortly to be, and ought three weeks before to have been, shrinking from his frown. Nevertheless, Sawbridge was a good-hearted man, although a little envious of luxury, which he could not pretend to indulge in himself.

"May I beg to ask," said Jack, who was always remarkably polite and gentlemanly in his address, "in what manner I may be of service to you?"

"Yes, sir, you may—by joining your ship immediately. And may I beg to ask in return, sir, what is the reason you have stayed on shore three weeks without joining her?"

Hereupon Jack, who did not much admire the peremptory tone of Mr. Sawbridge, and who during the answer had taken a seat, crossed his legs, and played with the gold chain to which his watch was secured, after a pause very coolly replied—

"And pray, who are you?"

"Who am I, sir?" replied Sawbridge, jumping out of his chair; "my name is Sawbridge, sir, and I am the first lieutenant of the *Harpy*. Now, sir, you have your answer."

Mr. Sawbridge, who imagined that the name of the first lieutenant would strike terror to a culprit midshipman, threw himself back in the chair and assumed an air of importance.

"Really, sir," replied Jack, "what may be your exact situation on board, my ignorance of the service will not allow me to guess, but if I may judge from your behaviour, you have no small opinion of yourself."

"Look ye, young man, you may not know what a first lieutenant is, and I take it for granted that you do not, by your behaviour; but depend upon it, I'll let you know very soon. In the meantime, sir, I insist upon it, that you go immediately on board."

"I'm sorry that I cannot comply with your very moderate request," replied Jack coolly. "I shall go on board when it suits my convenience, and I beg that you will give yourself no further trouble on my account."

Jack then rang the bell; the waiter, who had been listening outside, immediately entered, and before Mr. Saw-

bridge, who was dumb with astonishment at Jack's impertinence, could have time to reply—

"Waiter," said Jack, "show this gentleman downstairs."

"By the god of war!" exclaimed the first lieutenant; "but I'll soon show you down to the boat, my young bantam; and when once I get you safe on board, I'll make you know the difference between a midshipman and a first lieutenant."

"I can only admit of equality, sir," replied Jack; "we are all born equal—I trust you'll allow that."

"Equality—damn it, I suppose you'll take the command of the ship. However, sir, your ignorance will be a little enlightened by-and-by. I shall now go and report your conduct to Captain Wilson; and I tell you plainly, that if you are not on board this evening, to-morrow morning, at daylight, I shall send a sergeant and a file of marines to fetch you."

"You may depend upon it, sir," replied Jack, "that I also shall not fail to mention to Captain Wilson, that I consider you a very quarrelsome, impertinent fellow, and recommend him not to allow you to remain on board. It will be quite uncomfortable to be in the same ship with such an ungentlemanly bear."

"He must be mad—quite mad," exclaimed Sawbridge, whose astonishment even mastered his indignation. "Mad as a March hare—by God."

"No, sir," replied Jack, "I am not mad, but I am a philosopher."

"A what?" exclaimed Sawbridge; "damme, what next?—well, my joker, all the better for you, I shall put your philosophy to the proof."

"It is for that very reason, sir," replied Jack, "that I have decided upon going to sea; and if you do remain on board, I hope to argue the point with you, and make you a convert to the truth of equality and the rights of man."

"By the Lord that made us both, I'll soon make you a convert to the thirty-six articles of war—that is, if you remain on board; but I shall now go to the captain, and report your conduct, sir, and leave you to your dinner with what appetite you may."

"Sir, I am infinitely obliged to you; but you need not be afraid of my appetite; I am only sorry, as you happen to belong to the same ship, that I cannot, in justice to the

gentlemanly young men whom I expect, ask you to join them. I wish you a very good morning, sir."

"Twenty years have I been in the service," roared Sawbridge, "and damme—but he's mad—downright, stark, staring mad." And the first lieutenant bounced out of the room.

Jack was a little astonished himself. Had Mr. Sawbridge made his appearance in uniform it might have been different, but that a plain-looking man, with black whiskers, shaggy hair, and old blue frock-coat and yellow cassimere waistcoat, should venture to address him in such a manner, was quite incomprehensible;—he calls me mad, thought Jack, I shall tell Captain Wilson what is my opinion about his lieutenant. Shortly afterwards the company arrived, and Jack soon forgot all about it.

In the meantime Sawbridge called at the captain's lodgings, and found him at home. He made a very faithful report of all that had happened, and concluded his report by demanding, in great wrath, either an instant dismissal or a court-martial on our hero, Jack.

"Stop, Sawbridge," replied Captain Wilson, "take a chair; as Mr. Easy says, we must argue the point, and then I will leave it to your better feelings. As for the court-martial, it will not hold good, for Mr. Easy, in the first place, has not yet joined the ship, and in the next place, could not be supposed to know that you were the first lieutenant, or even an officer, for you went to him out of uniform."

"Very true, sir," replied Sawbridge, "I had forgotten that."

"Then, as for his dismissal, or rather, not allowing him to join, Mr. Easy has been brought up in the country, and has never seen anything aquatic larger than a fish-pond, perhaps, in his life; and as for the service, or the nature of it, I believe he is as ignorant of it as a child not a year old—I doubt whether he knows the rank of a lieutenant; certainly, he can have no idea of the power of a first lieutenant, by his treatment of you."

"I should think not," replied Sawbridge dryly.

"I do not think, therefore, that conduct which must have proceeded from sheer ignorance should be so severely punished—I appeal to you, Sawbridge."

"Well, sir, perhaps you are right—but still he told me he

was a philosopher, and talked about equality and rights of man. Told me that he could only admit of equality between us, and begged to argue the point. Now, sir, if a midshipman is to argue the point every time that an order is given, the service will come to a pretty pass."

"That is all very true, Sawbridge; and now you remind me of what never occurred to me at the time that I promised to take Mr. Easy in the ship. I now recollect that his father, who is a distant relation of mine, has some very wild notions in his head, just like what have been repeated by his son on your interview with him. I have occasionally dined there, and Mr. Easy has always been upholding the principles of natural equality and of the rights of man, much to the amusement of his guests, and I confess, at the time, of mine also. I recollect telling him that I trusted he would never be able to disseminate his opinions in the service to which I belonged, as we should have an end of all discipline. I little thought, at the time, that his only son, who has no more occasion to go to sea than the Archbishop of Canterbury, for his father has a very handsome property—I believe seven or eight thousand a year—would ever have sailed with me, and have brought these opinions with him into any ship that I commanded. It is a pity, a great pity——"

"He never could have brought his pigs to a worse market," observed Sawbridge.

"I agree with you, and as a father myself, I cannot but help feeling how careful we should be, how we inculcate anything like abstract and philosophical ideas to youth. Allowing them to be in themselves correct, still they are dangerous, as sharp instruments are in the hands of a child;—allowing them to be erroneous, they are seized upon with an avidity by young and ardent minds, and are not to be eradicated without the greatest difficulty, and very often not until they have accomplished their ruin."

"Then you think, sir, that these ideas have taken deep root in this young man, and we shall not easily rid him of them?"

"I do not say so; but still, recollect they have been instilled, perhaps, from the earliest period, by one from whom they must have been received with all confidence—from a father to a son; and that son has never yet been sufficiently in the world to have proved their fallacy."

"Well, sir," replied Sawbridge, "if I may venture to offer an opinion on the subject—and in so doing I assure you that I only shall from a feeling for the service—if, as you say, these opinions will not easily be eradicated, as the young man is independent, would it not be both better for himself, as well as for the service, that he is sent home again? As an officer he will never do any good for himself, and he may do much harm to others. I submit this to you, Captain Wilson, with all respect; but as your first lieutenant, I feel very jealous at any chance of the discipline of the ship being interfered with by the introduction of this young man, to whom it appears that a profession is no object."

"My dear Sawbridge," replied Captain Wilson, after taking one or two turns up and down the room, "we entered the service together, we were messmates for many years, and you must be aware that it is not only long friendship, but an intimate knowledge of your unrewarded merit, which has induced me to request you to come with me as my first lieutenant. Now I will put a case to you, and you shall then decide the question—and moreover, I will abide by your decision.

"Suppose that you were a commander like myself, with a wife and seven children, and that, struggling for many years to support them, you found yourself, notwithstanding the utmost parsimony, gradually running into debt. That, after many long applications, you had at last succeeded in obtaining employment by an appointment to a fine sloop, and there was every prospect, by prize-money and increased pay, of recovering yourself from your difficulties, if not realising a sufficient provision for your family. Then suppose that all this prospect and all these hopes were likely to be dashed to the ground by the fact of having no means of fitting yourself out, no credit, no means of paying debts you have contracted, for which you would have been arrested, or anything sufficient to leave for the support of your family during your absence, your agent only consenting to advance one-half of what you require. Now, suppose, in this awkward dilemma, without any one in this world upon whom you have any legitimate claim, as a last resource you were to apply to one with whom you have but a distant connection, and but an occasional acquaintance—and that when you had made your request for the loan of two or three hundred pounds, fully anticipating a refusal (from the feeling that he who goes a-bor-

rowing goes a-sorrowing), I say, suppose, to your astonishment, that this generous person was to present you with a cheque on his banker for one thousand pounds, demanding no interest, no legal security, and request you only to pay it at your convenience—I ask you, Sawbridge, what would be your feelings towards such a man?"

"I would die for him," replied Sawbridge, with emotion.

"And suppose that, by the merest chance, or from a whim of the moment, the son of that man was to be placed under your protection?"

"I would be a father to him," replied Sawbridge.

"But we must proceed a little further; suppose that you were to find the lad was not all that you could wish—that he had imbibed erroneous doctrines, which would probably, if not eradicated, be attended with consequences fatal to his welfare and happiness, would you therefore, on that account, withdraw your protection, and leave him to the mercy of others, who had no claims of gratitude to sway them in his favour?"

"Most certainly not, sir," replied Sawbridge; "on the contrary, I would never part with the son until, by precept or otherwise, I had set him right again, and thus had, as far as it was possible, paid the debt of gratitude due to the generous father."

"I hardly need say to you, Sawbridge, after what has passed, that this lad you have just come from is the son, and that Mr. Easy of Forest Hill is the father."

"Then, sir, I can only say, that not only to please you, but also from respect to a man who has shown such goodwill towards one of our cloth, I shall most cheerfully forgive all that has passed between the lad and me, and all that may probably take place before we make him what he ought to be."

"Thank you, Sawbridge; I expected as much, and am not disappointed in my opinion of you."

"And now, Captain Wilson, pray what is to be done?"

"We must get him on board, but not with a file of marines,—that will do more harm than good. I will send a note, requesting him to breakfast with me to-morrow morning, and have a little conversation with him. I do not wish to frighten him; he would not scruple to run back to Forest Hill—now I wish to keep him if I possibly can."

"You are right, sir; his father appears his greatest enemy.

What a pity that a man with so good a heart should be so weak in the head. Then, sir, I shall take no notice of this at present, but leave the whole affair in your hands."

"Do, Sawbridge; you have obliged me very much by your kindness in this business."

Mr. Sawbridge then took his leave, and Captain Wilson despatched a note to our hero, requesting the pleasure of his company to breakfast at nine o'clock the ensuing morning. The answer was in the affirmative, but verbal, for Jack had drunk too much champagne to trust his pen to paper.

CHAPTER IX

In which Mr. Easy finds himself on the other side of the Bay of Biscay.

THE next morning Jack Easy would have forgotten all about his engagement with the captain, had it not been for the waiter, who thought that, after the reception which our hero had given the first lieutenant, it would be just as well that he should not be disrespectful to the captain. Now, Jack had not, hitherto, put on his uniform, and he thought this a fitting occasion, particularly as the waiter suggested the propriety of his appearance in it. Whether it was from a presentiment of what he was to suffer, Jack was not at all pleased, as most lads are, with the change in his dress. It appeared to him that he was sacrificing his independence; however, he did not follow his first impulse, which was to take it off again, but took his hat, which the waiter had brushed and handed to him, and then set off for the captain's lodgings. Captain Wilson received him as if he had not been aware of his delay in joining his ship, or his interview with his first lieutenant, but before breakfast was over, Jack himself narrated the affair in a few words. Captain Wilson then entered into a detail of the duties and rank of every person on board of the ship, pointing out to Jack, that where discipline was required, it was impossible, when duty was carried on, that more than one could command; and that that one was the captain, who represented the king in person, who represented the country; and that, as the orders were trans-