he caught hold of the chaplain by the leg, who commenced swearing most terribly; but before he could finish the oath, the water which had burst into the cabin through the windows—for the dead lights, in the confusion, had not yet been shipped—burst out of the cross bulk-heads, sweeping like a torrent the marine, the cabin-door, and everything else in its force, and floating Jack and the chaplain with several others down the main hatchway on to the lower deck. The lower deck being also full of water, men and chests were rolling and tossing about, and Jack was sometimes in company with the chaplain, and at other times separated; at last they both recovered their legs, and gained the midshipmen's berth, which, although afloat, was still a haven of security. Mr. Hawkins spluttered and spit, and so did Jack, until he began to laugh.

"This is very trying, Mr. Easy," said the chaplain; "very trying indeed to the temper. I hope I have not sworn—I hope not."

"Not a word," said Jack—"I was close to you all the time—you only said, 'God preserve us!'"

"Only that? I was afraid that I said 'God d—n it!'"

"Quite a mistake, Mr. Hawkins. Let's go into the gun-room, and try to wash this salt water out of our mouths, and then I will tell you all you said, as far as I could hear it, word for word."

So Jack by this means got another glass of grog, which was very acceptable in his wet condition, and made himself very comfortable, while those on deck were putting on the dead lights, and very busy setting the goose wings of the main-sail, to prevent the frigate from being pooped a second time.

CHAPTER XXVI

In which our hero becomes excessively unwell, and agrees to go through a course of medicine.

THE hammocks were not piped down that night; some were taken indiscriminately for the wounded, but the rest remained in the nettings, for all hands were busy preparing jury masts and jury rigging, and Mr. Pottyfar was so well employed that

for twelve hours his hands were not in his pockets. It was indeed a dreadful night; the waves were mountains high, and chased the frigate in their fury, cresting, breaking, and roaring at her taffrail. But she flew before them with the wings of the wind; four men at the helm, assisted by others at the relieving tackles below. Jack, having been thanked on and washed off the quarter-deck, thought that he had done quite enough; he was as deep as he could swim before he had satisfied all the scruples of the chaplain, and stowing himself away on one of the lockers of the midshipmen's berth, was soon fast asleep, notwithstanding that the frigate rolled gunwale under. Gascoigne had done much better; he had taken down a hammock, as he said, for a poor wounded man, hung it up and turned in himself. The consequence was, that the next morning the surgeon, who saw him lying in the hammock, had put him down in the report, but as Gascoigne had got up as well as ever, he laughed and scratched his name out of the list of wounded.

Before morning the ship had been pumped out dry, and all below made as secure and safe as circumstances would permit; but the gale still continued its violence, and there was anything but comfort on board.

"I say, Martin, you ought to be thrown overboard!" said Gascoigne; "all this comes from your croaking—you're a Mother Carey's chicken."

"I wish I had been any one's chicken," replied Martin; "but the devil a thing to nestle under have I had since I can well remember."

"What a bore to have no galley-fire lighted," said one of the youngsters; "no tea, and not allowed any grog."

"The gale will last three days," replied Martin, "and by that time we shall not be far from the admiral; it won't blow home there."

"Well then, we shall be ordered in directly, and I shall go on shore to-morrow," replied Easy.

"Yes, if you're ill," replied Gascoigne.

"Never fear, I shall be sick enough. We shall be there at least six weeks, and then we'll forget all this."

"Yes," replied Martin, "we may forget it, but will the poor fellows whose limbs are shrivelled forget it? and will poor Miles, the boatswain, who is blind for ever?"

"Very true, Martin; we are thinking about ourselves, not

thankful for our escape, and not feeling for others," replied Gascoigne.

"Give us your hand, Ned," said Jack Easy. "And, Martin, we ought to thank you for telling us the truth—we are a selfish set of fellows."

"Still we took our share with the others," replied one of the midshipmen.

"That's more reason for us to be grateful and to pity them," replied Jack; "suppose you had lost your arm or your eyesight—we should have pitied you; so now pity others."

"Well, so I do, now I think of it."

"Think oftener, youngster," observed Martin, going on deck.

What a change from the morning of the day before; but twenty-four hours had passed away, and the sea had been smooth; the frigate dashed through the blue water, proud in all her canvas, graceful as a swan. Since that there had been fire, tempest, lightning, disaster, danger, and death; her masts were tossed about on the snowy waves, hundreds of miles away from her, and she—a wreck—was rolling heavily, groaning and complaining in every timber, as she urged her impetuous race with the furious running sea.

How wrong are those on shore who assert that sailors are not religious!—how is it possible, supposing them to be possessed of feeling, to be otherwise? On shore, where you have nothing but the change of seasons, each in his own peculiar beauty—nothing but the blessings of the earth, its fruits, its flowers—nothing but the bounty, the comforts, the luxuries which have been invented, where you can rise in the morning in peace, and lay down your head at night in security—God may be neglected and forgotten for a long time; but at sea, when each gale is a warning, each disaster acts as a check, each escape as a homily upon the forbearance of Providence,—that man must be indeed brutalised who does not feel that God is there. On shore we seldom view Him but in all His beauty and kindness; but at sea we are as often reminded how terrible He is in His wrath. Can it be supposed that the occurrences of the last twenty-four hours were lost upon the minds of any one man in that ship? No, no. In their courage and activity they might appear reckless, but in their hearts they acknowledged and bowed unto their God.

Before the day was over, a jury-foremast had been got up, and sail having been put upon it, the ship was steered with greater ease and safety—the main brace had been spliced to cheer up the exhausted crew, and the hammocks were piped down.

As Gascoigne had observed, some of the men were not very much pleased to find that they were minus their blankets, but Captain Wilson ordered their losses to be supplied by the purser and expended by the master; this quite altered the case, as they obtained new blankets in most cases for old ones. But still it was impossible to light the galley-fire, and the men sat on their chests and nibbled biscuit. By twelve o'clock that night the gale broke, and more sail was necessarily put on the scudding vessel, for the sea still ran fast and mountains high. At daylight the sun burst out and shone brightly on them, the sea went gradually down, the fire was lighted, and Mr. Pottyfar, whose hands were again in his pockets, at twelve o'clock gave the welcome order to pipe to dinner. As soon as the men had eaten their dinner, the frigate was once more brought to the wind, her jury-mast forward improved upon, and more sail made upon it. The next morning there was nothing of the gale left except the dire effects which it had produced, the black and riven stump of the foremast still holding up a terrific warning of the power and fury of the elements.

Three days more, and the *Aurora* joined the Toulon fleet. When she was first seen it was imagined by those on board of the other ships that she had been in action, but they soon learnt that the conflict had been against more direful weapons than any yet invented by mortal hands. Captain Wilson waited upon the admiral, and of course received immediate orders to repair to port and refit. In a few hours the *Aurora* had shaped her course for Malta, and by sunset the Toulon fleet were no longer in sight.

"By de holy poker, Massa Easy, but that terrible sort of gale the other day anyhow—I tink one time, we all go to Davy Joney's lacker."

"Very true, Mesty; I hope never to meet with such another."

"Den, Massa Easy, why you go to sea? when man ab no money, nothing to eat, den he go to sea, but everybody say you ab plenty money—why you come to sea?"

"I'm sure I don't know," replied Jack thoughtfully; "I came to sea on account of equality and the rights of man."

"Eh, Massa Easy, you come to the wrong place anyhow; now I tink a good deal lately, and by all de power, I tink equality all stuff."

"All stuff, Mesty, why? You used to think otherwise."

"Yes, Massa Easy, but den I boil de kettle for all young gentlemen. Now dat I ship's corporal, and hab cane, I tink so no longer."

Jack made no reply, but he thought the more. The reader must have perceived that Jack's notions of equality were rapidly disappearing; he defended them more from habit, and perhaps a wilfulness which would not allow him to acknowledge himself wrong—to which may be added his love of argument. Already he had accustomed himself to obedience to his superiors, and notwithstanding his arguments, he would admit of no resistance from those below him; not that it was hardly ever attempted, for Jack was anything but a tyrant, and was much beloved by all in the ship. Every day brought its lesson, and Captain Wilson was now satisfied that Jack had been almost cured of the effects of his father's ridiculous philosophy.

After a few minutes, Mesty tapped his cane on the funnel and recommenced.

"Then why you stay at sea, Massa Easy?"

"I don't know, Mesty, I don't dislike it."

"But, Massa Easy, why you stay in midshipman berth, eat hard biscuit, salt pig, salt horse, when you can go shore and live like gentleman? Dat very foolish! Why not be your own master? By all power! suppose I had money, catch me board ship. Little sea very good, Massa Easy, open one's eyes; but tink of the lightning t'other night. Poor massa boatswain he shut um eyes for ebber!"

"Very true, Mesty."

"Me hope you tink of this, sar, and when you go on shore you take Mesty wid you. He sarve you well, Massa Easy, long as he live, by de holy St. Patrick. And den, Massa Easy, you marry wife—hab pickaninny—lib like gentleman. You tink of this, Massa Easy."

The mention of the word marriage turned the thoughts of

our hero to his Agnes, and he made no reply. Mesty walked away, leaving our hero in deep thought.

This conversation had more effect upon Jack than would have been imagined, and he very often found he was putting to himself the question of Mesty—"Why do you stay at sea?" He had not entered the service with any particular view, except to find equality, and he could not but acknowledge to himself that, as Mesty observed, he had come to the wrong place. He had never even thought of staying to serve his time, nor had he looked forward to promotion, and one day commanding a ship. He had only cared for the present, without indulging in a future anticipation of any reward, except in a union with Agnes. Mesty's observations occasioned Jack to reflect upon the future for the first time in his life; and he was always perplexed when he put the question of Mesty, and tried to answer to himself as to what were his intentions in remaining in the service.

Nevertheless, Jack did his duty very much to the satisfaction of Mr. Pottyfar; and after a tedious passage, from baffling and light winds, the *Aurora* arrived at Malta. Our hero had had some conversation with his friend Gascoigne, in which he canvassed his future plans; all of which, however, ended in one settled point, which was that he was to marry Agnes. As for the rest, Gascoigne was of opinion that Jack ought to follow up the service and become a captain. But there was plenty of time to think about that, as he observed; now all they had to consider was how to get on shore, for the refitting of the ship was an excuse for detaining them on board, which they knew Mr. Pottyfar would avail himself of. Jack dined in the gunroom on the day of their arrival, and he resolved that he would ask that very evening. Captain Wilson was already on shore at the governor's. Now there had been a little difference of opinion between Mr. Pottyfar and Mr. Hawkins, the chaplain, on a point of seamanship, and most of the officers sided with the chaplain, who, as we have before observed, was a first-rate seaman. It had ended in high words, for Mr. Hawkins had forgotten himself so far as to tell the first lieutenant that he had a great deal to learn, not having even got over the midshipman's trick of keeping his hands in his pockets; and Mr. Pottyfar had replied that it was very well for him as chaplain to insult others, knowing that his cassock protected him. This was a bitter reply to Mr. Hawkins, who at the very time that

the insinuation made his blood boil, was also reminded that his profession forbade a retort. He rushed into his cabin, poor fellow, having no other method left, vented his indignation in tears, and then consoled himself by degrees with prayer. In the meantime Mr. Pottyfar had gone on deck, wroth with Hawkins and with his messmates, as well as displeased with himself. He was, indeed, in a humour to be pleased with nobody, and in a most unfortunate humour to be asked leave by a midshipman. Nevertheless, Jack politely took off his hat, and requested leave to go on shore and see his friend the governor. Upon which Mr. Pottyfar turned round to him, with his feet spread wide open, and thrusting his hands to the very bottom of his pockets as if in determination, said—

"Mr. Easy, you know the state of the ship. We have everything to do—new masts, new rigging, everything almost to refit—and yet you ask to go on shore! Now, sir, you may take this answer for yourself, and all the other midshipmen in the ship, that not one soul of you puts his foot on shore until we are again all a-taunto."

"Allow me to observe, sir," said our hero, "that it is very true that all our services may be required when the duty commences, but this being Saturday night, and to-morrow Sunday, the frigate will not be even moved till Monday morning; and as the work cannot begin before that, I trust you will permit leave until that time."

"My opinion is different, sir," replied the first lieutenant.

"Perhaps, sir, you will allow me to argue the point," replied Jack.

"No, sir, I never allow argument; walk over to the other side of the deck, if you please."

"Oh certainly, sir," said Jack, "if you wish it."

Jack's first idea was to go on shore without leave, but from this he was dissuaded by Gascoigne, who told him that it would displease Captain Wilson, and that old Tom, the governor, would not receive him. Jack agreed to this, and then, after a flourish about the rights of man, tyranny, oppression, and so forth, he walked forward to the forecastle, where he found his friend Mesty, who had heard all that had passed, and who insidiously said to him in a low tone—

"Why you stay at sea, Massa Easy?"

"Why, indeed," thought Jack, boiling with indignation;

"to be cooped up here at the will of another? I am a fool—Mesty is right—I'll ask for my discharge to-morrow." Jack went down below, and told Gascoigne what he had determined to do.

"You'll do no such thing, Jack," replied Gascoigne; "depend upon it, you'll have plenty of leave in a day or two. Pottyfar was in a pet with the chaplain, who was too much for him. Captain Wilson will be on board by nine o'clock."

Nevertheless, Jack walked his first watch in the "magnificents," as all middies do when they cannot go on shore, and turned in at twelve o'clock with the resolution of sticking to his purpose and quitting his Majesty's service; in fact, of presenting his Majesty with his between two and three years' time served as midshipman, all free, gratis, and for nothing, except his provisions and his pay, which some captains are bold enough to assert that they not only are not worth, but not even the salt that accompanies it; forgetting that they were once midshipmen themselves, and at the period were, of course, of about the same value.

The next morning Captain Wilson came off; the ship's company were mustered, the service read by Mr. Hawkins, and Jack, as soon as all the official duties were over, was about to go up to the captain, when the captain said to him—

"Mr. Easy, the governor desired me to bring you on shore to dine with him, and he has a bed at your service."

Jack touched his hat and ran down below, to make his few preparations.

By the time that Mesty, who had taken charge of his chest, &c., had put his necessaries in the boat, Jack had almost made up his mind that his Majesty should not be deprived yet awhile of so valuable an officer. Jack returned on deck, and found that the captain was not yet ready; he went up to Mr. Pottyfar, and told him that the captain had ordered him to go on shore with him; and Mr. Pottyfar, who had quite got over his spleen, said—

"Very well, Mr. Easy—I wish you a great deal of pleasure."

"This is very different from yesterday," thought Jack; "suppose I try the medicine?"

"I am not very well, Mr. Pottyfar, and those pills of the doctor's don't agree with me—I always am ill if I am long without air and exercise."

"Very true," said the first lieutenant, "people require air and exercise. I've no opinion of the doctor's remedies; the only thing that is worth a farthing is the universal medicine."

"I should so long to try it, sir," replied Jack; "I read the book one day, and it said that if you took it daily for a fortnight or three weeks, and with plenty of air and exercise, it would do wonders."

"And it's very true," replied Mr. Pottyfar; "and if you'd like to try it you shall—I have plenty—shall I give you a dose now?"

"If you please, sir," replied Jack; "and tell me how often I am to take it, for my head aches all day."

Mr. Pottyfar took Jack down, and putting into his hand three or four bottles of the preparation, told him that he was to take thirty drops at night when he went to bed, not to drink more than two glasses of wine, and to avoid the heat of the sun.

"But, sir," replied Jack, who had put the bottles in his pocket, "I am afraid that I cannot take it long; for as the ship is ready for fitting, I shall be exposed to the sun all day."

"Yes, if you were wanted, Mr. Easy; but we have plenty here without you; and when you are unwell you cannot be expected to work. Take care of your health; and I trust, indeed I am sure, that you will find this medicine wonderfully efficacious."

"I will begin to-night, sir, if you please," replied Jack, "and I am very much obliged to you. I sleep at the governor's—shall I come on board to-morrow morning?"

"No, no; take care of yourself, and get well; I shall be glad to hear that you get better. Send me word how it acts."

"I will, sir, send you word by the boat every day," replied Jack, delighted; "I am very much obliged to you, sir. Gascoigne and I were thinking of asking you, but did not like to do so; he, poor fellow, suffers from headaches almost as bad as I do, and the doctor's pills are of no use to him."

"He shall have some too, Mr. Easy; I thought he looked pale. I'll see to it this afternoon. Recollect, moderate exercise, Mr. Easy, and avoid the sun at mid-day."

"Yes, sir," replied Jack, "I'll not forget;" and off went Jack, delighted. He ordered Mesty to put up his whole portmanteau instead of the small bundle he put into the boat, and telling Gascoigne what a spoke he had put into his wheel, was soon in the boat with the captain, and went on shore, where he was cordially greeted by the governor.

CHAPTER XXVII

In which Captain Wilson is repaid with interest for Jack's borrowing his name; proving that a good name is as good as a legacy.

"WELL, Jack, my boy, have you any long story ready for me?" inquired the governor.

"Yes, sir," replied Jack, "I have one or two very good ones."

"Very well, we'll hear them after dinner," replied old Tom. "In the meantime, find out your room and take possession."

"That must not be for very long, governor," observed Captain Wilson. "Mr. Easy must learn his duty, and there is a good opportunity now."

"If you please, sir," replied Jack, "I'm on the sick list."

"Sick list," said Captain Wilson; "you were not in the report that Mr. Wilson gave me this morning."

"No, I'm on Mr. Pottyfar's list, and I'm going through a course of the universal medicine."

"What's all this, Jack, what's all this? There's some story here. Don't be afraid of the captain—you've me to back you," said the governor.

Jack was not at all afraid of the captain, so he told him how the first lieutenant had refused him leave the evening before, and how he had now given him permission to remain, and try the universal medicine, at which the governor laughed heartily, nor could Captain Wilson refrain from joining.

"But, Mr. Easy," replied the captain, after a pause, "if Mr. Pottyfar will allow you to stay on shore, I cannot—you have your duty to learn. You must be aware that now is your time,