

matter of course, it broke out after a few months' voyage, seem now almost incredible. Deaths to the amount of eight or ten a day in a moderate ship's company; bodies sewn up in hammocks, and washing about the decks for want of strength and spirits on the part of the miserable survivors to cast them overboard; and every form of loathsome and excruciating misery of which the human frame is susceptible:—such are the pictures which the narratives of nautical adventure in those days continually offer.* At present the scurvy is almost completely eradicated in the navy, partly, no doubt, from increased and increasing attention to general cleanliness, comfort, and diet; but mainly from the constant use of a simple and palatable preventive, the acid of the lemon served out in daily rations. If the gratitude of mankind be allowed on all hands to be the just meed of the philosophic physician, to whose discernment in seizing, and perseverance in forcing it on public notice, we owe the great safeguard of infant life, it ought not to be denied to those† whose skill and discrimination have thus

* *Journal of a Voyage to the South Seas, &c. &c.*, under the Command of Commodore George Anson, in 1740—1744, by Pascoe Thomas, Lond. 1745. So tremendous were the ravages of scurvy, that, in the year 1726, admiral Hosier sailed with seven ships of the line to the West Indies, and buried his ships' companies twice, and died himself in consequence of a broken heart. Dr. Johnson, in the year 1778, could describe a sea-life in such terms as these:—"As to the sailor, when you look down from the quarter-deck to the space below, you see the utmost extremity of human misery; such crowding, such filth, such stench!"—"A ship is a prison with the chance of being drowned; it is worse—worse in every respect—worse room, worse air, worse food, worse company!" Smollet, who had personal experience of the horrors of a sea-faring life in those days, gives a lively picture of them in his *Roderick Random*.

† Lemon juice was known to be a remedy for scurvy far superior to all others 200 years ago, as appears by the writings of Woodall. His work is entitled "*The Surgeon's Mate, or Military and Domestic Medicine*. By John Woodall, Master in Surgery. London, 1636." p. 165. In 1600, Commodore Lancaster sailed from England with three other ships for the Cape of Good Hope, on the 2d of April, and arrived in Saldanha Bay on the 1st of August, the commodore's own ship being in perfect health, from the administration of three table-spoonsfull of lemon juice every morning to each of his men, whereas the other ships were so sickly as to be unmanageable for want of hands, and the commander was obliged to send men on board to take in their sails and hoist out their boats. (*Purchas's Pilgrim*, vol. i. p. 149.) A Fellow of the college, and an eminent practitioner, in 1753, published a tract on sea scurvy, in which