

strengthened the sinews of our most powerful arm, and obliterated one of the darkest features in the most glorious of all professions.

(45.) These last, however, are instances of simple observation, limited to the point immediately in view, and assuming only so far the character of science as a systematic adoption of good and rejection of evil, when grounded on experience carefully weighed, justly entitle it to do. They are not on that account less appositely cited as instances of the importance of a knowledge of nature and its laws to our well-being; though, like the great inventions of the mariner's compass and of gunpowder, they may have stood, in their origin, unconnected with more general views. They are rather to be looked upon as the spontaneous produce of a territory essentially fertile, than as forming part of the succession of harvests which the same bountiful soil, diligently cultivated, is capable of yielding. The history of iodine above related affords, however, a perfect specimen of the manner in which a knowledge of natural properties and laws, collected from facts having no reference to the object to which they have been subsequently applied, enables us to set in array the resources of nature against herself; and deliberately, of afore-thought, to devise remedies against the dangers and inconveniences which beset us. In this view we might instance, too, the *con-*

he adverts to the superior virtue of this medicine; and Mr. A. Baird, surgeon of the Hector sloop of war, states, that, from what he had seen of its effects on board of that ship, he "thinks he shall not be accused of presumption in pronouncing it, if properly administered, a *most infallible remedy*, both in the cure and prevention of scurvy." (Vide Trotter's *Medicina Nautica*.) The precautions adopted by captain Cook, in his celebrated voyages, had fully demonstrated by their complete success the practicability of keeping scurvy under in the longest voyages, but a uniform system of prevention throughout the service was still deficient.

It is to the representations of Dr. Blair and sir Gilbert Blane, in their capacity of commissioners of the board for sick and wounded seamen, in 1795, we believe, that its *systematic introduction into nautical diet*, by a general order of the admiralty, is owing. The effect of this wise measure (taken, of course, in conjunction with the general causes of improved health) may be estimated from the following facts:—In 1780, the number of cases of scurvy received into Haslar hospital was 1457; in 1806 *one* only, and in 1807 *one*. There are now many surgeons in the navy who have never seen the disease.