

My narrative abides with the latter. He remained for several years aboard men-of-war, and, though not much in love with the service, did his duty in both storm and battle. He served in the action off the Dogger-Bank,—one of the last naval engagements fought ere the manœuvre of breaking the line gave to British valor its due superiority, by rendering all our great sea-battles decisive; and a comrade who sailed in the same vessel, and from whom, when a boy, I have received kindness for my father's sake, has told me that, their ship being but indifferently manned at the time, and the extraordinary personal strength and activity of his friend well known, he had a station assigned him at his gun against two of the crew, and that during the action he actually outwrought them both. At length, however, the enemy drifted to leeward to refit; and when set to repair the gashed and severed rigging, such was his state of exhaustion, in consequence of the previous overstrain on every nerve and muscle, that he had scarce vigor enough left to raise the marlinspike employed in the work to the level of his face. Suddenly, when in this condition, a signal passed along the line, that the Dutch fleet, already refitted, was bearing down to renew the engagement. A thrill like that of an electric shock passed through the frame of the exhausted sailor; his fatigue at once left him; and, vigorous and strong as when the action first began, he found himself able, as before, to run out against his two comrades the one side of a four-and-twenty pounder. The instance is a curious one of the influence of that "spirit" which, according to the Wise King, enables a man to "sustain his infirmity."

It may be well not to inquire too curiously regarding the mode in which this effective sailor quitted the navy. The country had borrowed his services without consulting his will; and he, I suspect, reclaimed them on his own behalf without first asking leave. I have been told by my mother that he found the navy very intolerable; the mutiny at the Nore had not yet meliorated the service to the common sailor. Among other hardships, he had been oftener than once under not only