

^{1792.}
April 20. was that most of the landmen, and all the women were sea sick; the latter, some of whom had infants at the breast, had been more than 24 hours without nourishment of any kind, and would have been so much longer if I had not undertaken to cook for them; for some, who would have relieved them if able, were labouring under the same disease; and the surgeon, whose more immediate duty it was to attend to them, was wholly destitute of feeling; he left to those, who had folly enough to feel, the charge of taking care of his patients; this certainly was not a very dignified employment, it was at least a useful one, and had I not undertaken it these poor women might have suffered much from hunger ere any other would have relieved them. I had already been employed since our sailing in functions equally low, and therefore was in some degree prepared for it; but at times I was compensated for the meanness of these employments by the exercise of authority pertaining to more dignified posts, for I verily believe that there is not an office or gradation of rank in naval service, from the admiral and commander in chief down to the jack of the bread room, which I had not already exercised in this ship. The fact is, that to govern and maintain order and regularity amongst a licentious rabble, without any legal power, was an exceedingly difficult task, and only to be accomplished by example. I soon perceived that I must either give up the point, which threatened ruin to the undertaking, or accomplish it by the constant exercise of unremitting exertions; the latter was most congenial to my mind, and therefore there was no employment however humble in the general opinion of the world which I hesitated to undertake; but, having once done this, I ordered whom I pleased afterwards to perform the same duty,