

the lap' was wholly at his disposal ! The important morning came, and I drew the dreaded ship, down the river. Had I drawn my death warrant, I hardly think it would have affected me more. My prayer was now apparently rejected, and the enemy of souls taking advantage of the agitated state of my depraved heart, easily made me draw the conclusion, that either I was no Christian, or that God paid no attention to those who professed to be such. In this gloomy desponding state, like a criminal going to execution, I embarked the same forenoon in His Majesty's ship *Resolution*, lying in a dreary part of the Medway, about two or three miles from Sheerness. I had just time to be introduced to the officers in the ward-room, when dinner came in. The third Lieutenant happening to be caterer that week, of course stood up at the head of the table, and asked a blessing ; but with so much seriousness as quite astonished me ; for being well acquainted with the customs of the ward-room in a King's ship, I had never heard any thing of the kind so solemnly pronounced there before, and I determined to mark every word that proceeded from that gentleman's lips, in the hope of hearing something that might enable me to ascertain his character ; nothing decisive occurred during dinner, but no sooner was the wine placed upon the table, than he was attacked by several of his messmates on his religious sentiments, and I soon discovered that he bore the genuine marks of a true Christian, by his judicious reproofs, and the very able manner in which he confuted all their infidel arguments. Wishing, I suppose, to know what spirit I was of, they frequently appealed to me for the truth of what they advanced ; but having always decided against them, I was imperceptibly drawn into the disputation on the side of the caterer. When it was time to

separate the purser rose and broke up the company, exclaiming with an oath, " Our new messmate is as great a Methodist as Tomlinson\*." I smiled, well pleased to be associated with such a man. As two needles touched with the loadstone, when they fall near to each other among chaff, will soon come together, so this Methodist Lieutenant and I myself speedily came into contact. After having exchanged a few questions, we went down to his cabin in the gun-room, had an hour's comfortable conversation, and concluded with prayer, although a few hours before we had never seen one another's faces. This singular circumstance could not fail to bring to my recollection the prayer I had so culpably forgotten, now completely granted, and I began to be reconciled to the ship Providence had assigned me ; but that God, who abounds in goodness, and delights in mercy, never confers his favours by halves. A few days had hardly elapsed, when an order came from the Admiralty, to send the *Resolution* up to Chatham, and one of the ships there to take her place. This was such welcome news to all on board, that lest the order should be countermanded, we obeyed it the same day, for the wind and tide favouring, we weighed, and came to an anchor off the Dock-yard before two o'clock. Thus my prayer, at first apparently rejected, was now completely answered, but it was in the Lord's way. Had mine been attended to, and I had drawn the ship that afterwards went down the river, I should have been miserable. So true it is, we 'know not what to pray for as we ought.' "

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\* Lieutenant Tomlinson was a pious, sensible, and well informed man, then well known in the Christian world. He was long a commander in the navy, and would have been high among the Admirals, had he not disoblged the Admiralty of that time, by publishing a plan for manning the navy without pressing, which that Board would not countenance. I enjoyed his friendship for many years.