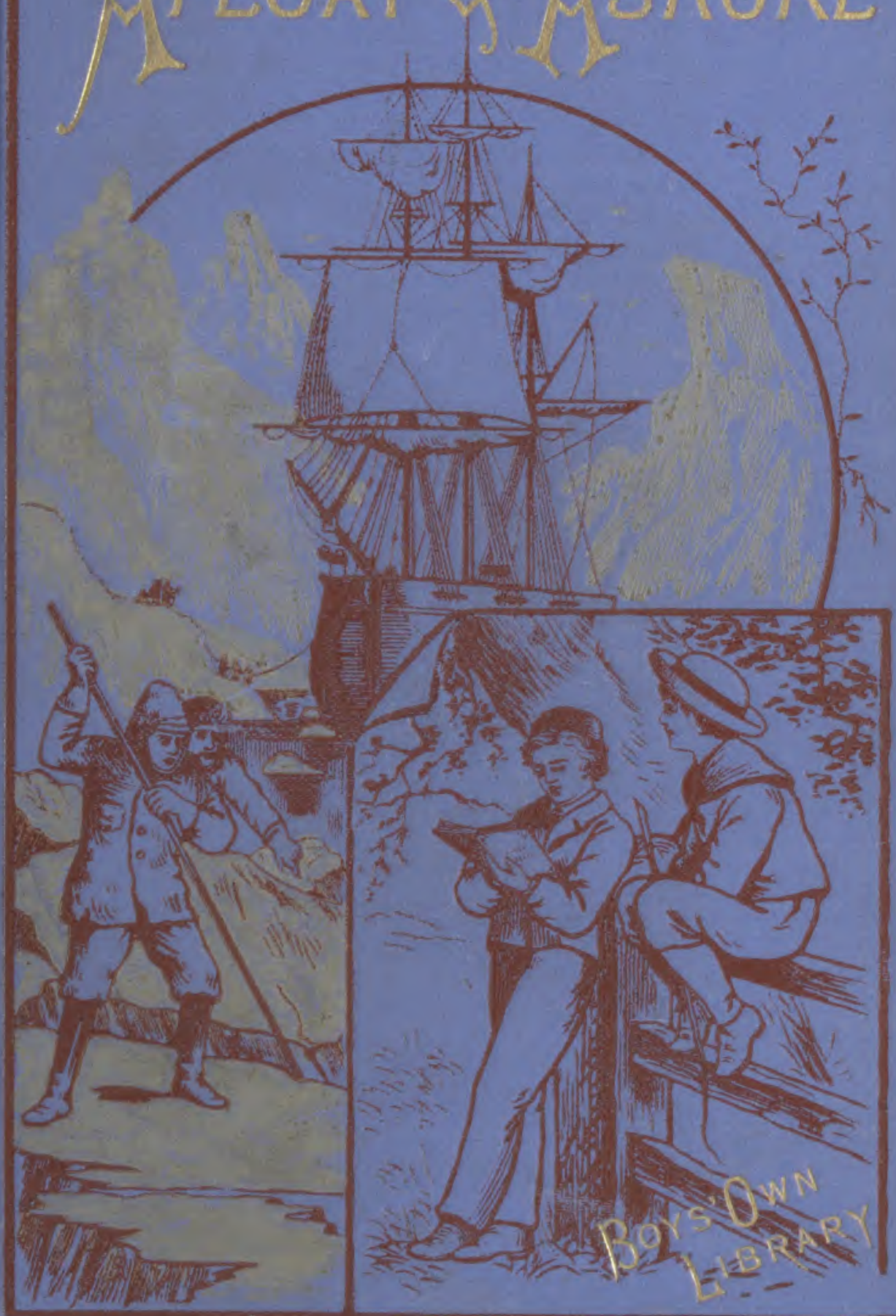
AFLOAT & ASHORE



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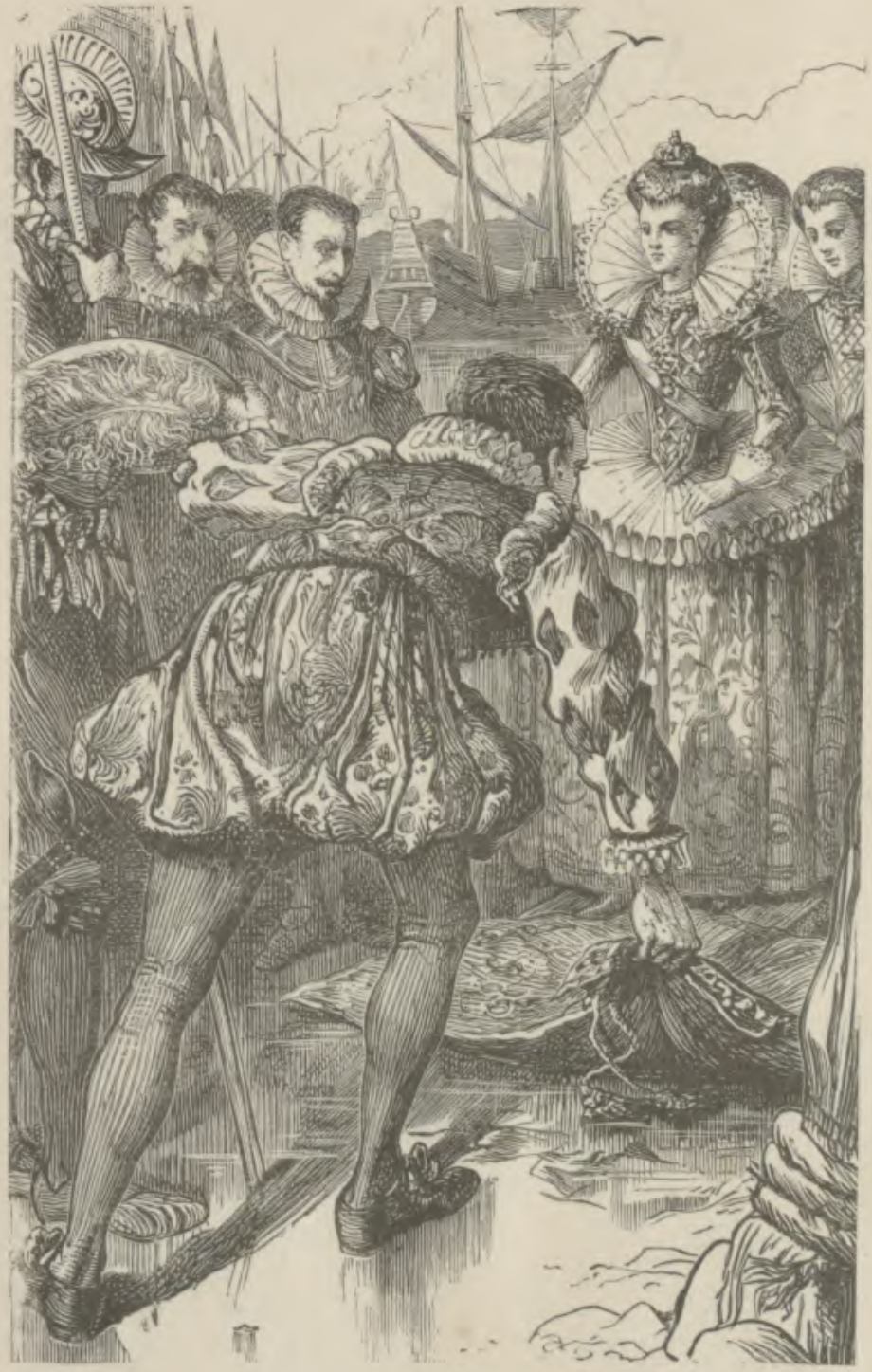

'Raleigh stepped forward and threw down before her a richly-embroidered cloak which he wore.'—AFLOAT AND ASHORE, *page* 3.

(*Frontispiece.*)

Major Stuckey
Cherry Grove

AFLOAT AND ASHORE

WITH

SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

BY

MRS. HARDY (JANET GORDON),

AUTHOR OF 'JACQUELINE,' 'THE SPANISH INQUISITION,' 'CHAMPIONS OF THE REFORMATION,' 'STORY OF A NOBLE LIFE,' ETC. ETC.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

THE following brief sketch of a very remarkable and unfortunate man is submitted to the public in the hope that it may induce some young readers to turn with interest to a period of English history, rich with many a life story, full of thrilling incident and romance, and dark with the shadow of many a base intrigue and crooked plot, in which private honour and political morality were too often sacrificed to work a rival's downfall, or win a king's smile.

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AFLOAT AND ASHORE

WITH

SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

CHAPTER I.

'A man so various that he seemed to be
Not one, but all mankind's epitome.'

THE brilliant and versatile courtier, soldier, and statesman, known to us as Sir Walter Raleigh, was born in 1552 at Hayes, in Devonshire. His father was a simple country gentleman, and his childhood was passed within sight and sound of those waves which were to form in after life his path to profit, adventure, conquest, glory, and disgrace.

While still very young he was sent to Oriel College, Oxford, by his father, but he did not remain there long. In 1569 he left it, and began his military education by enrolling himself in a troop of gentlemen volunteers, who were raised to assist the Huguenots in France by one of his near kinsmen.

In France he remained six years; and was present, among other engagements, at the disastrous battles of Jarnac and Moncontour. He then joined a small English force which was sent to the Netherlands, and while serving there became acquainted with an officer, Colonel Richard Bingham, a man who had travelled over every part of the then known world, and whose brain was filled with the wildest schemes of colonization and conquest. Raleigh's imagination, naturally fervent and glowing, caught fire at the vivid pictures which he painted of the far-famed Western Paradise, and he acceded eagerly to a proposal which was made to him by his elder brother, Sir Humphrey Gilbert. This distinguished captain had obtained from Queen Elizabeth a patent empowering him to colonize certain districts in North America, and he now asked Raleigh to join him in a projected expedition to the New World, which promised well, but was in reality most unfortunate.

One disaster after another scattered the hopes of the adventurers to the winds; and in 1579, Raleigh, who had returned to his native country as poor as when he left it, was glad to obtain the command of a company in the army raised for the subjugation of the rebels in Ireland. Hitherto he had been personally unknown to Elizabeth, but on his return from Ireland, chance threw an opportunity of an introduction to her in his way, which he did not fail to seize. The Queen one wet morning was on her way from her palace to her barge, when she came to a part of the road so muddy that she hesitated to advance.

Instantly Raleigh stepped forward and threw down before her a richly-embroidered cloak which he wore. It was the first step taken on the dizzy ladder which was to conduct him, through many alternations of court favour, to the scaffold and the headsman's block at last. Elizabeth was charmed alike by the romantic gallantry of the action and by the manly grace and beauty of the young knight errant. She took him into her service on the spot, and ever afterwards regarded him with a degree of favour, which, if it never reached the fever heat of that accorded to Leicester and Essex, was steady, and chequered by but few fluctuations.

In 1583, in concert with his brother, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, he again fitted out a fleet of five ships to prosecute discoveries in the New World; but this expedition, like that which preceded it, was unfortunate. Its only results were the discovery of Newfoundland, and the loss of its able and distinguished commander, Admiral Sir Humphrey Gilbert. Of the five ships which composed it, the *Golden Hind* alone returned to Falmouth in the autumn of 1583, and Raleigh, undismayed by his repeated disappointments, immediately set about preparing a new fleet, which sailed on the 27th of April 1584.

This expedition, more fortunate than its predecessors, was rewarded by the discovery of a fertile and beautiful land, to which Raleigh, in compliment to his mistress, gave the name of Virginia; and Elizabeth, in due course, acknowledged the complaisance of her courtier by creating him Sir Walter Raleigh,

and bestowing upon him a monopoly of vending wines throughout the kingdom, an appointment which brought him in large revenues.

Having discovered Virginia, he next proceeded to colonize it; an undertaking which involved him in no end of trouble, and in very serious expense. His first governor, Lane, was an imprudent man, and got embroiled with the Indians, which led to a series of *fiascos*, resulting in the total extinction of the infant colony. Still Raleigh, sanguine where others despaired, lost neither heart nor hope. One colony had disappeared, and he set himself patiently to plant another. With the spoils of the Spanish galleons taken by his ships, he proceeded to fit out a new fleet, and in the April of 1587 despatched one hundred and fifty settlers to Virginia, under the command of Mr. John White, whom he appointed his new governor there. The choice of Lane had been unfortunate, and that of White was scarcely less so. He chose to deviate from the minute instructions given him by his employer, and involved those committed to his charge in such a series of misfortunes, that they at last, in a manner, forced him to leave them.

On the 27th of August 1587 he sailed from Roanoak, which was the name given to the settlement in Virginia, and in the beginning of winter arrived in England, the colony at the date of his departure consisting of eighty-nine men, seventeen women, and eleven children.

He found his native land in a state of the most intense excitement. Philip, the powerful king of

Spain, had resolved to conquer England; the Pope had blessed the enterprise, and declared it holy, and had furthermore, by a bull which he issued, deposed the heretic Elizabeth, and assigned the crown to Philip as the heir of the house of Lancaster. It was no longer a question of utilizing discoveries in the New World, but of national existence; yet Raleigh, who was engaged along with the Queen's most trusted councillors and commanders in devising measures for the national defence, found time to listen to the complaints of his governor, and to procure for him two ships with the needful supplies.

White sailed, but only to encounter fresh misfortunes. He had scarcely been a few days at sea when he was attacked by a Spanish privateer, and after a hard struggle forced to put back to the port he had left with his disabled ships; and in the urgency of the national crisis, it was impossible, for the present, to repair his loss.

The Invincible Armada—so the invading fleet was proudly named—was the greatest that had ever sailed from any port of Spain, or, indeed, of the world. Philip had been three years in collecting and preparing it. In fitting it out he had employed with lavish hands the gold which was continually flowing into his treasury from the mines of Potosi and Peru. His resources were such as no other power in Europe could compete with; his navy was unrivalled; and his army at once better disciplined and more experienced than that of any other European State. One hundred and thirty-four ships and twenty caravels

composed the fleet, which was divided into seven squadrons, each with a separate commander, the whole being under the supreme authority of a generalissimo, the Duke de Medina Sidonia. In addition to the ordnance and other warlike stores, Philip, confident of success, had loaded his ships with everything requisite for taking possession of a conquered country. The holds of the vessels resembled so many farmyards, being filled with horses, mules, waggons, wheels, spades, mattocks, baskets, and shovels. There were also on board the fleet passengers and stores of even a more unwarlike kind. Philip, in his bigoted zeal, had despatched along with the expedition one hundred and eighty ecclesiastics of various grades, and these holy men brought along with them the arguments on which they were most accustomed to rely in theological controversies, to wit, chains, wheels, racks, and hollow braziers, which, filled with glowing charcoal, and applied to the feet of the heretical English, might convince them what a deadly sin it was to read and possess the Bible in their own tongue. Every one of these items was fully known to the people they came to conquer; but the free, bold spirit of the race, instead of sinking into submission, rose proudly up to meet the emergency. Hopelessly outnumbered, forced to fight at fearful odds, Philip might conquer England, but not before he had made of it one vast grave.

Elizabeth, casting aside the frailties and foibles which marked her lighter hours, appeared what she really was, the sagacious, politic sovereign, the mother and guardian of her people. Prudent, vigilant, brave,

but not rash, her demeanour inspired confidence in every class of her subjects. She appeared in public with an aspect of cheerfulness and high resolve, and expressed herself in terms worthy of the leader of a resolute and heroic nation. 'God,' she said, 'she was confident, would never desert the cause of His Church, or suffer its enemies to triumph.' This noble faith found an answering echo in the heart and soul of the people; for the Reformed religion had struck its roots so deep that it had entwined itself with the very life of the nation. All ranks and classes vied with each other in the eager devotion with which they rushed forward to meet the hour of danger; and that there was much need of this unanimity and singleness of purpose no one could doubt. The best troops of the country were in Holland; there was no standing army; the Queen's ships were few in number, and not very well appointed; and her whole revenues were totally inadequate to raise a force at all fitted to cope with that of Philip. In these circumstances she appealed for aid to her subjects. She sent a message in the first place to the Corporation of London, to ask what they would be willing to do for the defence of the country. The Corporation in return asked what the Privy Council and her Majesty would expect from them. 'Fifteen ships,' they were told, 'and five thousand men.' Two days afterwards they sent a message, to say that they had ready ten thousand men and thirty ships amply furnished. The example of London was quickly followed by the whole country. Simultaneously, and as if animated only by one heart

and soul, the whole of England rose in arms, the maritime counties being most forward in their warlike preparations. A body of troops was sent to Milford. Plymouth was put into as good a state of defence as possible, and garrisoned by five thousand men from Devon and Cornwall. Along with these, commanding the force of the Stanneries, was Sir Walter Raleigh, whom the Queen had appointed Lieutenant-General of the county of Cornwall. Portland, of which he had also the charge, was fortified as well as the time would permit, and troops were sent to it and to the Isle of Wight, as well as to defensive positions along the coasts of Kent, Sussex, Norfolk, and Suffolk. Every corner of the land rang with the clang of arms, and every man able to bear a weapon was eager to volunteer in defence of his country and religion. 'Our master,' wrote a Jesuit spy, 'seemeth scarce aware of the effect which his challenge has produced.'

In addition to this general rising all over the country, the Queen commanded two armies to be levied. The first, of twenty-two thousand foot and two thousand horse, she committed to the command of her unworthy favourite, Leicester, and it was encamped at Tilbury in Essex; the other, which numbered twenty-eight thousand nine hundred men, was commanded by her near kinsman, Lord Hunsdon, an experienced and able soldier. In addition, also, to what they had done before, the city of London raised a force of ten thousand men, besides which they had other reserves, a circumstance which so emboldened many, that they began to cry down the

necessity for any great effort by sea,—a dangerous delusion, against which Raleigh strenuously lifted his voice.

'I hold,' said he, 'that England without the aid of her fleet is unable to debar any enemy from landing, and it would be most perilous to make the adventure; for the encouragement of a first victory to the enemy, and the discouragement of being beaten to the invaded, might draw after it most disastrous consequences.' This remonstrance was not without effect, and every sinew was strained to get afloat an efficient fleet. Fortunately, there was no lack of able captains and admirals,—men who had won both profit and glory on the Spanish Main, and who knew, by the experience gained in many a bloody sea-fight, the qualities of the foe against whom they were so soon to be matched. Lord Howard of Effingham, the High Admiral of England, assumed the chief command, and under him were the most renowned captains of our early maritime history,—Drake, Frobisher, Seymour, and Hawkins.

Uncertain of the point of attack, the Lord High Admiral made as prudent a disposition of his fleet as he could. He divided it into three parts, placing the largest vessels in the centre, which he commanded himself. Drake he stationed with twenty ships and five pinnaces on the side of Ushant, that he might be able to give the earliest notice of the enemy's approach, while he sent Hawkins to take up a position between his own and the Scilly Islands. Lord Henry Seymour he despatched to the neighbourhood of

Dunkirk, with directions to cruise along the coast of Flanders, to observe the movements of the Spaniards, and to impart to him any information which he might obtain.

And now came a pause of awful expectation, which some of Elizabeth's counsellors advised her to signalize by a Roman Catholic Saint Bartholomew; but this she steadily and indignantly refused to do, and was rewarded by the fidelity of her Roman Catholic subjects, who not only disregarded the invitations of the Pope to throw off their allegiance, but fitted out vessels at their own expense for the defence of the country, which they entrusted to the command of their Protestant fellow-subjects. But although she declined to defend herself by a Roman Catholic massacre, she neglected no measure of prudence which could increase her popularity or encourage the army. She took up her abode near Tilbury, and when the Armada was daily expected, reviewed the army there in person. Mounted on a noble war-horse, magnificently dressed, with a marshal's truncheon in her hand, and a corselet of steel laced over her glittering robes, she addressed her soldiers with looks and tones to which the emotion of the moment lent the most impressive eloquence and dignity. She was there as no puppet-king acting a studied part in some holiday pageant, but the heroic Queen of a free and imperilled people; and as the Black Prince might have spoken on the desperate field of Crecy, so she spoke at Tilbury.

'My loving people,' said the fearless daughter of

the Tudors, 'we have been persuaded by some that are careful of our safety, to take heed how we commit ourselves to armed multitudes, for fear of treachery; but I assure you I do not desire to live to distrust my faithful and loving people. Let tyrants fear! I have always so behaved myself, that, under God, I have placed my chiefest strength and safeguard in the loyal hearts and good-will of my subjects; and therefore I am come amongst you at this time, not as for my own recreation or sport, but as being resolved, in the midst and heat of the battle, to live or die amongst you all; to lay down for my God, for my kingdom, and for my people, my honour and my blood even in the dust. I know that I have but the body of a weak and feeble woman; but I have the heart of a king, and of a king of England too, and think it foul scorn that Parma, or Spain, or any prince of Europe should dare to invade the borders of my realms, to which, rather than any dishonour shall grow by me, I myself will take up arms, I myself will be your general—the judge and rewarder of every one of your virtues in the field. I know already by your forwardness that you have deserved rewards and crowns, and we do assure you, on the word of a prince, they shall be duly paid you. In the meantime, my lieutenant-general shall be in my stead, than whom never prince commanded more noble or more worthy subject; nor will I suffer myself to doubt but that by your obedience to my general, by your concord in the camp, and by your valour in the field, we shall shortly have a famous

victory over those enemies of my God, of my king dom, and my people.'

On the 20th of May the great fleet sailed. It left the Tagus amid priestly blessings and the loud and vehement cheering of a multitude who already in imagination saw their king the conqueror of England. The instructions of the Spanish commander-in-chief, preserved in the State Paper Office, show that the Duke de Medina Sidonia's intentions were to have a general rendezvous off Cape Finisterre, but if any vessels got separated from the main body, they were to steer for the Groyne, from whence the whole fleet were to make for the shores of England; the point of meeting there being on the south side of the Scilly Islands, but if this should be found impossible, they were to steer for Mount's Bay, on the coast of Cornwall. Great preparations were also at this juncture made in Flanders, and a huge flotilla equipped there, destined to convey troops intended to co-operate with those on board the fleet, as soon as the Armada should have succeeded in making good a landing. 'Man proposes,' the proverb tells us, 'but God disposes.' It was found impossible to carry any one of these instructions into effect. The first check the fleet received was off Cape Finisterre, where it encountered such a violent storm that the larger ships were dispersed, and many of the smaller sunk and driven for refuge to different adjacent harbours. News of this disaster was quickly conveyed to England. The whole Armada, it was reported, was sunk, upon which the Queen, who was quite as

frugal as she was brave and high-spirited, directed four of her largest ships to be laid up, in order to save expense.

'Rather than do such an imprudent action at such a moment,' said the Lord High Admiral Howard, 'I will take upon myself the cost of these four ships.' He then called a council of war, at which it was resolved that he should sail towards Spain, to complete the destruction of the Armada, if it were found to be as much disabled as was reported, or to ascertain if it were still in a condition to keep the seas. This he accordingly did, and part of his squadron gave chase to fourteen Spanish ships which were seen between Ushant and Scilly; but they escaped, and with the great body of the Armada, succeeded in making their second rendezvous off the Groyne, or Corunna, as it is now called, where they arrived, however, in a very shattered condition.

Meanwhile the English High Admiral, afraid that some of them might reach Plymouth in his absence, returned with all haste thither, and on the very day of his arrival, the Spanish commander-in-chief, having heard from some fishermen that he had laid up his ships, left the Groyne and set sail for England. Still, however, the elements were unpropitious, and seemed to fight on the side of the heretics. The passage of the huge fleet of the faithful through the Bay of Biscay was slow and perilous in the extreme; one hour it was becalmed, the next saw it involved in thick fogs, the next tossed hither and thither by contrary winds. In vain, with Catholic zeal, they invoked

the saints and the Virgin. God, it seemed, had deserted His chosen and gone over to the side of the enemy. At last, on the 19th of July, the storm-vexed Armada entered the British Channel, and there, towards sunset, it was observed off the Lizard Point, spread like a huge half moon over the summer seas, by Fleming, the captain of a Scottish pirate. His resolution was taken at once. Crowding all sail, he made with as little delay as possible for Plymouth, and at once conveyed the astounding intelligence to Howard. At the moment when he arrived, the officers and men belonging to the different ships were engaged in a game of bowls on the Hoe, from which they were recalled in a very few minutes, and then the task of warping out the ships began. This was a difficult operation, for the wind was blowing freshly from the south-west. It was managed, however, both quickly and skilfully, and, as it proved, in plenty of time, for it was not until the evening of the next day, Saturday the 20th of July, that the enemy was first descried.

The vessels composing the Armada were, as Fleming had reported, drawn up in the form of a semicircle, the half moon stretching from horn to horn to an extent of not less than seven miles, and presenting, from the size and height of the larger ships, an extremely imposing and majestic appearance. But this very circumstance of their height and bulk, which struck terror into all inexperienced eyes, inspired Howard and his officers with alacrity and confidence. They had encountered these huge

Spanish hulks before, and knew how impossible it was to manage them, especially in stormy weather. With their own lighter vessels and superior seamanship, they felt confident, now that they had seen it, that they could out-manœuvre and finally defeat the much-vaunted Armada. Howard accordingly drew off his vessels to one side, and suffering the whole Spanish fleet to pass, immediately doubled upon its rear, and followed it for some time without offering it any molestation.

A pinnace called the *Disdain*, commanded by Captain Jonas Bradbury, was then selected to begin the battle, which she did by carrying a defiance to the enemy, after the fashion of the times, and then retiring after discharging her ordnance against the vessel which happened to be nearest to her. The Admiral's own ship, the *Ark Royal*, then advanced, and singling out one of the largest Spanish galleons, poured a well-directed broadside into her. At the same moment Drake, Hawkins, and Frobisher attacked that division of the Armada which was under the command of the Spanish Rear-Admiral Juan de Ricaldo. He fought with courage and obstinacy, but he could not resist the fury of the English onset; his squadron was dispersed, one of his ships was burnt, and the flag-ship itself, with fifty-five thousand ducats on board, was taken by Drake, who immediately distributed the money among his sailors.

The Spanish commander, whose chief object at the moment was to pass through the Channel to Calais, where he expected to meet the squadron of the Duke

of Parma, meanwhile continued his course in spite of these reverses, contenting himself with crowding all sail, and throwing out signals for his heterogeneous fleet to keep up with him if possible; and Howard, satisfied with the advantage he had gained, intermitted hostilities until forty vessels, which had been left behind at Plymouth, should have joined him. In this manner that eventful Sunday, the 21st of July, came to a close.

On Monday, the English still stood off, willing that the Armada, before they attacked it in earnest, should advance farther up the Channel. On the morning of Tuesday the 23d July, they were reinforced by a small squadron under Sir Walter Raleigh. The Spaniards were then opposite Portland, and it was resolved to attack them at once. Many of the officers, particularly the younger and more inexperienced, were anxious to board the enemy without delay, but Howard, acting by the advice of Raleigh, and of his more distinguished captains, resolutely opposed this course. 'There is no use in boarding,' he said; 'our light ships can approach near enough to give broadsides every shot of which shall tell; while from their great size, the enemy will never once be able to get their ordnance to bear upon us.' He therefore kept his squadron, which consisted of almost one hundred ships, constantly in motion, hovering around the huge, unwieldy Spanish galleons, ready to take advantage of every breath of favourable wind to dart forward, pour in a broadside, and then retire out of range of the Spanish guns; only to return again and pour in

another discharge before they had time to reload. This harassing combat continued for some time, and then the Spaniards tried to put an end to it, by bearing down upon their assailants, and so forcing them to come to close quarters; but this course of tactics, which would have been very unfavourable for the English, Howard and his captains dexterously avoided. Separating into small divisions, they glided between the great ships of the enemy, and managed to evade them—all except one small squadron of six ships, led by Sir Martin Frobisher and Sir Thomas Howard. These got so far separated from the main body, that they were surrounded by the Spaniards, who, coming abreast of them, began an engagement which lasted for two hours, and in which Frobisher and his merchantmen fought with the utmost valour and resolution against the far superior force with which they were encompassed. So obstinately did they defend themselves, that they were able to maintain the unequal battle until the Lord High Admiral, perceiving their plight, began to move to their assistance, which had the effect of detaching some of their assailants.

The Spanish admiral, as soon as he perceived Howard's intention, at once sent sixteen of his best-equipped galleons to endeavour to intercept him. A very sanguinary engagement followed this movement, in which the Spaniards fought bravely, but at a disadvantage, for their guns were so high above the water that the greater portion of their shot flew over the heads of their assailants, while every broadside of the English did such deadly execution, that at last,

disabled and dispirited, they were glad to sheer off, leaving the victory with Howard, who had the satisfaction of finding that his brave subordinate Frobisher had also repulsed the squadron with which he had been fighting for many hours. Night coming on put an end to the battle, leaving the English victors, with a large Venetian ship and several transports in their hands.

Next day the Spaniards showed great disinclination to fight, and by some oversight the powder of the English having become exhausted, they were forced to suspend operations until a fresh supply arrived. During the whole of the 24th they continued inactive, but, on the morning of the 25th, having received a fresh supply of ammunition, Captain Hawkins attacked and took a large Portuguese galleon, which had dropped astern. Three galleasses attempted to rescue her, but had much ado to escape themselves. At this juncture the wind fell to a dead calm, which had the effect of reducing the Spanish vessels to complete inactivity, while the lighter English ships, towed hither and thither by the long-boats, at once took the offensive and subjected them to a galling fire. In a few minutes the action became general. The Spanish admiral's ship, the *San Martin*, had her mainmast shot away, and was so much disabled that she would have been taken, if his Vice-Admiral, Recaldo, had not come to his assistance. This, and the failure for the second time of the English supplies of powder, saved him. Unable for want of ammunition to continue the fight, Howard

and his captains dexterously availed themselves of the rising wind, and bore away out of range of shot.

Meanwhile the Armada, although crippled and shattered, and unspeakably harassed by the English squadrons which hung upon her rear, continued to advance up the Channel, still presenting from the number of the ships such an imposing appearance that her progress excited the most lively emotions of anxiety and alarm in the maritime counties. False rumours of the complete success of the Spaniards were spread abroad, and eagerly listened to in Rome and Madrid. In Paris, the Spanish ambassador entered the church of Notre Dame, and flourishing his sword above his head, shouted Victoria, as loud as he could bawl; and in Rome, Cardinal Allen gave a great feast in honour of the occasion, and invited to it all the English, Irish, and Scotch Roman Catholics in the popish capital. There was one universal *Te Deum* throughout Catholic Europe over the conquest of England, and all the while never was England so instinct with rampant, defiant life. As the Armada swept past on her disastrous path, crowds flocked to the beach to watch her, and from every harbour, from every fishing village she passed, boats, pinnaces, small craft of every kind shot out, eager to bear their share in the coming hour of retribution. The carcase was before them, and from many a rock-built eyrie, from many an ancient castle, the island eagles flocked to their prey.

On the 27th, the Spanish generalissimo accomplished the object he had been striving after for

weeks: he cast anchor before Calais, and at once despatched an express to the Duke of Parma, beseeching him to send him without delay forty fly-boats, and urging him to embark his whole army at once. But Medina Sidonia was a month behind his time, and that month's delay had rendered Parma powerless. His ill-built boats were already rotting in the harbour, they were warped, leaky, unseaworthy; sickness had decimated his troops; his provisions were so nearly exhausted that famine stared him in the face; and, to complete his misfortunes, a Dutch fleet, commanded by Count Justin of Nassau, blockaded the only harbours from which he could put to sea.

It was evident that no assistance could be expected from him; and the whole plan of the invasion being thus disarranged and thrown out of gear, the Spanish commander-in-chief continued to lie in Calais harbour, considering, perhaps, what was best to be done, until Lord Howard in a startling and unexpected manner put an end to his meditations, and lent to the vaunted Armada wings of fear, which carried her out of the English Channel a great deal faster than she had entered it.

Selecting eight of his smallest and least useful ships, the English admiral filled them with combustibles, and entrusted them to two of his most experienced captains, Young and Prowse. These officers conducted them at midnight to within a short distance of the Armada, fired the trains, and then taking to their boats, left the burning ships to drift down upon the enemy. Blazing above, below, one

glowing mass of fire from stem to stern, they advanced upon the luckless fleet, which, however, did not wait to receive them. Frantic with terror, the Spaniards cut their cables, and fled in dismay towards every point of heaven. One of the largest of their galleons, failing to get off, was stranded near the town, and taken after a desperate fight, during which her captain and four hundred men were slain.

When the fire-ships had burned down, and the panic was somewhat abated, the Spanish generalissimo tried to gather his lost chickens under his wings again, but the bulk of them were nowhere visible, and were beyond the reach of any signals he could make. Some had run ashore on the coast of Flanders, some lay near Gravelines; only a very few rejoined him, and these the English prevented from taking up their old safe position in Calais Roads. They then tried to make for Dunkirk, and found it closed against them also, and on the morning following that disastrous night, the battle began again in earnest from all points. Drake, Frobisher, Hawkins, Fenton, Raleigh, the Lord High Admiral, the Earl of Cumberland, and Lord Henry Seymour, all fell upon the Spanish fleet at once, intent upon completing the havoc which the midnight surprise had begun; many large galleons were sunk, others were taken; every hour increased the fury and ardour of the assailants, and redoubled their hopes of victory. The Duke of Medina Sidonia, at last abandoning those delusive hopes of conquest which had buoyed him up, thought now only of how he could escape most quickly

and safely. On the 29th he tried to fly southwards towards the Straits of Calais, but he had scarcely begun to steer in that direction, when the wind changed, and, freshening into a gale, threatened to drive him on the shores of Zealand, which abounded in dangerous quicksands and shallows. From this, which would have been destruction in another shape, he was saved by the wind again veering to the south-west, which enabled him to tack and regain the open sea, where he continued to cruise about until the evening, when he called a council of war. Before this body of his officers he laid their unhappy condition, the inability of the Duke of Parma to help them, and the manifest superiority of the English, who, while they had inflicted upon them the most disastrous losses, had themselves lost only one small vessel; in his opinion the best, almost the only course before them, was to sail round Scotland, and return to Spain by the Orkneys and Ireland.

This advice, which betokened great ignorance of the stormy seas he proposed to brave, was adopted by the council of war, and next morning, what was left of the Armada set sail for the north, much harassed by the English squadrons, which, hanging upon their rear, seized the disabled vessels, sunk the smaller craft, and from time to time singling out a great galleon, compelled her to fight. These combats generally ended in the total defeat of the Spaniards; and the destruction of Medina's whole fleet appeared inevitable, when the powder and shot supplied to the Queen's ships again fell short, and

they were forced from want of ammunition to return home.

Scarcely had they abandoned the chase, when the poor remnant of the Armada was again attacked by a violent storm, which flung them upon the inhospitable shores of Ireland, the Orkneys, the coasts of Argyll and the Western Islands, whilst a small division, driven back into the English Channel, fell a prey to Elizabeth's cruisers.

Only fifty-three ships out of one hundred and thirty-four found their way back to Spain, and these were shattered by the tear and wear of many a disastrous fight, crippled by the storm and tempest, so utterly shorn of the state and splendour with which they set out, with crews so hunger-worn and emaciated, so exhausted with sickness and cold, that no one who had seen them could ever forget their ap pearance. After this fashion his Invincible Armada returned to Philip, and although he bore the defeat of what had been the mightiest fleet in the world with his customary impassiveness, he indulged in no more vain dreams either about the conquest or conversion of England. As for Elizabeth, she and her captains promptly acknowledged, in the many apparently accidental circumstances which had conduced to their preservation, the overruling and protecting hand of God, which had interfered in their extremity to save them. She appointed a medal to be struck in commemoration of the victory, with the inscription, '*Afflavit Deus et dissipantur*,' and by her orders a form of prayer and thanksgiving for the

occasion was prepared for use throughout the kingdom. On the 8th of September, eleven banners taken from the Spaniards were brought to the capital, and after being publicly displayed there, were hung up over London Bridge; and on the 24th November the Queen made a triumphal progress through the city, in honour of the great deliverance vouchsafed to her. She was seated in a magnificent throne chariot, drawn by white horses, and attended by her Privy Council, the foreign ambassadors, the judges and bishops, and a great concourse of the nobility. Her footmen and pensioners marched around her chariot, then came the Earl of Essex leading her richly-caparisoned horse of State, after him came the ladies of the court, and on either side of them the royal guard, commanded by Sir Walter Raleigh, sumptuously dressed, as Elizabeth liked her personal attendants to be. Proceeding to St. Paul's, she fell on her knees there, before the assembled crowds, and reverently returned thanks to God for the signal victory with which He had blest her arms. The whole assembled clergy then sang a litany, and in the grey gloom of the November afternoon she drove back to her palace at Somerset House by torchlight.

For the part which he took in the destruction of the Armada, Raleigh received an augmentation to his patent of wines, and shortly afterwards was so unfortunate as to offend his royal mistress in such a manner and to such a degree, that his fellow courtiers were disposed to consider his disgrace as permanent.

CHAPTER II.

'Oh how wretched
Is that poor man that hangs on princes' favours.'

ELIZABETH, as is well known, affected to consider all her more favoured courtiers as her devoted lovers, and Raleigh, in common with Essex and Sidney, was accustomed to use language in which he described his royal mistress, now approaching sixty, as instinct with all the grace and loveliness of life's luxuriant prime. Her wrinkled face, according to Sir Walter, was fair as Diana's, lustrous as that of the sea-born goddess of beauty; and dire, therefore, was the wrath of this paragon of women, when she found that her eloquent swain had, while amusing her royal ear with his choicest flatteries, carried his fickle vows elsewhere, and wooed and won Elizabeth Throgmorton, one of her fair maids of honour. In her first impulse of anger she committed both husband and wife to the Tower, where Raleigh languished until he found means to atone for his offence, and

flatter himself once more into her favour, when he was released, and the manor of Sherborne in Dorsetshire bestowed upon him as a compensation for his sufferings, with the intimation that for the present he must remain there in a species of honourable exile, and not venture to show himself at court.

In this enforced seclusion his imagination recurred with all the ardour of his youth to his boyish dreams of discovery and adventure, and in 1594 he despatched Jacob Whiddon, an officer who had been long in his service, to explore the regions of the New World for that lost El Dorado of which the Spanish soldiery told such wondrous tales in their guard-rooms and around their camp-fires; and when Whiddon returned with his report, Sir Walter, with as little delay as possible, fitted out a considerable fleet, in command of which he sailed from Plymouth in the beginning of February 1595, caring not much, perhaps, in that moment of supreme excitement and hope, for Elizabeth's smiles or frowns.

The result of this expedition was the discovery of Guiana, but not of the fabled mines of gold which were to make of their fortunate discoverer a second Crœsus. In the vain search after this imaginary garden of the Hesperides, Raleigh and his men ascended the Orinoco and some of its tributaries in boats, and found everywhere the lush luxuriance of tropic beauty, but not the gold which they so ardently desired to find.

This boat voyage lasted for several weeks, and entailed upon them many hardships,—hunger, cold, and

weariness unspeakable. The rainy season overtook them on their return, and it was amid torrents of rain, and thunder and lightning such as they had never before heard or seen, that the travel-worn, dispirited Englishmen rejoined their ships.

In due time they arrived in England, where Sir Walter found the Queen in a worse temper with him than when he set out. In these circumstances he abandoned the project of immediately colonizing Guiana; but six months after his return, still itching after the gold which it was so difficult to find, he fitted out and despatched to the scene of his discoveries two ships, which he placed under the command of Captain Keymis, an officer who had served under him in the former expedition.

Captain Keymis had orders to survey as much of the country as he could, and to collect all possible information about the routes into the interior. These objects he accomplished very successfully, and returned to London in the June of 1596.

During his absence Raleigh had not been idle. Although the Queen had not yet forgiven him fully, she appointed him to a command in the fleet which, under Lord Essex and the Lord High Admiral Howard, accomplished the brilliant feat of cutting out and destroying the huge fleet of Philip, under the very guns of Cadiz, a success immediately followed up by the capture and sack of the town. Within two months after his return from Cadiz, Raleigh fitted out another ship for a third voyage to Guiana, which he entrusted to the command of

Captain Bertie. His instructions were similar to those of Captain Keymis; he was to do all in his power to discover where the hidden mines were, and how they could be made most easily accessible; but his search, like that of Keymis, was fruitless. The golden mirage, continually playing before their dazzled imaginations, lured them onwards, only to elude their grasp, and in due course, he also returned with his tale of disappointment, and arrived in Plymouth towards the end of June. He found Raleigh too busy for the moment to attend to his story, or employ himself as he usually did, with fresh schemes of discovery. Guiana could wait, but so could not the projects which he had now in hand. These projects were very dissimilar, and yet the one depended much more upon the other than might at first be supposed. His whole soul was intent upon preparing another great naval expedition against Spain; but that he might be able to do this upon the extensive scale which he desired, it was necessary to procure his own return to court, and he saw that this depended in a great degree upon the reconciliation of the favourite and the Secretary. He accordingly strove with all his power to make peace between Essex and Cecil. It was no easy task. He had first to overcome the jealousy and distrust with which Essex had always regarded himself, and then to get him to relinquish the suspicion and enmity which he had constantly displayed towards Cecil; but he had the advantage of knowing both men well, and he accomplished his object at last, after infinite

trouble and pains. His own restoration to court and to court favour followed. The Queen, obliged to him for the greater quietness and peace which followed the cessation of open hostilities between her two ambitious courtiers, no longer objected to receive him, and he was introduced into her presence on the 2d of June 1597 by Sir Robert Cecil. Elizabeth, after his long absence, received him very graciously, and restored him to his full powers and authority as Captain of the Guard. In the evening he attended her when she rode abroad, and she was pleased, as she had been wont to do before his unlucky marriage, to honour him with much private conference, and on the days succeeding, he went and came to the privy-chamber boldly, as he had been accustomed to do.

The first part of his task was now satisfactorily accomplished, and he set himself at once without delay to prepare for the other.

The aspect of public affairs was such as to justify and favour the prosecution of his designs. Philip had been so incensed by the burning of his fleet in the port of Cadiz, that he began again to cherish his old ambitious dream of invading England. With this end in view he assembled a large fleet at Lisbon; but the overruling providence of God still fought against him. Again, as before, the elements did the work of the English navies. A great storm arose; his fleet was driven hither and thither; and it was found, when the tempest had blown past, that thirty-six of his huge galleons were totally wrecked. Still

he persevered. He was emphatically one of those men whose slow, dull natures receive impressions only with difficulty, but are as granite to retain them. It was one of his settled convictions that he was destined to conquer England, and he spared no sacrifice to attain his object. With patient industry he set himself, spider-like, as often as he was baffled, to re-twine again the threads of his broken web. Such of his shattered ships as would float he repaired; such as were hopelessly wrecked and sunk he replaced by others, on whose building and equipment the wealth of the Indies was profusely lavished; and in a few months another navy rode proudly as before over the subject seas, waiting only his nod to attempt a simultaneous descent upon England and Ireland.

Elizabeth, as before, was not unwarned of the tender mercies in store for her. Raleigh and other of her naval commanders had long had their eyes upon the Spanish fleet, which had been slowly growing for months in the ports of Ferrol and the Groyne; and to meet this force, the Queen and her advisers fitted out the naval expedition which has been called, in the history of those times, the Island Voyage. The fleet they prepared consisted of one hundred and twenty sail, seventeen of which were the Queen's own ships, while forty-three were of smaller size, and the others were used as tenders and for carrying victuals. The force on board these ships was composed mainly of newly-levied troops, to the number of five thousand; but to these were added one thousand veterans under Sir Francis Vere, who had served

in Holland. Unfortunately, the Lord High Admiral Howard was so unwell as to be unable to assume the chief command, and Essex was appointed in his place,—an appointment in which the Queen showed less than her usual penetration, for Essex, although a brilliant soldier, did not shine as a general, and was still less successful as a naval commander. The captains under him were chosen from the most experienced seamen in England, with Lord Thomas Howard as Vice-Admiral, and Sir Walter Raleigh as Rear-Admiral. It was also resolved, before the expedition sailed, to discharge all the land forces except the veterans under Sir Francis Vere, and to limit their endeavours principally, and in the first place, to the intercepting of the India fleet.

At last all was ready, and on the 17th of August 1597 they put to sea, but had not proceeded far when Raleigh's ship, the *War-Spite*, had her mainmast broken. This accident compelled her to fall behind for repairs, and in consequence Raleigh was obliged to part company with his commander. This circumstance, Essex, always jealous and irritable, and ignorant of the sea service and its requirements, construed into intentional disrespect, and could with difficulty be reconciled to his rear-admiral, when the whole fleet assembled a little later at the Azores. At these islands they had been informed that they would find the whole Spanish fleet; but they discovered, to their intense mortification, that this information was false, and that they would require to fix upon some other plan of action. Upon this, Essex, to the sur-

prise of those who had lately witnessed his pettish resentment, sent for Raleigh, and desired to have his counsel in the emergency, for although he did not like him, he knew that he could fully depend upon his naval experience. Raleigh's advice was, that he and Essex should attack Fayal, that Howard and Vere should besiege Graciosa, the Netherland veterans Pico, and Lord Mountjoy and Sir Christopher Blount St. Michael's, while they should all finally unite to storm Terceira.

This was agreed upon, and Raleigh had scarcely finished taking in his wood and water, when a messenger came to tell him that Essex had already borne away for Fayal, and that he was to follow him with as little delay as possible. This he at once did, but although he made all the haste he could, he could never get a glimpse even of his commander-in-chief. In these circumstances he thought the best thing he could do was to steer straight for Fayal, where, according to previous agreement, he should certainly find the Earl. This he did, and next morning arrived in the roads of Fayal, to find them empty and deserted; no Essex was there, and nothing had been heard of him. It now became a very perplexing question what he was to do. The captains of his own squadron earnestly advised an immediate descent upon the town, as every hour's delay only gave the enemy so much longer time to strengthen the fortifications; but this course was opposed by the friends of Essex, and Sir Walter, unwilling, if he could avoid it, to widen the breach between them, agreed to

postpone the attack for a short time. He had scarcely come to this determination when the wind changed, and with the *War-Spite* and part of the fleet he rounded the point, and cast anchor in a better roadstead than that which they had at first occupied. From this new position they had a more extensive view of the island, and it looked so fertile and beautiful, that a large party with the rear-admiral at their head were tempted to land. They had their arms with them, but had no intention to fight, their object being only to pass the time and to fill their water-casks. Nor would they in all probability have deviated from this resolution, had hostilities not been forced upon them by a large party of Spaniards, who, as soon as they perceived their intention to land, hastened to oppose them. Raleigh upon this augmented his party to two hundred men, all drawn from his own squadron. He would have no other, although the captains of the Netherland veterans loudly cheered him as he rowed along their line, and eagerly besought him to accept reinforcements from them. Declining all assistance, he rowed as quickly as he could towards the shore, having first ordered the pinnaces with some heavy ordnance in them to fire upon the trenches. It had always been a maxim of his, that it was much more easy to invade a coast than to defend it, and he now in his own person demonstrated the truth of this axiom. Rowing straight for the landing-place amid showers of shot, he leapt into the shallow water, waded on shore, clambered up the rocks, and at the head of his men cut his way

through the narrow entrance into the fortifications. There the Spaniards, astonished at his daring and unable to withstand the impetuosity and vigour of his attack, did not long dispute the situation with him, but threw down their weapons and fled, leaving him master of the fortifications and trenches, with the loss only of a few soldiers, and two long-boats which were sunk.

It was a gallant deed, gallantly done, and he resolved to follow it up by an immediate attempt to make himself master of the town. As a preliminary measure, he sent forward some musketeers and sergeants to reconnoitre the enemy's lines; but they were like the Israelitish spies, they returned with the despairing cry, 'It is too hard for us,' upon their lips. The batteries were so formidable, that they declared one and all that they would not face them.

'Will you not?' said Raleigh; 'then I will. I have always observed that these Spanish troops, of whose exploits we have heard so much, turn out upon trial to be very indifferent soldiers.'

At first they supposed that these words were spoken in jest, but he soon convinced them that he was in earnest. Calling for his casque and cuirass, he placed himself at the head of those who chose to follow him, and set off himself to reconnoitre the town. No service could have been more dangerous. Cannon shot and stones from the battered walls flew like hail around him. One of his friends, Sir Arthur Gorges, was wounded, two soldiers beside him had their heads carried off, his own clothes and armour were

literally riddled with balls, and yet he escaped without so much as a scratch. Having finished his observations, he sent a messenger to request Captain Bret and the whole of the men to come up, as he expected that they would not be able to take the citadel, which was strongly fortified, without much trouble.

This anticipation proved to be unfounded; Raleigh's first attack had struck such terror into the Spaniards, that they had no mind to stand a second, but abandoned the fort without firing a shot. The conquerors then marched on to the town, which they found also deserted. Thus in a very short time, with the loss only of ten men killed and twenty wounded, he made himself master of the whole island. The English immediately dispersed themselves in search of plunder; but as the town, which was called Villa Dorta, was unwalled, Raleigh, dreading a surprise, recalled them, and raising a strong barricade, set a watch; and strictly prohibiting any of the soldiers from straggling away without the consent of an officer, he had the satisfaction of remaining unmolested all night. Next morning the fleet of Essex was descried on the horizon, and in no long time the commander-in-chief cast anchor in Fayal roads. Always disposed, where Raleigh was concerned, to a jealous irritability of temper, the mortification and rage of the Earl at finding his anticipated laurels snatched from his brow may be more readily conceived than described. Instead of feeling any satisfaction at the success of his rear-admiral, he characterized it, in the first transports of his anger, as an insolent subverting of discipline

and contempt of his authority, and spoke of it as a crime for which the offender might justly lose his head.

This ebullition of temper he followed up by placing all the officers engaged in the attack under arrest, and when Sir Walter appeared in person to report the victory and welcome him to the town, he upbraided him with his disobedience, and asked him if he was ignorant of the article in the instructions which provided that no one should land any of the troops without the general's presence.

Raleigh met this storm with much composure and command of temper, explaining in a very temperate tone that this provision in the instructions to which the earl had alluded referred only to the captains and inferior officers, not to him who was rear-admiral, and, as the Earl knew, specially appointed in her Majesty's letters to take the command of the whole fleet, failing him and Lord Thomas Howard.

Essex could make no answer to this, for he knew it was true; and then Raleigh went on to explain that they had waited for his arrival, and that when the first fighting was forced upon them, they had no intention of taking the town, but were led on from one success to another. Upon hearing this, the Earl became suddenly calm, and Lord Thomas Howard hastening to cast a fresh supply of oil upon the troubled waters, the officers under arrest were released, the commander-in-chief restored to good humour, and the whole affair brought to a pleasant termination.

Essex, although very quick-tempered and passionate, was noble and generous; and when his short-lived anger was over, he was usually ready to acknowledge that he had been in the wrong, and prompt to make reparation for it. His greatest weakness was an excessive personal vanity and ambition, and a desire to stand well with every one; and this failing led him at Graciosa, to which they went next, to fall into a grievous error. Thinking more of his own popularity than of the Queen's interests, he allowed himself to be so wheedled and talked over by the chiefs of the island, that he gave up all thoughts of attacking them, and, without firing a shot, steered with his whole fleet for St. Michael's. Here his ships took three Spanish vessels, the largest of which, of four hundred tons burden, was taken by Raleigh. She was very richly laden with gold, silver, pearls, musk, ambergris, civet, and cochineal, and carried besides many passengers of distinction. 'I foresee,' said Raleigh, when Sir Arthur Gorges, his captain, told him how rich the Spanish cargoes were; 'I foresee that all this will advantage us but little, yet I am glad of it, for the sake of this poor Earl, for the money will please the Queen, and cause her to repine less at the cost of the voyage.'

This anticipation might have proved correct, if the Earl's total want of naval skill had not entailed, instead of success, a series of the most tantalizing failures and mortifications, all the more bitter that they could have been avoided by common foresight and prudence. The principal object of the expedition had been to

take the treasure-fleet, and this rich prize was actually descried by Captain Monson, who had been sent to look out for it, and who strove by every signal which he could think of to attract the attention of his commander-in-chief. In vain, however, were all his efforts. Essex, as fickle as he was deficient in naval tactics and daring, had already changed the course he had agreed upon, and had steered for St. Michael's. There was still, however, a chance. If he went straight there, he could scarcely fail to meet the treasure-laden argosies; but no, his evil fortune impelled him to take a circuitous route to the north of Terceira, and while he was cruising aimlessly about, Philip's rich galleons made the coast of Spain in safety.

Naturally the veteran captains he commanded were in the highest degree incensed at this reckless mismanagement. 'None of us,' said Sir William Monson indignantly, 'could be blamed in this business. All is to be ascribed to the want of experience in my Lord of Essex and his flexible nature, which makes him so easy to be overruled. When he first anchored at Flores, I advised him to spread his ships north and south as far as the east wind which then blew would carry them, which had he done, certain it is, that in less than forty hours he had made the Queen owner of the whole treasure-fleet. But he was diverted from it by divers gentlemen, who, coming principally for land service, found themselves wearied by the tediousness of the sea. We may say truly, that there never was such a chance to have undone the State of Spain as now; for every royal of

plate we had taken had been two to them, by our converting it into war upon them.'

This great opportunity was lost; but Raleigh, who was lying at St. Michael's, waiting for his erratic commander-in-chief, well-nigh took a carrack of eighteen hundred tons burden. Mistaking his ships for Spanish vessels, she advanced proudly towards them, with all her sails set, when the rear-admiral, perceiving her mistake, ordered every flag to be hauled down, and all to keep as quiet as possible. Not a gun was to be fired, not a boat lowered until he gave the word. His orders were obeyed, and the rich prize was almost within their grasp, when a Dutch captain, either from stupidity or malice, discharged a gun at the advancing stranger, and, as if by the touch of a magician's rod, the whole scene was changed. With amazing celerity the carrack changed her course, and like a startled fawn stood away from the fleet, to which a few seconds before she had been so eagerly advancing. Her escape seemed certain, but at that moment the wind suddenly veered round, and she ran ashore under the town. Raleigh followed her at once with his barges, designing to board her; but her crew perceiving his intention, set fire to her in a great many places at once, and then took to their boats. Still the English advanced, undeterred by the surge and surf, eager to save some part of the wealth which was about to be consumed to ashes before them; but they were too late. Before they could reach the doomed ship she was on fire from stem to stern, her great guns were discharging from every port, her decks, her masts, her

cordage, her furniture were all one mass of flame and as she burned gradually to the water's edge, she exhaled, sweet in death, fragrant perfumes around her, Sabean odours from the cargo of spices slowly consuming in her hold.

Meanwhile Essex, having committed one irreparable blunder, straightway rushed into another, whose consequences might have been so tremendous as to entail nothing less disastrous than the utter ruin of his country. It was in vain that his veteran officers implored him to go home, and assured him that nothing more could be done for that season. He was conscious of failure, and he longed to perform some exploit by which he might repair his own glory, and wipe out the intolerable sense of mortification under which he smarted. He therefore continued to cruise about, now in pursuit of one fancy, now of another; while Philip's fleet, setting sail from the Groyne and Ferrol, and finding the English coast almost wholly undefended, anticipated an easy landing and a bloody reckoning for their lost Armada, and for the many disasters and defeats which had befallen them since then. England was even in greater peril than in 1588. Never, not even when his Invincible Armada set sail, had Philip seemed so near obtaining all that hatred and revenge could give him as a guerdon for years of mortification and defeat. Human help seemed unavailing, when Providence again interfered; the stormy winds of the English Channel were let loose, and his fleet was a third time scattered, crippled and disabled, to the four winds of heaven.

Meanwhile Elizabeth's trusty Lord High Admiral was on his way home. He encountered, but without much damage, the same storms which had destroyed the Spanish fleet, and late in October reached the western coast, and leaving his ship, posted straight to London, while Raleigh went on with the vessels to Plymouth, to perform those duties which belonged more properly to his superior,—to see after the repairing of the ships, to pay and disembark the troops, and to distribute the regiments from Flanders along the coast of Cornwall, that the country might be in some measure prepared against a surprise from Spain. The object of Essex by his hasty journey was to obtain, if possible, the Queen's ear before she was prejudiced against him by any of his dissatisfied officers; but he found on reaching London, that he might have saved himself his trouble. Elizabeth was a very good judge of service rendered to her, and such a series of failures and mortifications as had befallen her Lord High Admiral was not at all to her liking. She received him not only coldly, but with the most bitter reproaches; she openly accused him of misconduct; she demanded of him why he had neither taken nor burned the Ferrol fleet; and she angrily asked him how he had allowed the treasure-ships to escape. In short, she showed towards him such contempt and disdain, that he was glad to retire from court, and shut himself up in his own house at Wanstead. He found, too, the more to embitter his retirement, that while he had been away on his luckless voyage, his royal mistress, forgetting her absent Achilles, had

promoted his rival Cecil to the post of Master of the Wards, and had also bestowed a peerage upon Lord High Admiral Howard, with the title of Earl of Nottingham, mentioning in the patent that this honour was conferred upon him as a reward for the eminent services he had rendered his country by his exertions against the Armada, and in the capture of the Spanish fleet at Cadiz.

All this was as gall and wormwood to Essex, and the consciousness that he had tarnished his own glory did not dispose him to bear it more patiently, but rather the reverse. He himself had been commander-in-chief in the action at Cadiz, and affecting to consider the terms in which Lord Howard's promotion was couched as a direct impeachment of his honour, he sent him a challenge.

This quarrel was very disquieting to the Queen, who sent for Raleigh, and desired him, if he could, to make peace between the two Earls. This was not easily done. Essex was determined either to fight or to have the patent of Lord Howard's peerage altered, and the old lord was not unnaturally as determined to retain the flattering terms in which his services were spoken of in the original patent. At the first whisper of giving it up, he retired to his house at Chelsea, and pretended to be sick, while the poor Queen, distracted between returning regard for her favourite, and a desire to be just to one who was not only an old and faithful servant, but also nearly related to her on the mother's side, turned upon Burleigh and Cecil, and accused the astute

father and son of having brought her into this dilemma.

They excused themselves, courtier fashion, protesting and vowing that they had nothing to do with the matter, and devoutly hoping that Raleigh would be able to bring matters to an amicable conclusion. This, after an infinite deal of trouble, he was at last able to effect. Lord Howard kept his patent, which he could not be prevailed upon to resign ; and as a set-off against it, Essex was made Earl-Marshal, a dignity which he condescended to accept ; and the Queen, satisfied with his returning good humour, was contented to forget his failures. Meanwhile the peace-maker, wearied out with constant hard service, had retired to his seat at Sherborne, expecting that in due time the reward of his services would be bestowed upon him. The absent, however, are often forgotten : the place of Vice-Chamberlain, which became vacant about this time, was bestowed not upon him, but upon Sir Robert Sidney.

At Sherborne, his ambition, thus momentarily checked in the courtier's arduous up-hill path, turned with the ardour which was one of his distinguishing characteristics towards literary and mathematical pursuits. It usually happens that those who dip with shallow draught into every department of science and learning excel in none, but this was not the case with Raleigh. His genius was not more discursive than it was profound. The hours of his temporary retirement were studiously passed in mathematical

and literary researches, or in social intercourse with his friends, among whom were the celebrated mathematicians, Hariot, Dee, and the Earl of Northumberland, and the still more distinguished dramatic and poetical names that are found upon the roll of the Mermaid Club, to wit, Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Fletcher, Beaumont, Carew, and Donne.

While he was thus enjoying himself in his rare interval of leisure, the circumstances of the country were daily becoming more critical. Philip, unable to carry on hostilities at the same time both with France and England, made overtures of peace to Henry IV. of France. Henry, on his part, before beginning negotiations, communicated the intentions of their common enemy to the Dutch States and to England.

Elizabeth, much interested in the news, resolved to send Sir Robert Cecil to the court of France to watch the progress of the negotiations, and to endeavour to forward as much as he could the interests of the Protestant cause. This embassy was not at all to Cecil's liking. He had enemies at home, whose machinations he dreaded in his absence; but he had also a natural genius for intrigue, which enabled him to bring the system of espionage to great perfection. He was determined not to leave England until he had got his secret agents and spies into training, and had arranged that intelligence of everything that happened at court, even the minutest trifles, should be promptly and secretly conveyed to him. In order to spin out the time for this, he got Raleigh and others of his friends to invite him to a series of

farewell entertainments, and when at last these festivities came to a close, he had arranged his secret correspondence, and was ready for his troublesome embassy. On the 11th of February he departed, Raleigh, whom he had made a member of the Privy Council, accompanying him with other friends to Dover.

His delay had enabled him to secure himself very efficiently against enemies at home, but it had also lost him, as he soon found, the principal object of his mission abroad. He had come to France in order that he might, if possible, prevent Henry from concluding a peace without the concurrence of Elizabeth and the States of Holland; but when he reached Paris, he had the mortification to find that the preliminaries of a treaty were already arranged, and all his efforts to induce the French king to break it off were in vain.

On the 2d of May the treaty of Vervins between France and Spain was signed, and Cecil, considering the favourable conditions obtained by France, seems to have come to the conclusion that it would be a good thing also for England to obtain peace with her old enemy on the same terms. In this opinion he was backed up by the sagacity and experience of his father; nor did it seem that peace would be difficult to obtain. Philip, stricken with mortal disease, might well be supposed to be weary of the continual, harassing, often humiliating warfare in which all the latter years of his life had been spent. His hostilities with England had not been so fortunate as to make him

wish to bequeath such a legacy of ever-recurring mortification and defeat to his weak and inexperienced successor. Thus judging, the Secretary returned home, eager for peace, and without loss of time brought his pacific projects before the Privy Council, where they were very keenly debated.

It was in the debate upon this subject that his father, the Lord Treasurer Burleigh, appeared for the last time in public. With the calm prudence, the unimpassioned judgment, the ripe wisdom, which was the outcome of a long and laborious life, he spoke in favour of peace, and endeavoured to convince the wayward and passionate Essex that his opposition to it was both impolitic and unchristian. In vain, the Earl only became more obstinate; Burleigh's arguments, which he could not answer, while they convinced his judgment, irritated his temper, and made him more clamorous for war, until at last the old man ended the debate in a manner so striking and solemn, that a sudden awe fell upon all those who witnessed it. Taking a prayer-book from his pocket, he opened it, and placing it before Essex, silently pointed to that verse in the Psalms which says, 'Men of blood shall not live out half their days.' It was as if the venerable statesman saw before him, not the great Earl-Marshal, the spoiled favourite of fortune, but the fallen courtier, who was so soon with pious resignation to bend that graceful and unwise head beneath the executioner's axe.

Whilst there was among Elizabeth's ministers such a diversity of opinion upon this important point, there

was no lack of much revelry, with abundance of masques and tournaments, at court The Queen liked such splendid trifling ; and as Raleigh excelled in the tilt-yard and at the jousts, and was besides a man of noble figure, and partial to the splendour of apparel which she loved, Elizabeth began to regard him with such favour that the jealousy of Essex was aroused.

Having gracefully carried off the prize of victory, Sir Walter would wear the glove, or scarf, or favour conferred upon him by his royal mistress, with as much show of gallant devotion as if it had been the first love-gift ever bestowed upon him by his fair and affectionate wife, who, in the seclusion of Sherborne, had to content herself with what little of her husband's company his court avocations left him time to bestow upon her.

The Queen, meanwhile, coquettish even in age, loved such show of heart devotion well, and took great delight in the pageants and martial games of her courtiers ; being recalled from these splendid feudal displays only by the threatening condition of Ireland, and the necessity of coming to some resolution as to the policy to be pursued towards Spain.

Ireland, always disaffected, and bound by the ties of a common faith to Spain, was again on the eve of a universal rebellion. The policy of the Lord Deputy, the Earl of Ormond, alternately weak and indulgent, and then unseasonably cruel and severe, had not been fortunate in its results. It was necessary to recall him, but before doing so, the Privy Council sent for Raleigh, who had served in Ireland in his youth, and

desired to know his opinion upon the perplexed state of affairs there.

No record has been preserved of what passed upon this occasion, except that Raleigh himself was very unwilling to accept the onerous and undesirable situation of Lord Deputy.

A Lord Deputy, however, had to be found, and the Queen, after some deliberation, selected Sir Robert Knolles for the post. He was the uncle of the Earl of Essex, but this did not prevent the favourite from taking a different view of matters from her Majesty, and earnestly or rather imperiously beseeching her to appoint instead Sir George Carew. A curious scene then took place at the council-table. The Queen condescended to explain the reasons of her choice, and Essex more eagerly than before pressed the claims of his, until, seeing that he could not prevail, he rose abruptly, and in an uncontrollable fit of temper turned his back contemptuously upon his royal mistress. This was more than Elizabeth could bear; she also had a temper of her own. Her father's haughty and passionate nature had descended to her, and without more ado, she dealt her unmannerly courtier a smart box on the ear. This personal chastisement infuriated the Earl beyond all bounds; he laid his hand on his sword, which he half plucked out of its scabbard, swearing loudly the while that he would not have borne such an indignity from her Majesty's father, Henry VIII. The Queen, who was by this time as angry as he was, upbraided him with his insolence, and dismissed him from her presence, upon which

he at once left the court, and retiring to one of his houses, shut himself up there, to brood over the insult which he affected to consider that he had received.

Many of his friends, especially the Lord Keeper Egerton, remonstrated with him upon the folly of his conduct. 'It renders all that can be said in your behalf unavailing,' they said to him, 'and gives your enemies a dangerous advantage over you.'

'I care little for that,' was the reply of Essex; 'let those who mean to make their profit of princes show no sense of the injuries received from them. Let them acknowledge an infinite absoluteness on earth, who do not believe in an absolute infiniteness in heaven. You say I advantage my enemies by this course; I do not see that. When I was at court I found them absolute, and I had rather they should triumph alone, than have me attendant upon their chariot wheels. As for leaving my friends, that matters still less; when I was at court I had no power to show them any proof of my love, and now that I have turned a hermit, they shall bear no envy on account of their love to me.'

In defiance of all Egerton's remonstrances, he persisted in remaining in retirement, and also in reiterating with angry obstinacy that the Queen had made a mistake, and that in spite of all which her more favoured advisers might say, Carew was the only man capable of governing Ireland.

This unwise and overbearing conduct kept continually fresh in the Queen's mind the remembrance of his insolence, and indirectly contributed to the

exaltation of Raleigh, who received a greater share of the Queen's favour and approbation than he had ever previously enjoyed. He found himself, in fact, filling to a great degree the place formerly occupied by Essex, and he seems to have come to the conclusion that there was not room for both of them on the same dizzy eminence; and laying aside the respectful deference which he had hitherto paid to the favourite, he became from this time his open and avowed enemy. It was either from him or from Cecil that the hint came which resulted in the total ruin of Essex. The favourite had returned to court and been partially reconciled to the Queen; but in his retirement he had forgotten nothing, and had learned nothing, and came back to public life more determined than ever upon having his own way. A thoroughly spoiled child of fortune, he was as overbearing and haughty in his adversity as he had ever been in his prosperity; and he succeeded at last in wearing out even Elizabeth's indulgent partiality, and making her glad to avail herself of the insidious recommendation of one of his rivals, that he should be appointed to the government of Ireland. There can be no doubt that both Cecil and Raleigh knew that he was quite unfit for such a difficult post. They were well aware that his schemes for tranquillizing that unhappy country were impracticable, and that his sanguine temper was ill calculated to weigh or meet the difficulties before him; but they wished to precipitate his final disgrace, and, as events proved, they took the readiest means to do so. His royal mistress, although for-

mally reconciled to him, had not forgotten his failures in the Island Voyage, or forgiven him the escape of the Spanish plate-fleet. A second series of disastrous mistakes in Ireland could scarcely fail to be fatal to him, and these errors he was likely to have more excuse than before for committing, for Cecil, the Home Secretary, who hated him, had the command of those resources which are truly denominated the sinews of war. He could, to a certain extent, make an army efficient or otherwise as he chose, and he seems to have been determined that the favourite should have as little straw as possible for his tale of bricks.

Essex himself had no heart for his difficult but withal honourable appointment; he regarded it only as a splendid exile, and did not conceal the reluctance with which he repaired to the scene of his ill-fated viceroyalty. Before he left he wrote a letter to the Queen, couched in the desponding strains of a despairing lover. This farewell epistle is eloquent, in spite of all its absurdity, and breathes the reproaches of a lover, whose undying constancy merited a different reward than that which cruel fate had bestowed upon him.

CHAPTER III.

A notable actor leaves the busy stage.

ESSEX had been scarcely four months in his new government, and had not signalized himself much there, when Elizabeth, with a hasty rushing into expense, very unlike her usual thrift, suddenly ordered eighteen ships of war to be fitted out. This fleet was placed under the command of Sir Walter Raleigh and Sir Thomas Howard. Nor did her warlike preparations stop here. A levy of six thousand men was raised, principally to guard the city of London and the Queen's person. Chains were drawn across the principal streets of the metropolis, a constant watch was kept up, and lights were placed at night in conspicuous positions. Every preparation was made to guard against an attack which was believed to be imminent, but no one could conjecture from what quarter the threatening danger was anticipated, for all these preparations took place in the midst of profound peace. Of whom was Elizabeth, who was not given to sudden panics, afraid?

Spain, as usual, was preparing a fleet at the Groyne; but it seems now well ascertained that the intentions of Philip towards England were at this moment pacific. It would rather seem that the Queen, incensed at the inactivity of the Earl of Essex, had been made to believe that his inaction covered deep and dangerous designs, and that while he was doing nothing towards subjugating the rebels in Ireland, he was secretly preparing for an attack upon his native country, and meditating, if not the subversion of her government, at least the wresting of all power from the hands of his rivals, and the humiliation of herself to the position of a puppet-queen, with him for mayor of the palace.

From whatever source her fears proceeded, they did not, however, continue long. The fleet had scarcely been a month at sea when it was recalled; but her dissatisfaction with her late favourite was not so easily laid to sleep. She was, there is little reason to doubt, very much disappointed by his conduct in Ireland. Ignorant to a great degree of what he was speaking about, he had before he set out criticised very severely the policy and acts of his predecessor, and had spoken of what he himself would do, in language rather befitting a hero laying aside his armour than one only beginning to gird it on. 'The rebellion,' he said, 'could be soon and easily suppressed;' but this illusion vanished as soon as he had set foot in Ireland. He then found that he had lightly promised what was in truth an impossibility; but Elizabeth, who had never realized for herself the

difficulties of his position, was inclined to hold him to his empty boast, and to demand that the extravagant expectations which he had himself raised should be fulfilled. In this humour she was encouraged by Cecil, Raleigh, and the Earl of Nottingham. To all these men the quondam favourite had been haughty and overbearing in his hour of power, and to Raleigh in especial he had been often unjust and insolent; now all three were resolved to make the most of his absence, and to gather for themselves hay while the sun shone.

Elizabeth, on her part, free from the admiration and fond partiality with which his presence never failed to inspire her, lent a willing ear to their continual complaints about the delays and expenses of the Irish campaign, while to himself they took care to convey in an exaggerated form all her bitter and hasty words of resentment and scorn.

Meanwhile she was, as more than one eye-witness tells us, exceedingly unhappy, and her temper in regard to the once favourite Earl was fickle and variable in the last degree. One moment she was dissolved in tenderness at the recollection of her sweet Robin, a pet name she had for Essex, and, forgetting her venerable years, exhibited to all around her the caprices and follies of a love-sick girl; the next, Cecil or Raleigh came with their complaints that all was going wrong in Ireland. The rebellion was spreading, Essex was doing nothing, and yet he had a large and brave army. He had made another truce with the rebels: what could it all mean? And so they kept on, harping on

the same string of hints and insinuations, till their unfortunate mistress, distracted between the love of dotage, and the fears and suspicions of an ill-served and sagacious prince, burst into loud fits of violent anger. In these moods she openly accused the Earl of betraying her and his country, she listened eagerly while his enemies pointed out to her his dangerous popularity, and she began, apparently in sober earnest, to suspect him of meditating treason even against herself.

That Essex was not ignorant of her suspicions is shown by a letter which he wrote to her about this time; in this he boldly vindicates himself, declares the honesty of his intentions, and demands that she shall do him justice—but all in a haughty strain, and taking for granted apparently that her partiality had already forgiven him his former offences. This was precisely what she had not yet been able to do, and when this letter was followed up, not by vigorous action against the rebels, but by a demand for additional reinforcements of two thousand men, her wrath burst out into a fury which exceeded all bounds.

She wrote him a letter, dated from Nonsuch, which was exceedingly bitter and severe. In it she upbraided him with the sluggishness and inutility of all his operations, and sarcastically asked him what had become of his mighty promises of success, not one of which had been fulfilled. He had only added failure to failure, and if he went on in the style in which he had begun, she saw nothing for it but that she and her kingdom would be exhausted and impoverished be-

yond all reasonable bounds, not to speak of the loss of honour, and the encouragement which the rebels would thereby receive. She concluded by adding to her reproaches the most cruel suspicions. She had seen a writing, she said, in the form of a cartel, full of impertinent challenges and needless comparisons, which she supposed had been prepared in the hope of terrifying all men from censuring his proceedings; but she assured him that with whatever groundless hope he might have countenanced such an attempt, she did not doubt but that she should be able to let his friends know 'what belongs to us, to you, and to themselves.'

This letter, in which the passionate anger of the Queen was mingled with the gall of Cecil's bitter pen, brought about almost immediately the crisis upon which the Earl's enemies had counted. He saw now, too late, with what reason the Lord Keeper Egerton and others of his best friends had deprecated his absence from court, as giving his rivals time and opportunities for plotting against him, which they might, and which in the end they did turn to fatal account. Who these rivals were, he knew very well. His letters are full of accusations and complaints against Raleigh, Cobham, and Cecil, although he does not often allude to the Secretary by name. Cecil was in truth the most dangerous, because the most unscrupulous of the three. Afraid that the Queen's severe letter might not of itself produce the effect he desired, he contrived, one contemporary writer tells us, that a report should reach Essex in Ireland that Elizabeth was danger-

ously ill. This news, which he received shortly after her angry missive, hurried him with rash impetuosity into the fatal step of leaving his government, not only without her Majesty's permission, but without giving her the slightest intimation of his intentions. Still in his riding-dress, all disordered and muddy from his rapid journey, he made his appearance early one morning at Nonsuch, and, as regardless of etiquette as of prudence, straightway rushed up-stairs towards Elizabeth's bed-chamber, where he was informed he should find her, she having not yet risen. There in good truth she was, no Venus or Diana rich in unadorned charms, secure in the sovereign power of beauty to please under all circumstances; but a haggard, wasted old woman, sitting up with a loose wrapper thrown around her, with her grey hair hanging all loose and dishevelled about her wrinkled face, wanting sadly, if the truth were told, whatever adventitious aids the toilet could give her.

Seeing the booted, bespattered knight-errant rush hastily into her presence, she very naturally screamed; so did her startled maids of honour; and while one ran here and another there in the wildest confusion, Essex knelt down and besought her forgiveness for his sudden and unexpected return. At once all Elizabeth's resentment vanished. The sight of sweet Robin once more in lover-like fashion at her feet revived all her forgotten tenderness; she stretched out her hand to him, which he kissed passionately, and was afterwards allowed to have some private conversation with her, in which he found her so gracious and kind, so alto-

gether the Elizabeth of old, that when he retired at last to change his travel-stained dress, he was heard to thank God for the sweet calm which he had found at home, after all the troubles and storms he had endured abroad.

This lull, however, was not of long duration. As was to be expected, Cecil and his party did not take the Queen's lover-like view of his conduct, and they had the art so to represent its enormity to her, that when he returned in a few hours to her presence, he found her mood completely changed. Raleigh and the Secretary had been hard at work during his short absence; the former, indeed, was so discomposed when he heard of the gracious reception which the Queen had accorded to her quondam favourite, that he took to his bed out of sheer mortification and chagrin. Elizabeth upon this sent for him,—an opportunity of which he did not fail to avail himself to inflame the royal mind against his rival. Cecil, equally determined to prevent Essex, if possible, from regaining his old influence, was not so frank or straightforward in his hatred. He said nothing openly against the Earl, but pretended to pity him, while at the same time he was filling her Majesty's ear with the most artful insinuations against him.

Then came hard lines for sweet Robin. The power which he had once possessed over Elizabeth's affections was his now only to a very limited degree; it could not save him from being examined and arraigned before the Council, who judged him not with the partial eyes of sexagenarian love, but with the

prying, censorious glance of party hatred. By their orders he was confined to his chamber, forbidden to hold any intercourse with his family or friends, and treated with as much rigour as if he had been already found guilty of high treason. In these trying circumstances, debarred from the society of his friends, and excluded from the presence of Elizabeth, he addressed a letter to her, full of tender and affecting pathos, in which he assured her that if his humble letters found not access to her, he had already lived too long, and should be ready to hail any death which would open a door of escape for him out of his many miseries. This letter produced no effect upon the Queen, and yet it was very evident to all around her that she still retained a great deal of affection for him. Upon this, distress and anxiety of mind threw him into a fever, and when she was told how ill he was, she was seen by her attendants to shed many tears. She sent him some broth from her own table, and ordered no fewer than eight physicians to visit him, adding the assurance that she would come herself if it were possible to do so consistently with her honour.

All these relenting dispositions were, however, nullified and neutralized by Cecil's secret hatred, while all the time he was constantly declaring that he was not the Earl's enemy. He had no dislike to him, or any motive whatever for his opposition to him, except zeal for the public good; and yet, when Essex and his friends pressed for a personal reconciliation, he would not have it, alleging it was of no use; 'For there is no constancy,' said he, 'in my lord, nor any

dependence to be placed upon his love.' In all his conduct towards his rival he displayed the same hypocrisy. He set every spring in motion against him; but he never appeared in the matter himself openly, he always acted by the agency of others. As wary as he was unpitying and unscrupulous, the letter recommending Elizabeth to take extreme proceedings against the unfortunate Earl has come down to posterity, not in his handwriting, but in that of the more open and impetuous Raleigh. Sir Walter had many injuries and slights to avenge; he had never forgiven Essex for his conduct to him during the Island Voyage; his whole attitude towards him for months had been determinately hostile; but yet there is little doubt that in the writing of this letter, as in other things, he allowed himself to be made the tool of Cecil.

This document, which its author, in his own days of affliction, was destined to remember with deep regret, presents a painful memorial of unforgiving hatred and revenge. In it he exhorts Cecil to leave no stone unturned to secure the doom of their common rival, assuring him that Essex, if he escaped, would never forgive him for what he had already suffered, and ending with the words, 'I have seen the last of the Queen's good days and of ours, if he should ever again obtain his liberty.' This advice, which agreed so well with his own inclinations, was very palatable indeed to the Secretary, who redoubled his hints and insinuations with such effect, that he soon inflamed Elizabeth's temper, embittered by age,

infirmity, and disappointment, into a state of fury. Yet she consulted others before she finally determined upon the absolute ruin of her once beloved favourite. She spoke to Mr. Francis Bacon, afterwards Lord Chancellor, upon the matter, and he, to his honour, took a lenient view of Essex and his conduct; but all he could say in his favour only procured him the enmity of the Cecils, without producing any more than a momentary impression upon the Queen. Meanwhile, it seemed as if exhausted nature would do the work of the executioner; the fever with which the Earl had been seized continued so violent that it brought him at last to the brink of the grave. Then another short-lived fit of relenting on Elizabeth's part ensued—he was again for a little while her dear and sweet Robin; but no sooner did he revive a little, than her resentment returned, and as soon as he had gained sufficient strength, she decreed that he should be tried before the Privy Council.

At this trial the most studied indignities were shown to him. When he came in, no mark of courtesy or common respect was paid to him, and he was allowed to kneel on the bare floor at the upper end of the table. At length the Archbishop of Canterbury, compassionating his weakness and exhaustion, spoke to those nearest to him, and upon his solicitation a cushion was brought and given to the Earl, and afterwards, still at the Archbishop's request, he was further accommodated with a stool. Except this prelate, no one seemed to have the least pity for him: but even under every disadvantage, he defended

himself nobly, and bore with much patience and gentleness the envenomed accusations which Coke, the Queen's Attorney-General, brought against him.

Nothing, however, which he could do or say availed him anything. His judges had already made up their minds, and determined his fate before he entered the council-room. His sentence, which was pronounced by the Lord Keeper, was to his haughty spirit more bitter than death; it bore that he was to be deprived of all his offices, that he was to be degraded from his rank as Councillor of State, and was to be confined in his own house during her Majesty's pleasure.

It was generally believed throughout the country that this sentence would satisfy the Queen's anger, and that after a short time the quondam favourite would be restored to all, if not to more than all, of his former power; but this anticipation on the part of the public was not fulfilled. Weakened by illness, Essex had hitherto seemed to bear adversity better than prosperity; he had been humble and patient during his trial, and after hearing his sentence he had retired quietly to the country, there to await reviving health, and some return of her Majesty's kindly feelings towards him. For a time he remained in seclusion, expecting a token of some renewed interest on her part, but none came; and then he began to write to her, earnestly desiring some mitigation of his sentence. No hope of this, however, was held out to him, upon which he made a request that his patent of sweet wines might be renewed. This

prayer the Queen also refused, sarcastically observing that the Earl, like an unmanageable steed, must still be stinted in his provender. This taunting speech was repeated to him, and drew from him the bitter remark, which Elizabeth was never able to forgive: 'Her Majesty grows old, and her mind is fast becoming as crooked as her carcase.' Despairing of regaining his former influence, Essex now threw prudence to the winds, and rushed into one mad intrigue after another. Although no Puritan, he placed himself at the head of that party. He entered into communication with the King of Scotland, and denounced Raleigh, Cecil, and Cobham to James, as enemies of his title to the English throne, and partizans of the Infanta of Spain; and finally he attempted to raise an insurrection against the Queen in the streets of London, for which insane attempt he was arrested at Essex House by the Earl of Nottingham, and conveyed to the Tower. In the evidence which was produced at his trial for high treason, which immediately followed, Sir Ferdinand Gorges, one of his fellow-conspirators, declared that the life of Raleigh was particularly aimed at. This shows a rancour of hatred on the part of Essex which goes somewhat to excuse the steady unrelentingness with which Raleigh had pursued to the utmost every advantage against him.

As was to be expected, he was condemned to death, but was not immediately executed. The Queen, it was alleged, had in happier days given him a ring as a pledge and token of her love, and had

then told him, that however much or justly she was offended with him, the sight of that ring, sent by him as a token of submission, would never fail to recall her tenderness, and procure his forgiveness. As he had vainly looked for some sign from her of returning favour, so now, with the yearning of a breaking heart, she in her turn expected the return of this ring, but it never came. It had, indeed, been sent by Essex, who had given it to Lady Nottingham to be conveyed to the Queen, but she showed it first to her husband, and he, being one of the party who disliked the Earl, prevailed upon her to keep it back.

At last, sick with hope deferred, the Queen resolved to act upon what had been the governing principle of her life, and sacrifice to what seemed the public good her own private feelings. Towards the end of February 1601 she gave orders for the execution of her still beloved Earl, and on the 25th of the same month he was brought to the block, meeting his fate at last with such patient and mournful resignation, that many of his enemies, Raleigh among the rest, were affected even to tears at the sight of his execution.

CHAPTER IV.

'Resolved for death or dignity.'

THE tragedy of the 25th of February put an end to the secret hopes and fears of months; at last their great rival was gone, and Cecil and Raleigh could breathe more freely. No relenting weakness could recall him now from the shadowy spirit world, or make the grave give back its dead to win from them the fickle favour of their mistress; and for a short interval all was contentment and peace, if not in the Queen's heart, at least in her court; and then the harassing, never-ending struggle for power began afresh. Beside the scaffold they had reared, scarcely even then daring to be too secure in their hope that their rival would be swept from their path, Raleigh and the Secretary had been friends; but, Essex once gone, Cecil straightway began to regard Sir Walter with envious eyes, and to tremble for his own power. There had been a time when Raleigh had been grateful for his patronage, but now, secure in the

Queen's esteem, ambitious, proud, and conscious of great abilities, he seemed inclined to bestow rather than to solicit favours. Superior to Cecil in intellectual endowments, he was no longer content with the inferior place, and this change of times and circumstances was keenly noted and resented by the Secretary, although, with his customary dissimulation, he gave no outward sign of his displeasure. The talents which his new rival dissipated on a variety of pursuits, he more wisely concentrated upon one object,—himself, and the aggrandizement of his own power. Looking forward into the future, as was his wont, he saw that Elizabeth could not live long, and, turning to the rising sun, he began to pay secret but assiduous court to the King of Scotland. He maintained with him a constant correspondence, in which he not only laid the foundations of his future influence, but established in the mind of that weak monarch the inveterate prejudice against Raleigh from which all Sir Walter's subsequent misfortunes sprang.

Outwardly, there was nothing but cordiality between them; they had been confidants, if not friends, in the past, and they were confidants still. Cecil, even, as it were, fell back, and allowed his rival to bask his little hour in the sunshine of Elizabeth's favour, which at the longest could be but short, while all the time he was weaving, spider-like, the dangerous web which, when the time came, would drag his adversary down into hopeless destruction.

Meanwhile, the Queen bestowed upon Raleigh daily more and more of that favour which the far-seeing

Secretary had already begun to despise. She promoted him about this time to the government of Jersey, a post not incompatible with that personal attendance upon herself which his position as Captain of her Guard required.

In the discharge of his duties as Captain of the Guard, he was accustomed to gratify the love of his royal mistress for display, by wearing the most splendid apparel. He had a suit of silver armour for tilting, and his court dress, even down to his shoes, was so emblazoned and set with precious stones, that the jewels he wore upon his person were computed to be worth sixty thousand pounds. Thus gorgeously arrayed, he attended Elizabeth in her progresses throughout the country. One of these journeys, the last she ever made, took place some months after the death of Essex. In making them she had many objects in view, the chief of which seems to have been to see for herself the state of her kingdom, to get acquainted with her subjects, and to increase and retain her popularity. Her custom was to pass from the house of one nobleman to another, the favoured peer being expected to spare no expense in the magnificent preparations made to receive her. Masques, pageants, and dramatic entertainments were prepared for her, and in these, Raleigh, from his varied erudition and acquirements, was fitted to excel. He had also great conversational powers, and as his office of Captain of the Guard kept him constantly near the Queen's person, he was often able to impart new interest and amusement to the wearisome hours of travelling, and

by these means rose, in the last years of her life, to be a greater favourite with her than he had ever been before.

During the course of this last progress, Elizabeth spent the months of August and September at Oatlands. She was then apparently in good health, and found much pleasure in the recreation of the chase. Although verging upon old age, she hunted, a court chronicler tells us, every second day.

This was severe exercise for a lady of sixty-nine, but she appeared to take pleasure in it, and showed herself, her biographer tells us, excellently disposed towards the chase, continuing long on horseback, and regaling herself in the afternoon with masques and dances, performing a *coranto* herself one evening with Mr. Palmer, who was accounted the most accomplished dancer of the time.

In September, her Majesty, resuming her journey, went to Basing in Hampshire, a seat of the Marquis of Hertford, where she was so well entertained and so entirely satisfied with her situation that she remained for thirteen days. While she was at Basing, the Duke de Biron, with a suite of twenty noblemen and four hundred attendants, arrived on an embassy from Henry IV. of France, and was by the Queen's orders conducted by the sheriff of the shire to the Vine, a country house belonging to Lord Sandys, which was supplied with plate and hangings from the Tower, and fitted up with seventy beds, and other necessary furniture, by the noblemen and gentlemen of the county of Southampton. Here the ambassador was maintained

at the public expense for four or five days, and had his first interview with the Queen in a park near the Vine, whither she had gone for the purpose of hunting. She received him with a curious mixture of coquetry and dignity, affecting at first not to see him; but when he had followed her humbly for the space of about twenty yards, she took off her mask and bowed to him in a very gracious and courteous fashion. When she left Basing at the end of thirteen days, she was so much pleased with her visit that she knighted ten gentlemen, a greater number of knights than she had ever created at any one time during her whole reign; one of these honoured individuals being Carew Raleigh, the brother of Sir Walter.

All this time the Queen, although attending sedulously to public affairs, and pursuing her customary sports and recreations in the presence of her court, was in secret bitterly repining over the fate of Essex. The favourite, forgotten by all besides, was remembered still by his unhappy mistress. Ever since his death she had been declining slowly but surely in health and spirits. On the 27th October she opened her last Parliament, in which Raleigh sat as one of the knights for Cornwall. Many of his speeches delivered in this Parliament have been preserved at considerable length, and are distinguished by his characteristic talent and originality. Some of the questions argued before the House were calculated to touch him very nearly, for a majority of the Commons had come up to London determined to put an end to what they characterized as the mon

strous and unconscionable monopolies of starch, tin, fish, cloth, and other necessaries of life. Sir Walter, as Lord Warden of the Stanneries, had long enjoyed the monopoly in tin, and he defended his right to it now as well as anything so objectionable in principle could be defended. 'It did not, at least,' he said, 'press hard upon the poor, for, whereas before his time, as was well known, the workmen had had but two shillings a week, since he became Lord Warden they had had four duly and truly paid. At the same time, if the House judged it best to abolish the monopoly, he would not,' he said, 'oppose the measure, provided that it should be enacted that all the other monopolies should fall along with it.'

Elizabeth, having been informed of the general discontent upon this subject, immediately saw, with a wisdom which was never attained by her Stuart successors, that the time for yielding to the popular outcry had come. She resolved with no outward show of unwillingness to concede the monopolies to the demand of the people, and she made the concession as she always did, gracefully and well. She instructed the Speaker to announce that she had been informed of the universal discontent and distress occasioned by these grievances, and would take immediate steps for their removal.

The vexed subject of the monopolies having been thus set at rest, the best means for suppressing the pirates at Dunkirk was next discussed ; and then some very keen debates followed upon the statute of tillage, Raleigh pleading that the law which made the sow-

ing of a certain quantity of hemp compulsory should be abolished, and agriculture left free. So great was the relief afforded by the abolition of monopolies, and so much had Elizabeth endeared herself to the people by the frank and ready way in which she had met their complaints, and done her best to rectify the abuses under which they groaned, that the House of Commons appointed the Speaker with a large deputation to wait upon her Majesty, and express to her the inestimable joy and comfort which they had received from her gracious message. She received them in the great chamber adjoining the council-room, the Speaker, in the name of the seventy members who followed him, assuring her of his and their determination to spend every drop of blood in their hearts, and every spirit of breath in their nostrils, for the safety and welfare of their sovereign.

Elizabeth's reply was striking and characteristic, and has a melancholy interest, as being the last public address of this great princess. It concludes something in the strain of the Hebrew monarch,—'Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.'

'To be a king, and to wear a crown,' said the solitary heart-crushed woman, 'is a thing more glorious to them that see it, than it is pleasant to them that bear it. For myself, I was never so much enchanted with the glorious name of a king or the royal authority of a queen, as delighted that God had made me His instrument to maintain His truth and glory, and to defend this kingdom from peril, dishonour, tyranny, and oppression. No queen will

ever sit in my seat with more zeal for my country, or care for my subjects, nor any that will sooner with willingness venture her life for your good and safety than myself. For it is not my desire to live or reign longer than my life and reign shall be for your good; and though you have had, and may have, many princes more mighty and wise sitting in this State, yet you never had, nor shall have, any that will be more careful and loving. Shall I ascribe anything to myself and my sexly weakness? I were not worthy to live, then, and of all most unworthy of the great mercies I have had from God, who hath given me a heart which never yet feared foreign or home enemy. I speak it to give God the praise as a testimony before you, and not to attribute anything to myself. For I, O Lord, what am I, whom practices or perils past should not fear; or what can I do, that I should speak for any glory to myself? God forbid. I do assure you there is no prince that loveth his subjects better, or whose love can countervail our love. And though God hath raised me high, yet this I count the glory of my crown, that I have reigned with your loves. This makes me that I do not so much rejoice that God hath made me a queen, as that he hath made me queen over so thankful a people.'

About this time Raleigh sold his Irish estates to Richard Boyle, who afterwards became Earl of Cork. Busy as his life had been, he had found time to do something for them. When they came into his hands, they consisted in great part of large tracts of barren land, which he did his best to get enclosed and culti-

vated. At Youghall in the county of Cork, where his house and gardens were, he introduced the culture of the potato, which he had brought from Virginia, and of the cherry, which he had imported from the Canary Islands. At Lismore, also, which formed part of the extensive grant of land bestowed upon him by Elizabeth, he founded with rare and enlightened liberality a free school, and he seems to have made his gardens at Youghall as beautiful as those at Sherborne. All this, however, cost him such a large annual expenditure of money, that he judged it prudent to sell them, particularly as the intending purchaser came to him with a letter from his kinsman, Sir George Carew, strongly recommending him not to lose such a favourable opportunity of disposing of his troublesome possessions.

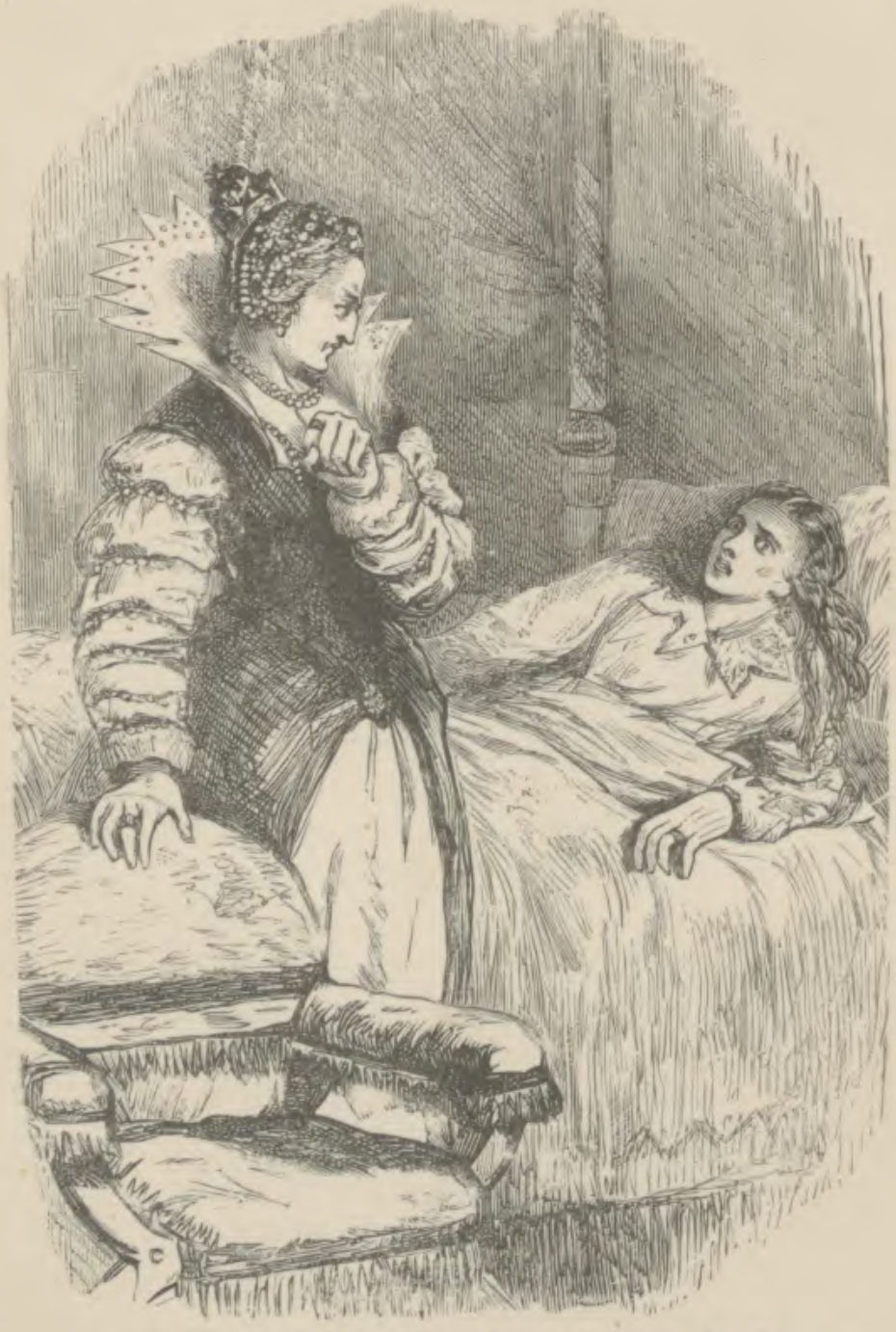
CHAPTER V.

'Within a still and darkened room the last proud Tudor slept.'

THE death of the Queen now drew on apace; for months she had been in declining health and spirits, and her secret distress had been much aggravated by a death-bed confession made to her by Lady Nottingham. The secret of the ring entrusted to her by Essex preyed upon the mind of the afflicted Countess, she felt that she could not carry her guilty secret with her to the grave, and when she knew that she was dying, she sent for the Queen, confessed her treachery, and besought her forgiveness.

'I cannot,' said Elizabeth, clutching with unconscious force the shoulder of the dying woman; 'God may forgive you, but I never can.'

From that moment her depression increased. All throughout the close of the year 1601, a deep melancholy amounting almost to hypochondria oppressed her. She would scarcely allow herself to be dressed, and, refusing her ordinary food, would eat only of



"'I cannot,' said Elizabeth; 'God may forgive you, but I never can.'"—AFLOAT AND ASHORE, *page* 74.

bread and succory pottage. She kept a rusty sword continually near her, and with it she would occasionally pierce the hangings, or walk in an agitated manner up and down the chamber, or stamp upon the floor of her room. Her temper, never very good, became extremely fierce and irritable; she was intolerant of the smallest fault, and chid her ladies with the utmost severity for the slightest mistake they made. At last, early in January 1602, she was seized with a severe cold, which speedily reduced her to an alarming state of weakness. Dr. Dee, an astrologer and mathematician, in whom she placed great confidence, had warned her that Whitehall would probably be fatal to her, and she accordingly removed to Richmond, where the country air appeared for some time to revive her. This improvement in her health was, however, only temporary, and towards the end of February she was seized with an increase of illness. She refused all sustenance, and would not go to bed, but sat for whole days and nights upon the floor of her chamber, supported by cushions which her ladies brought to her. In this melancholy condition she languished until the 15th March, when she became so alarmingly ill that the Lords of the Council were sent for. They found her sunk in the deepest depression, refusing all food and medicine, and taking no interest in anything around her. At this moment Sir Robert Carey, the Warden on the Scottish borders, arrived, and although very weak, she roused herself when she heard he had come, and desired to see him, for she was much attached to him.

'I found her,' says this old and trusty servant in his memoirs, 'sitting low upon cushions placed in one of her withdrawing rooms. She called me to her, I kissed her hand, and told her it was my chiefest happiness to see her in safety and health, which I hoped might long continue. She took me by the hand, and wrung it hard, saying as she did so, "No, Robin; I am not well." She then discoursed with me of her indisposition, and told me that her heart had been very sad and heavy for ten or twelve days, and in her discourse she fetched not fewer than forty or fifty great sighs. I used the best words I could, to persuade her from this melancholy humour, but I found it was too deep-rooted in her heart, and hardly to be removed.'

After her interview with Carey, she declined to speak with any one, she refused food, and would not even sleep, obstinately persisting in her resolution not to go to bed, apparently from the idea that if she once lay down in it, she would never rise again.

At last she could no longer sit up, but was forced to lay herself in a half-reclining position upon the cushions which were spread on the floor of her room. There she remained for a week, sunk in a state of forlorn apathy, taking no apparent notice of what went on around her. At last, on the 23d of March, it became apparent that she was dying, and the Lords of the Council ventured to introduce a subject which had been much in their minds, but to which she had always manifested the greatest aversion, namely, the succession to the throne. 'Who,' they asked,

'should succeed her?' At these words, a flash of her former temper and spirit lit up for a moment the apathetic gloom of her dying face, and she turned to the Lord High Admiral, who stood on her right hand, and said to him, almost fiercely, 'I told you that my seat has been the seat of kings, and I will have no rascal to succeed me. Trouble me no more. He who comes after me must be a king. I will have none but our cousin of Scotland.'

Soon after this public acknowledgment of the rights of James, she became speechless, but intimated by signs that she wished her chaplains and the Archbishop of Canterbury to pray with her.

Sir Robert Carey, who was in her chamber at the time, has left us an interesting account of what followed. 'The prelate,' he tells us, 'kneeling down beside her, questioned her minutely as to her faith, all which questions she answered as well as she could, by lifting up her eyes or hands. He then began to pray, all present joining in the responses, until his knees becoming weary, he rose at last to depart, but the Queen by signs enjoined him to continue in prayer. This he did for a considerable time, and was then once more rising up to depart, when Elizabeth again laid her hand on his, and with imploring gestures besought him to remain beside her, deriving, as appeared to all, the greatest comfort from his prayers.'

Shortly after this she became insensible, and was left in charge of her women, who watched beside her until three in the morning of Thursday the 24th of

March, when she expired without a groan or struggle, in the same chamber in which her grandfather Henry VII. had died. She had reigned for the long period of forty-five years, and had raised England during the course of her eventful life from the position of a second-rate to that of a first-rate power.

Scarcely had she drawn her last breath, when Carey, to whom she had been much attached, exemplified in his own person how large a share of worldly wisdom generally enters into a courtier's love. Slipping down a back stair of the palace, he made his exit unobserved, and at once took horse for Scotland. Riding night and day, he reached Edinburgh late on Saturday night, and found that the pacific heir of the great Elizabeth had already gone to bed. Having told his errand, he was, however, instantly admitted to the presence of the Scottish Solomon, and dropping on one knee beside the bed, hailed the surprised and delighted James as King of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland. The new King, who made no attempt to conceal his happiness, then gave him his hand to kiss, and asked many questions about the Queen's illness, and in particular, if he had brought any letters. Carey said, 'He had not, but he had brought a blue ring,' a token which James knew, and which at once assured him of the truth of his intelligence.

The triumphal progress of the Scottish King to his new dominions is well known, but, almost from the very moment of Elizabeth's death, Raleigh had reason to feel that he had lost his best friend. His days of

court favour were ended, there was no more sunshine of royal smiles for him; but in place of the consideration which he had enjoyed, there was almost from the first only suspicion, and coldness, and neglect.

This prejudice and distrust on the part of his new master was due, no doubt, in the first place, to the insinuations of Essex and Cecil; but it was greatly aggravated and increased by the difference in character and temperament between the two men. The heroic captain, whose strong arm had helped to lay the foundations of the naval greatness of England, had no patience for the awkward, timid pedant, who shrank back, shuddering, from the sight of a naked sword. The man who had fought and won Elizabeth's battles was jealous for the greatness of England; her pusillanimous heir thought only of how he could best secure his own repose, and avoid all necessity for action. The adventurous discoverer of Virginia and Guiana was eager that his native country should divide with Spain the rich provinces of the New World; England's alien king thought only of how he could best fill his own exchequer, and the pockets of the needy courtiers who had followed him from the then poverty-stricken land of his birth. Even literature, on which it might have been supposed that a monarch so learned and a subject so accomplished would have met as upon common ground, failed to produce any sympathy between them. James had erudition, the shallow lore of the schoolman, pretentious, artificial, wanting in all practical utility and

good results. As vain as he was weak, the pompous syllogistic exhibitions with which he loved to astonish the council-table were wont to draw smiles from men much inferior to Raleigh in intellectual capacity. He, on his part, did not conceal the contempt with which his new sovereign inspired him. Haughtily conscious of his own powers, he refused to worship at his shrine, or join the flattering crowd who hailed James as a royal poet and philosopher. To all this was soon added another powerful cause of disunion; the rivalry between him and Cecil, which had long been smouldering like the hidden fires of an inactive volcano, burst into furious life soon after the arrival of the Scottish King in England. The crafty Secretary was no stranger to his new master; he had long paid his court to him; he had studied the minutest points of his character; he knew its many weak sides, and could accommodate himself to them all. Nothing was too hard or too mean for him, if he could only win and keep power. His policy under Elizabeth had been like the character of his mistress, vigorous and spirited; it became, under James, vacillating and timid. He even submitted to become the favourite of a favourite, and spared neither money nor flattery to secure the interest of the King's minion of the moment, Sir George Hume. These arts were successful—he speedily became as necessary to James as he had been to Elizabeth; he was continued in his office of Secretary of State, and soon saw his power so well established, that he was able to give the royal mind very much what preposses-

sions he chose. This influence he exerted to undermine his enemies, of whom Raleigh was one of the chief.

Weldon, who has preserved some curious anecdotes of the court of King James, tells us that this monarch's grudge against Raleigh sprang from the circumstance that Sir Walter and some others were of opinion that the Scottish King should have been required to sign certain conditions before he was permitted to succeed to the crown of England. James' weakness, and the absurd value which he attached to the royal character and position, would no doubt incline him to resent to the last degree such a proposed interference with his heaven-deputed power; but although likely enough, there is no satisfactory evidence to show that such a compact was ever seriously contemplated; it is rather in Cecil's hatred and influence that we are to seek and find the true causes of Raleigh's disgrace.

At first, under the new regime he was simply neglected, but coldness and indifference soon passed into positive injuries. He held many lucrative situations, and upon these the eyes of James' needy favourites were fixed longingly. Soon desire passed into fruition; the post of Captain of the Guard, which he had filled for many years, was taken from him, and bestowed upon Sir Thomas Erskine. He was next deprived of his wine patent; and although a pension of three hundred pounds was granted to him as a compensation for what he had lost, he was soon deprived of that also, being arraigned

within three months of James' succession upon a charge of high treason.

This accusation, mysterious, and, as far as can be gathered now, unfounded, has left an ineffaceable stain upon the Government of James I.

CHAPTER VI.

The Conspiracy of the Main. Raleigh arraigned upon a charge of High Treason.

THE charge of conspiracy and high treason brought against Raleigh amounted, as far as can be ascertained, to this. He had a friend, one Lord Cobham, a weak, envious, and discontented man. Cobham was ambitious and aspiring, and his hopes of preferment having been disappointed, he gave vent to his chagrin in indulging in a great deal of silly talk against the Government. Even while Elizabeth was alive, he had begun a secret correspondence with Count Aremberg, a Flemish nobleman in the service of the King of Spain. This nobleman, after James' accession, was sent to England as an ambassador from the Archduke of Austria, and after he came to London he renewed his intimacy with Cobham, and desired him to use his influence to procure a peace between Spain and England.

To such a measure as this, Raleigh had always been extremely opposed; the principal aim and object of his life had been the furtherance of the war with

Spain. He had recently written against Philip III., and had even offered to raise two thousand men at his own expense, in order to invade his kingdom. Cobham was aware of this, and he seems to have suggested to Aremberg the necessity of buying over Raleigh to their views; and it was finally settled between them, that Raleigh should have a pension if he would agree to further the cause of peace, and Cobham was empowered to offer him eight thousand crowns. This he accordingly did; but Sir Walter treated the matter as a jest, and laughingly told him, 'that he would tell him more when he saw the money.'

This, and no more than this, was proved at his subsequent trial; but it unfortunately happened, that much about the same time Cecil discovered a Catholic plot against the King and the royal family, which had been hatched by a few popish priests. One of the principal conspirators in this plot was Mr. Brooke, a brother of Lord Cobham. With his dying breath, this man, before he laid his head on the block, absolved his brother from all knowledge of the plot, or of their treasonable designs; but such an absolution did not satisfy Cecil. He chose to suspect Lord Cobham, and Raleigh also, as a friend of Cobham's.

The court was then at Windsor, and Sir Walter, who had followed it thither, was one day upon the terrace, when the Secretary came up to him, and accosting him with a mysterious air, desired him to follow him to a private meeting of the Lords of the Privy Council. Raleigh at once complied, and was, to his great surprise, strictly examined as to the cor-

respondence Lord Cobham had held with Aremberg. 'He answered that he did not believe that it contained anything treasonable or unwarrantable, and assured them that they could get full information about it by questioning La Rensy, a confidential servant of the ambassador.' He was then dismissed, but immediately afterwards received an order to remain a prisoner in his own house. Here he received a message from Lord Cobham, who had also been apprehended, desiring to know what had taken place at the Council, whereupon he sent a confidential dependant, Captain Keymis, to tell him that he had cleared him from all suspicion.

Cobham's turn came next; he was examined at Richmond, and was at first very firm, exculpating both himself and Raleigh from the charge of any treasonable correspondence. Upon this, Cecil bethought himself of a base and crafty plan for entrapping him. He caused to be shown to him a letter which Raleigh had written to himself, recommending that La Rensy, the servant of Aremberg, should be examined. Upon seeing this, Cobham hastily concluded that he had been betrayed, and breaking into a furious passion, accused Raleigh of being privy to a conspiracy against the Government of King James. 'He himself,' he said, 'had procured a passport to enable him to go to the King of Spain, who had engaged to give him six hundred thousand crowns. With this money he was to return to Jersey, and there to take Raleigh's advice as to how it could be best distributed among the discontented in England.'

As long as his passion lasted, he continued to utter these and similar ravings; but before he had reached the foot of the stairs leading to the council-room, he was seized with remorse for having falsely accused his friend, and returned, and retracted all that he had said.

To these vague and inconclusive details of conversations between Lord Cobham and Count Aremberg, was afterwards added the still more absurd charge of conspiring to place the crown upon the head of Arabella Stewart. At first, however, there was no mention of this, and the other circumstances appeared so trivial, that even Cecil's inventive genius was at fault, and he hesitated to bring forward a charge of high treason upon such slight grounds. He was, however, too envious and malicious to make up his mind to an honourable acquittal, but had the suspected man committed to the Tower, where he plied him with private examinations, while outside he strained every nerve to procure some substantial proof against him. Cobham, who was cowardly, false, and unprincipled, was precisely one of those men who can be got under judicious management to say anything, and Cecil worked incessantly upon his fears to get him if possible to reiterate and confirm the charges which he had retracted. Cobham's brother, who was also in custody, a much cleverer and equally unprincipled man, was tampered with in the same way. He was given to know by Cecil, that if he would act in conformity with his wishes, he should have a full and free pardon. Crafty as the Secretary was, there is a

remarkable letter preserved in the State Paper Office, addressed to him by this man, in which he pledges himself to perform the services required of him. What services these were may be guessed by the long and inveterate enmity which Cecil had shown towards his illustrious prisoner.

Still, nothing conclusive could be obtained against Raleigh. Lord Grey of Wilton, who had been privy to the conspiracy of the priests, and his own confidential dependant, Captain Keymis, were examined; but nothing in the least degree incriminating him could be extracted from them. In spite of all these difficulties, it was at last resolved to proceed against him upon the vague and inconclusive accusations detailed above, and Sir Walter was accordingly indicted at Staines on the 21st September. The subservient jury found a true bill against him, and he was remanded to the Tower, to await his trial for high treason.

In those days the prisoners accused of high treason were often treated with the utmost injustice and rigour, and Raleigh, taking into account the hostility of Cecil, and the virulence which Coke, the Attorney-General, was likely to display against him, felt that he had very little to expect from a jury exposed to such intimidating influences. His last and only hope was, to obtain from his accuser a declaration of his innocence. In these circumstances, he contrived one night, when the Lieutenant of the Tower was at supper, to get a poor man to throw into Cobham's window an apple with a letter fastened to it. In this

letter he implored him for God's sake to do him justice, an appeal which the wretched man, who was by turns distracted with terror and remorse, could not resist. He wrote a letter in reply, which he sent to Raleigh, in which, in the most solemn manner, he retracted his false statements, and cleared him of all stain of treason. This letter was produced at the subsequent trial, but was disregarded both by the judges and jury. Not satisfied with this, Raleigh addressed a petition to the King, in which he complained of the cruel manner in which an accusation of treason had been compounded against him, out of trivial circumstances and groundless presumptions, and besought him to show him mercy. He also addressed a letter to Sir Edward Coke and the Lords Cecil and Henry Howard, in which he cleared himself with much ability from the charges and imputations brought against him; but all these efforts availed him nothing, no one would stretch out so much as a little finger to save him. The day of trial at last arrived. He had no mercy to expect, not even justice; but he met it calmly and courageously, and fought the desperate battle for life and honour with all his accustomed vigour and ability.

As London was at that time devastated by the plague, the Court appointed to try him was held at Winchester, on the 17th of November 1603. The principal commissioners were the Earls of Suffolk and Devon, Lord Henry Howard, Lord Wotton of Morley, Popham the Lord Chief-Justice, Sir John Stanhope, and Cecil himself.

Most of these men were personally hostile to Raleigh, and those who were not were at the best indifferent, or under the thumb of the Government. In those corrupt times it was too common to tamper with the juries appointed to try political offences, and a contemporary writer tells us that, it being feared that the first jury might not prove subservient enough, another was substituted on the night of the 16th November. On the following day the trial began, the indictment setting forth that the prisoner had conspired to dethrone the King, and that he had also attempted to raise sedition, and to restore the Roman Catholic religion by means of a foreign invasion. Also, that at Durham House he had met Lord Cobham, and had there consulted with him as to the best means of placing the crown upon the head of Arabella Stewart; for which purpose Count Aremberg was to be solicited for a grant of six hundred thousand pounds, and a correspondence at once opened through him with the Spanish King.

Under the new Queen, peace with Spain and the establishment of the Roman Catholic religion were to be secured, and Lord Cobham on his return from Spain was to have visited Sir Walter at his government of Jersey, and there considered how the money could be best disposed of in order to excite a rebellion.

Brooke, Lord Cobham's brother, was alleged to be privy to all these designs, and to have freely acceded to them. Fragments of a conversation were also detailed, in which it was declared that one of the conspirators, Lord Cobham, had said, 'That there never

would be a good time in England until the King and his cubs were taken away;' and lastly, it was alleged that for his share in managing the correspondence with Aremberg, Raleigh was to receive a bribe of eight thousand crowns.

Such was this remarkable document; and after it had been read, the jury was sworn, and the King's Attorney-General, Sir Edward Coke, began his charge. In this speech he did not confine himself to the subject in hand, but proceeded to give a detailed account of the conspiracy of the popish priests, commenting severely upon the baseness of Lord Grey, Brooke, Markham, and other of the conspirators, when he was stopped by Raleigh.

'These matters,' he said, 'relate to a separate crime, with which the accusation against me has no connection, and to enlarge upon them as you are doing, is fitted to create a prepossession against me.'

Coke, thus recalled to his charge, proceeded, but in such a palpably unfair and unjust manner, that it led at last to an extraordinary scene of violence and abuse. Having charged Raleigh with a desire to destroy the King and his family, he at last reached his climax by entreating the prisoner to say what malice he could possibly bear towards the children. Sir Walter, upon this, said very pointedly:

'To whom speak you this? You tell me news I never even heard of before.'

'Oh, sir, do I?' retorted Coke. 'I will prove you to be the notoriousest traitor that ever came to the bar. After you have taken away the King you will alter

religion; as you, Sir Walter Raleigh, have followed them of the Bye (Lord Grey's plot) by imitation; for I will charge you with the words.'

'Your words cannot condemn me,' said Raleigh; 'my innocency is my defence. Prove one of those things wherewith you have charged me, and I will confess the whole indictment, and that I am the most horrible traitor that ever lived,—that I am worthy to be crucified with a thousand torments.'

'Nay,' said Coke, 'I will prove it all. Thou art a monster. Thou hast an English face but a Spanish heart. Now you must have money; Aremberg was no sooner in England,—I charge thee, Raleigh,—than thou incitest Cobham to go unto him, and to deal with him for money to bestow upon discontented persons.'

'Let me answer for myself,' replied Raleigh.

'No,' said Coke; 'thou shalt not.'

'But,' said Raleigh, 'it concerneth my life.'

'Oh,' sneered Coke, 'do I touch you now?'

After this he went on to enumerate the charges contained in the indictment, to which Raleigh answered,

'In all this I do not yet find that you have spoken one word against me. If my Lord Cobham be a traitor, what is that to me?'

To this remonstrance Coke returned a remarkable answer, which has furnished Shakespeare with one of his sarcastic touches: 'All that he did was by thy instigation, thou viper! for I know thee, thou traitor.'

'It becometh not a man of quality and virtue to call me so,' said Raleigh; 'but I take comfort in it, for it is all you can do.'

'Have I angered you?' asked Coke.

'I am in no case to be angry,' answered Raleigh.

Upon this, Lord Chief-Justice Popham interfered. 'Sir Walter Raleigh,' he said, 'Mr. Attorney speaketh out of the zeal of his duty for the service of the King, and you for your life. Be patient on both sides, I pray you.'

The clerk then read over the proofs. These consisted solely in the absurd hints of plots and invasions which had been wrung out of Cobham, all of which he had retracted, and about none of which he could furnish any reliable information, or give any straightforward account, except that they had conferred about them repeatedly.

CHAPTER VII.

Let proof speak.

THE clerk having finished the recital of Lord Cobham's extraordinary statements, Sir Walter was then allowed to address the jury in his own defence. This he did with much natural and pathetic eloquence, vindicating himself indignantly from the charge of being a Spaniard in his heart, proudly recapitulating the many times he had served against Spain by sea and land, and reminding the jury that in these different engagements he had spent of his own property, for the good of the country, four thousand pounds. He protested that in the matter of Lord Cobham's negotiations with Count Aremberg, he was innocent. The King of Spain, he said, was now to his certain knowledge as poor as he had once been rich ; and rich or poor, he showed how improbable it was that he should think of advancing either to him or any one else the large sum of six hundred thousand crowns without ample security. What security, he asked, is it even

alleged that I or my Lord Cobham offered, for this enormous sum. As for plotting in behalf of the Lady Arabella Stewart, he protested before God, that until the accusation was brought against him, he never even heard of such a thing. He then entered into the charges that Lord Cobham had preferred against him in his fit of passion. 'After Lord Cecil spoke to me at Windsor,' he said, 'I wrote to him, telling him that if La Rensy, Count Aremberg's servant, were not secured, he would fly, and so the opportunity would be lost of arriving at the root of the matter. This letter of mine was afterwards shown to Lord Cobham, and he, supposing I had revealed all that I knew of his dealings with Count Aremberg, made in his rage these false and unfounded accusations against me, which immediately he repented of, and retracted, before he had reached the foot of the stairs leading from the council-room.'

The foreman of the jury then asked that some information might be furnished to him regarding the letter which the prisoner alleged he had written to Lord Cecil. He particularly wished to know if it was written before the date of Lord Cobham's accusation.

To this question Cecil returned a crafty, unstraightforward answer, in which he enlarged a great deal upon the former intimacy which had existed between him and the prisoner, but avoided with much dexterity giving a plain yes or no to the question put to him by the foreman of the jury. Coke then took up the allegation which Raleigh had made, that

Cobham had accused him in a fit of passion, and answered it by a statement which was afterwards shown to be false.

'How,' he asked, 'could Cobham utter this accusation in a sudden ebullition of resentment, when two months before he had said to his brother, Mr. Brooke, "You are a fool to remain in the Bye plot, that is, the plot of Lord Grey and the priests; Raleigh and I are on the Main (the name given to Raleigh's pretended conspiracy). We mean to take away the King and his cubs."'

This speech, which was a shameless invention, not a word of which had ever been uttered, naturally aroused Raleigh's indignation, and he besought the jury and the Court to have it examined into. 'I beseech you, my lords,' he said, 'let it be proved that Lord Cobham ever so expressed himself. Let him come here and attest his own words. Call my accuser before my face, and I have done. All that is brought against me is only this accusation of his,—an accusation he never subscribed, he never avouched. I beseech you, my lords, let this lord be sent for. Charge him on his soul, on his allegiance to the King. If he affirm it, I am content to be found guilty.'

This reasonable request was, however, refused, with such manifest injustice, that it elicited from James himself the observation, 'That if Cobham could have spoken one word against Raleigh, his enemies would not have grudged to bring him even from Constantinople.' This speech, curiously characteristic of the

mixture of shrewdness and weakness which distinguished the King, precisely hit the root of the matter. Cecil knew that Cobham had nothing to say which could seriously involve Raleigh, but in the course of his cross-examination much might come out which was very prejudicial to himself; he therefore so influenced the other judges, that he got them to repel the request as illegal, and calculated to promote the growth of treasons, and open a door for the destruction of the King.

The trial then went forward, Coke making another attempt to mix it up with the particulars of the Bye plot, especially dwelling upon the words, 'touching the destruction of the King and his cubs,' which Brooke alleged had been used by Raleigh. These expressions Sir Walter indignantly repudiated, and Brooke a short time afterwards, on the scaffold, solemnly declared that he spoke the truth, and that the lie was his own.

Coke then alleged that Sir Walter had given Lord Cobham a book written against the title of King James to the English throne, but this charge when examined into also fell to the ground. It was proved that the book in question was found among Lord Burleigh's papers, which Raleigh had examined with the consent of his son. It had been taken by mistake to his house, and had there been seen by Cobham, who lifted it from the table, Raleigh remarking as he did so, that it was 'a foolishly written book.'

At this stage of the trial, Lady Arabella Stewart was led into the court by her brother-in-law, the Lord

High Admiral. This unfortunate woman, whose whole life was a sacrifice to the jealousy of her royal relatives, then protested that she had never dealt in the affairs which were under consideration. Lord Cobham had indeed written to her that some who were about the King were labouring to disgrace her, but she had considered the letter only as a foolish trick, and had immediately sent it to his Majesty.

Raleigh, upon this, made another attempt to be permitted to examine Lord Cobham. 'You see,' he said, 'how he hath accused me, and in what manner he hath forsworn it. Were it not for this accusation, all this were nothing. Let him be asked if I knew of the letter which La Rensy brought him from Aremberg. Let me speak for my life. It can be no hurt for him to be brought. He dares not accuse me. If you grant me not this favour, I am strangely used. Campion was not denied to have his accusers face to face.'

To this appeal the Lord Chief-Justice Popham answered, that Cobham could not be brought, because the desire of acquitting his old friend might move him to speak otherwise than according to the truth.

To this Raleigh indignantly replied, 'If I have been the infuser of all these treasons into him, I entreat you, gentlemen of the jury, to mark this well: if I have been, as he is made to allege, the cause of all his miseries, and the destruction of his house, and that all this evil hath happened unto him through my wicked counsel; if this be true, whom hath he cause

to accuse or to be revenged upon save me? and I know him to be as revengeful as any man on the earth.'

At this critical juncture Cecil again artfully interfered. He began with one of his crafty speeches about his former affection for Sir Walter, and then went on to ask him, whether, if Cobham were really brought, which he knew was against the law of the realm, and were asked if he were his only instigator to treason, would he dare to put himself upon his answer.

'Yes,' said Raleigh, without the least hesitation, 'I would. Let Cobham declare before God and the King that I knew of this matter of the Lady Arabella, or of the money out of Spain, or of the Surprising Treason (another name for the plot of Lord Grey and the priests); let him avouch any of these things;—I put myself upon it, if he does so, let me be at once declared guilty.'

'Then,' said Cecil, 'Sir Walter Raleigh, call upon Heaven, and prepare yourself, for I do verily believe my lords will prove this. Excepting your faults (I call them no worse), by God I am your friend. The heat and passion in you, and the Attorney's zeal in the King's service, make me speak this. You argue that Cobham must have made you acquainted with his conferences with Aremberg; this does not follow. If I set you on work, and you give me no account, does that make me innocent?'

'Whoever,' said Sir Walter significantly, 'is the workman, it is reason that he should give an account to the workmaster. But let it be proved that Cobham

gave me any account of his conferences with Aremberg.'

Upon this, Cecil sat down. Hypocrite as he was, and bred a courtier from his cradle, it is possible that he was stung by Raleigh's last words, which plainly conveyed an intimation that the accused was conscious that he, and he alone, was the real contriver and fabricator of the whole charge against him.

Coke next called a witness named Dyer, a pilot, who alleged that he had heard a Portuguese say at Lisbon, that Don Cobham and Don Raleigh would cut the throat of the King before he was crowned.

'This idle gossip,' Raleigh said, 'proves nothing, for if Cobham was in correspondence with Aremberg, which he certainly was, it necessarily followed that the fact was known in Spain.' He then went on to say that there was scarcely any case so doubtful that the King's Council could not make it good against the law. That for himself, it was well known to all that he had always condemned the Spanish faction, and had spent so much of his means in the war against Spain, that if he had died in Guiana, he would not have left three hundred merks a year to his wife and son.

Upon this Coke, having again failed in the proof, burst out into a torrent of abuse, in which he was checked by Cecil,—an interruption which so enraged him that he sat down in a passion, and would not utter another word until the judges besought him to proceed. At first he paid no attention to their entreaties, and for a time sat obstinately silent; but

at last, after much persuasion, he got upon his feet again, and launched out into a style of even more violent invective than before, declaring that the prisoner at the bar was the most vile and execrable traitor that ever lived.

'You speak indiscreetly, barbarously, and incivilly,' said Raleigh.

'I want words sufficient to express thy viperous treasons,' shouted Coke, who made up in vehemence what he wanted in reasoning.

'I think you want words, indeed,' observed Raleigh, 'for you have spoken one thing at least half-a-dozen times over.'

'Thou art an odious fellow,' bawled the Attorney-General in reply; 'thy name is hateful to all the realm of England for thy pride.'

'It will go near to prove a measuring cast between you and me, Mr. Attorney,' retorted the prisoner.

Upon this Coke, in a sudden fury plucked a letter from his pocket. 'Now I will prove,' he said, 'that there never has lived a viler viper upon the face of the earth than thou. Do you see this letter, my lords? This is written by Lord Cobham, who was a good and honourable gentleman until he was overtaken by this wretch, and who, finding his conscience overburdened, hath writ this out of duty to his Prince, taking it upon his salvation that he hath writ nothing but the truth. In this letter, which Coke proceeded to read aloud, Cobham re-asserted all that he had retracted, and declared that Aremberg had promised Raleigh a pension of fifteen hundred

pounds a year for his services in promoting a peace, but brought no new accusation against him. When Coke had finished the reading of this letter, and had made some very abusive comments upon it, Raleigh again resumed his defence.

'You have heard,' he said, 'the strange tale of a strange man, and in it Mr. Attorney thinks he hath enough to ruin me. But the King and all of you shall witness by our deaths which of us was the ruin of the other. Knowing that Lord Cobham had thus falsely accused me, I bid a poor fellow throw in at his window a letter which contained these words, "You know that you have undone me, write now three lines to justify me."'

Here he was interrupted by the Lord Chief-Justice Popham, who asked, 'But what say you now to the letter, and the pension of fifteen hundred a year?'

'I say,' answered Raleigh, 'that Cobham is a base, dishonourable, poor soul, as this will show;' and taking a letter from his breast, he requested Cecil to read it, as he was the only one of the judges who knew Lord Cobham's hand-writing.

This letter, which contained a complete exculpation of the prisoner, made a great impression upon the Court, and for the moment quite destroyed the effect of Cobham's repeated accusations.

'Seeing myself near my end,' it began, 'for the discharge of my own conscience, and freeing myself from your blood, which, else, will cry vengeance against me, I protest upon my salvation, I never practised with Spain by your procurement. God so

comfort me in this my affliction, as you are a true subject, for aught I know to the contrary. I will say with Daniel, "*Purus sum a sanguine hujus.*" So God have mercy upon my soul, as I know of no treason by you.'

A profound silence followed the reading of this letter, which was the last piece of evidence produced, during which the jury retired, and, in face of what they had just heard, found the prisoner guilty, after a short deliberation of a quarter of an hour.

Raleigh, upon this, was asked in the usual form if he had anything to say why the sentence of death should not be pronounced against him.

'My lords,' he said, standing up perfectly collected and calm, 'the jury have found me guilty. They must do as they are directed. I can say nothing why judgment should not proceed against me. You see whereof Cobham has accused me. You remember his protestations that I was never guilty. I only desire that the King should know of the wrongs done to me since I came hither by Mr. Attorney. I desire, my lords, to remember three things to the King. First, I was accused to be a practiser with Spain. I protest I never knew that Lord Cobham meant to go thither. I will ask no mercy of the King if Cobham will affirm that I did. Second, I never knew of the practice with Lady Arabella. Third, I never knew of my Lord Cobham's unwarrantable practices with Count Aremberg, or of the Surprising Treason (the plot of Lord Grey and the priests). I submit myself to the King's mercy. I know his mercy is greater

than my offence. I recommend my wife and son of tender years, unbrought up, to his compassion.'

He then ceased speaking, and Popham proceeded to pronounce the sentence of death, dwelling lingeringly, as if he loved such themes, upon every horrible detail that attended executions for high treason in those days. Upon which Raleigh besought the judges to entreat the King, that in consideration of the honourable places which he had held, so much mercy should be shown to him as that the mode of his death should not be ignominious.

The Court then broke up, and Sir Walter was conducted back to prison by the sheriff, a condemned traitor, yet having impressed all who beheld him by the noble tranquillity of his demeanour, which, while it displayed the serene composure of innocence, had in it nothing of bravado, but was marked by the gravity and seriousness of one who felt that, however guiltless, he had yet been adjudged a criminal by the laws of his country.

It will scarcely now be doubted by any one who impartially considers the evidence, that Raleigh was not guilty of the crime laid to his charge. Some historians, Hume among others, have considered the accusation proved, but this appears to have arisen from confusing the charge brought against him with the plot of Lord Grey and the popish priests, of which it was clearly proved and admitted, even by Cecil himself, that he was entirely innocent. As for plotting to place Lady Arabella Stewart on the throne, that was controverted by her own evidence,

and such a scheme does not seem even to have been contemplated by Grey, Markham, Brooke, or their fellow conspirators. As for the pension from Spain, he never denied that such a sum of money was offered to him, as indeed it was offered to all the principal political personages at the court of King James. His ruin is to be traced to none of these sources, but to the enmity of Cecil, abundant proof of which is to be found in a small volume, entitled, *The Secret Correspondence of Sir Robert Cecil with James Sixth of Scotland.* There exists also a curious letter found among the Burleigh papers, which internal evidence shows to have been addressed by Lord Henry Howard to the Secretary. The style of this letter is dark and enigmatical, and initials are occasionally used instead of proper names, but it is easy to trace in it the outline of the plan by which Cobham and Raleigh were to be entrapped into a charge of high treason, and the destruction of both attained.

To this may be added the evidence of the French ambassador, De Beaumont, who states in his despatches, that in the prosecution of Sir Walter Raleigh, Cecil appeared very violent, 'and did seem to act more from interest and passion than from zeal for the public good.' More than once during the trial he interfered, but it was always in a manner unfavourable to the prisoner; and it was owing to his influence that Raleigh was denied what he so earnestly craved, the favour, if favour it could be called, of being confronted with Cobham. It is possible that Cecil knew even better than Raleigh the uneasiness and remorse

with which his unfortunate brother-in-law was perpetually haunted, and judged that to produce him might lead not only to the exculpation of the prisoner, but to his own confusion and ruin. Therefore he steadily refused the request of his fallen rival, but with none of Coke's barbarous violence. If his cold heart beat a little faster, no one perceived it. He was polished, calm, passionless, as usual, the same smooth, dissembling hypocrite as when, in his victim's short hour of court favour, he had seemed to fall back and give him precedence. No words can better describe his conduct than those used by Oldys. 'The Secretary,' he says, 'all through this trial played with a smooth edge upon Raleigh; his blade seemed ever anointed with the balsam of compliment or apology; he gave not such rough or smarting wounds as Coke, but these were as deep and fatal as the other.'

As for Coke, his ability as a lawyer was such that he must have seen through Cobham's flimsy accusations; but his great desire seems to have been to ingratiate himself with his new sovereign, and with Cecil, who, from his influence over the mind of James, was then the most powerful man in England. To this is to be ascribed his bitterness of manner, his brutal abuse, his overbearing conduct to the jury, and the sanguinary unrelentingness with which he lent himself to hunt to death an innocent man. He had his reward in the favour of the King, to gain whose smiles he had so vilely prostituted his honourable office; and his victim had his in the approval of a

good conscience, which so powerfully sustained him that he was enabled to display an ability, a courage, and a temper which compelled the admiration of all. When the trial began, he was an unpopular man; when it was finished, he carried back with him to his condemned cell the most extreme pity and approval of all who beheld him. He had no need there to blush for lost honour and shipwrecked honesty, as Cecil may well have done at Whitehall or Windsor under his robe of state.

CHAPTER VIII.

'Be plain, good son, and homely in your drift,
Riddling confession finds but riddling shrift.'

AFTER being conveyed back to prison, Raleigh remained for a whole month at Winchester, constantly expecting death, and night after night finding himself still alive. The truth was that James, unlike his Secretary, not possessing the key to the pretended plot, was thoroughly bamboozled by it, and had in his own sapient mind devised a plan for discovering such of its more hidden mazes as had escaped the beagle-like skill of his Attorney-General and trusty Prime Minister. He signed the warrants for the immediate execution of the Lords Cobham and Grey and Sir Griffin Markham, and directed Raleigh to be informed that his also was prepared, which was not the case. On the principle, it is to be supposed, that he who drives fat oxen should himself be fat, James did not scruple at a lie. Raleigh was informed that his execution was fixed for the Monday, while Cobham, Grey, and Markham were to precede him in this dance of

death by two days, and were to appear on the scaffold on Friday.

The windows of Raleigh's apartment overlooked the fatal spot, and looking out on the morning of Friday, he could plainly see that all preparations were made for the solemn scene so soon to be enacted. Then presently Sir Griffin Markham was led forth. He complained a good deal of his hard fate, bade farewell to his friends who were present, and after some time spent in prayer, was about to lay his head on the block, when a bustle and confusion arose in the crowd below, and after a good deal of struggling and pushing, John Gib, a Scotch groom of the bedchamber, elbowed his way forward, and ordered the execution to be stayed in the name of the King.

Markham, bewildered and confused, was then removed by the warders and locked up in an adjoining hall. No sooner was he gone than the crowd were amused by another masquerade of the same kind. Lord Grey of Wilton was led out, as he believed, to die. A group of young courtiers surrounded him, and an intimate friend supported him on either side, after the fashion of groomsmen. He himself looked gay and cheerful—more like a young bridegroom than a man about to encounter a sudden and violent death. Kneeling down, he confessed his crime, asked pardon of the King, and prayed aloud with much fervency and apparent sincerity. He was then about to remove his cloak and doublet, and the executioner was feeling the edge of the axe, when the sheriff approached, and waving him off, requested

Lord Grey to step aside for an hour into the hall in which Markham was confined, as the King had determined that Lord Cobham should have the precedence of them both. Cobham accordingly next appeared on the scaffold, with an air of such confidence and boldness, that it was generally believed that he had an assurance from his brother-in-law, Cecil, that this extraordinary scene was not to be his last. He had a part to play, and he rather over-acted it than otherwise. He began with saying some short prayers after the clergyman who accompanied him, which he pronounced in a very loud tone. He then expressed sorrow for the offence he had committed against the King. As for Sir Walter Raleigh, he declared upon the hope of his soul's resurrection, that what he had said of him was true. This assertion, which he had so often and so variously contradicted himself, did not go for much. He then made as if he would have taken a farewell of the whole world, when the sheriff again interposed, and bade him defer his adieus for a time, as something else yet remained for him to do. Grey and Sir Griffin Markham were then brought back to the scaffold, eyeing each other strangely the while, like men who had returned in some curious unexplained fashion from the world beyond the grave.

The sheriff then made them all three a short speech, in which he enlarged a great deal upon the heinousness of their guilt and the justice of their condemnation. To all this they assented, anxiously wondering what would come next. It was what two of them at least

did not expect, a reprieve. 'See,' continued the official, 'the great mercy of your Prince; he hath sent thither this countermand, and hath given you your lives.'

'Upon this,' says a spectator, 'such hues and cries and cheering arose from the crowd, that the noise of it extended from the castle into the town, and there began fresh.'

The delight James took in the evolution of this curious stratagem was extreme. The honour of the invention and the carrying through of it were, he declared, his own, and no man should rob him of the praise of it. As for the lords, they knew only that the execution was to go forward; but when the hour for it arrived, he called them before him, and informed them that he had been much troubled about the ins and outs of this business; for to execute Grey, who was a noble, young, spirited fellow, and to save Cobham, who was as base and unworthy, were a manner of injustice. To save Grey, again, who was of a proud, insolent nature, and execute Cobham, who had shown great tokens of humility and repentance, were as great a solecism; and so he spoke for a long time, discoursing much on Plutarch's comparisons, and bringing in one contrariety after another, till the puzzled lords were as thoroughly at sea in the ins and outs of the business as he could possibly be himself; he then looked round upon their perplexed faces, and said, with a self-satisfied smile, 'and therefore, my lords, I have saved them all.'

Except the astonishment and delight of the crowd,

the perplexity of the Lords of the Council, and the gratitude of the doomed men themselves, this miracle of royal clemency was fruitless of all results.

Grey and Markham were honourable men, and had nothing to confess which at all tended to incriminate Raleigh; and as for Cobham, he had shown himself so utterly false and untrustworthy, that what he said went for nothing with all discerning men.

Raleigh, on his part, had already made all his preparations for death. The King, he was assured, would not pardon him, and at the royal desire he was visited by the Bishop of Winchester. This prelate found him very tranquil, and in a resigned and Christian frame of mind. He then pressed him to make his confession, but this the prisoner refused to do, steadily protesting his innocence of all the charges preferred against him by Cobham, save in the single matter of the pension, the offer of which, he said, he had never denied. The Bishop then left him, and he spent the short time that remained to him in writing a farewell letter to his wife.

'You shall now receive,' he said, 'my dear wife, my last words, in these my last lines. My love I send you, that you may keep it when I am dead; and my counsel, that you may remember it when I am no more. I would not, by my will, present you with sorrows, dear Bess. Let them go into the grave with me, and be buried in the dust. And seeing it is not the will of God that ever I shall see you more in this life, bear it patiently, and with a heart like myself.

'First, I send you all the thanks which my heart

can conceive, or my words can express, for your many travails and cares taken for me; which, though they have not taken effect as you wished, yet my debt to you is not the less. But pay it I never shall in this world. Secondly, I beseech you for the love you bear me living, do not hide yourself many days after my death; but by your travail seek to help your miserable fortunes, and the right of your poor child. Thy mournings cannot avail me—I am but dust. Thirdly, you shall understand that my land was conveyed *bona fide* to my child. The writings were drawn at midsummer was twelve-months. My honest cousin Brett can testify so much, and Dabberrie, too, can remember somewhat therein; and I trust my blood will quench their malice that have thus cruelly murdered me, and that they will not seek also to kill thee and thine with extreme poverty. To what friend to direct thee I know not, for all mine have left me in the true time of trial; and I plainly perceive that my death was determined from the first day. Most sorry I am, God knows, that, being thus surprised with death, I can leave you in no better estate. God is my witness, I meant for you all my office of wines, or all that I could have purchased by selling it, half my stuff, and all my jewels, except some one for the boy. But God hath prevented all my resolutions, even that great God that ruleth all in all. But if you can live free from want, care for no more, the rest is but vanity. Love God, and begin betimes to repose yourself on Him, and therein shall you find true and lasting riches, and endless

comfort. For the rest, when you have travailed and wearied your thoughts over all sorts of worldly cogitations, you shall but sit down by sorrow in the end. Teach your son also to love and fear God while he is yet young, that the fear of God may grow up with him, and then God will be a husband to you and a father to him—a husband and a father that cannot be taken from you. Bayley oweth me two hundred pounds, and Adrian Gilbert six hundred. In Jersey, also, I have much money owing me. Besides, the arrearages of the wines will pay my debts; and howsoever you do, for my soul's sake pay all poor men. When I am gone, no doubt you shall be sought after by many, for the world thinks that I was very rich. But take heed of the pretences of men and their affections, for they last not but in honest and worthy men, and no greater misery can befall you in this life than to become a prey, and afterwards to be despised. I speak not this, God knows, to dissuade you from marriage, for it will be best for you both in respect of the world and of God. As for me, I am no more yours, nor you mine. Death hath cut us asunder, and God hath divided me from the world, and you from me. Remember your poor child, for his father's sake, who chose you and loved you in his happiest time. Get those letters, if it be possible, which I writ to the lords, wherein I sued for my life. God is my witness it was for you and yours that I desired life. But it is true that I disdain myself for begging it; for know it, dear wife, that your son is the son of a true man, and one who, in his own respect, despiseth

death in all his misshapen and ugly forms. I cannot write much. God, He knoweth how hardly I steal this time when others sleep; and it is also high time that I should separate my thoughts from the world. Beg my dead body, which living was denied thee, and either lay it at Sherborne, if the land continue, or in Exeter church, by my father and mother. I can say no more—time and death call me away.

'The everlasting, powerful, infinite, and omnipotent God, who is goodness itself, the true life and true light, keep thee and thine, have mercy on me, and teach me to forgive my persecutors and accusers, and send us to meet in His glorious kingdom. My dear wife, farewell! Bless my poor boy; pray for me, and let my good God hold you both in His arms.

'Written with the dying hand of some time thy husband, but now, alas, overthrown. Yours that was, but now not my own.—WALTER RALEIGH.'

This letter, simple, pathetic, and manly, sufficiently rebuts the charge of atheism brought against the writer by Coke, who in the course of his abusive charge had repeatedly accused Raleigh of being a disbeliever in God and in the Christian religion, tauntingly contrasting him in this respect with Essex, who, he said, 'died the child of God.'

This affecting letter to Lady Raleigh was written before the wonderful melodrama of Friday, the 10th December, was enacted before his astonished eyes. It is possible that, judging from what he then saw that reprieves were the order of the day, he may have had some hope of the like clemency in his case—a hope

which was soon confirmed by the intimation that mercy was to be extended to him as well as to the other prisoners; and he was accordingly, on the 15th of the same month, remanded with Cobham, Grey, and Markham to the Tower.

Here he was permitted to have the society of his wife, who earnestly entreated to be allowed to share his confinement; and here, within the prison walls of the fortress, his youngest son, Carew, was born. He was suffered also to have his own attendants, two servants and a boy being allowed to him, and at such intervals as he chose, the visits of a clergyman, Mr. Hawthorn. Dr. Turner his physician, his steward from Sherborne, and one or two others were also admitted into his rooms.

Apart from the hardship of his undeserved imprisonment, he does not seem at first to have been treated with any undue rigour. The King was disposed at this time to show him all possible lenity, and even a degree of favour; but they who had only this weak monarch's fickle sense of what was right to look to, were often doomed, as Raleigh was, to find it but a reed of Egypt.

CHAPTER IX.

'Here I and sorrow sit;
Here is my throne; bid kings come bow to it.'

A NEW life was now to begin, at fifty-one for the active, adventurous, pre-eminently restless man, who had been by turns in his brilliant career a successful soldier, a distinguished naval leader, a favoured courtier, a shrewd politician, a discoverer of unknown countries, a planter of new colonies, a prosecutor of one novel scheme after another, during forty years of incessant activity by sea and land. To such a man restraint was peculiarly galling, and it was only after a painful struggle with himself that he could settle down to his new home in the prison of the Tower. He had alleviations denied to many prisoners: his wife and children were beside him; he was permitted the society of a few friends; he had a mind filled with rich and varied stores; and he had literary habits to fall back upon, although he had never been in the strict sense of the word a student. He had none of the student's love of

solitude or retirement; his studies had been carried on in hours stolen from sleep, or business, or pleasure, in the hurried intervals which he could snatch from the excitement of court intrigues, or the turmoil of war, or the busy deliberations of the council-table. As the companions of such short fragments of time, they had been delightful to him, but now, when they were all that he had to fall back upon to fill up the still hours of his solitary, monotonous prison-life, his soul recoiled from them almost in disgust, and yearned with an intense and painful longing for the fierce excitement of the battle-field, for the mad tumult of the storm, for the deck of his victorious ship, for the sultry cabin of his crowded boat on the turbid waters of the Orinoco—for anything except these guarded rooms with their eternal sameness, with the warder's slow, measured step for ever clanking on the stone pavement outside, and the grinding of the bolts and bars, which seemed perpetually to whisper, 'Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further.' It was hard for him to learn to accommodate himself to his narrow ward; but necessity is a stern taskmaster, and he strove to repress his yearnings after freedom, and reconcile himself to his new situation, with all the manly cheerfulness and fortitude which were so characteristic of him. In these early prison days, he projected and began his *History of the World*, and also amused himself by turning a small house in the garden of the Tower into a laboratory. Here he carried on various chemical experiments, and sometimes spent the whole day poring over his stills and

retorts. He devoted also a great deal of his time to arranging his affairs, which had got embarrassed during his late troubles. Strictly speaking, his moveable estate had been forfeited by his attainder, but James, acting under a rare impulse of generosity, permitted it to be conveyed to trustees, by whom it was held for the benefit of his family.

From the first he had been unfortunate enough to have the enmity of Wade, the Lieutenant of the Tower, to struggle against. This man was a dependant and tool of Cecil's, and, as such, was disposed to regard with a peculiarly unfavourable eye Cecil's victim; but in spite of this difficulty, his first experience of prison-life was not unfavourable, and when contrasted with what was to follow, must have seemed like a pleasant green oasis in the midst of a parched and sandy desert.

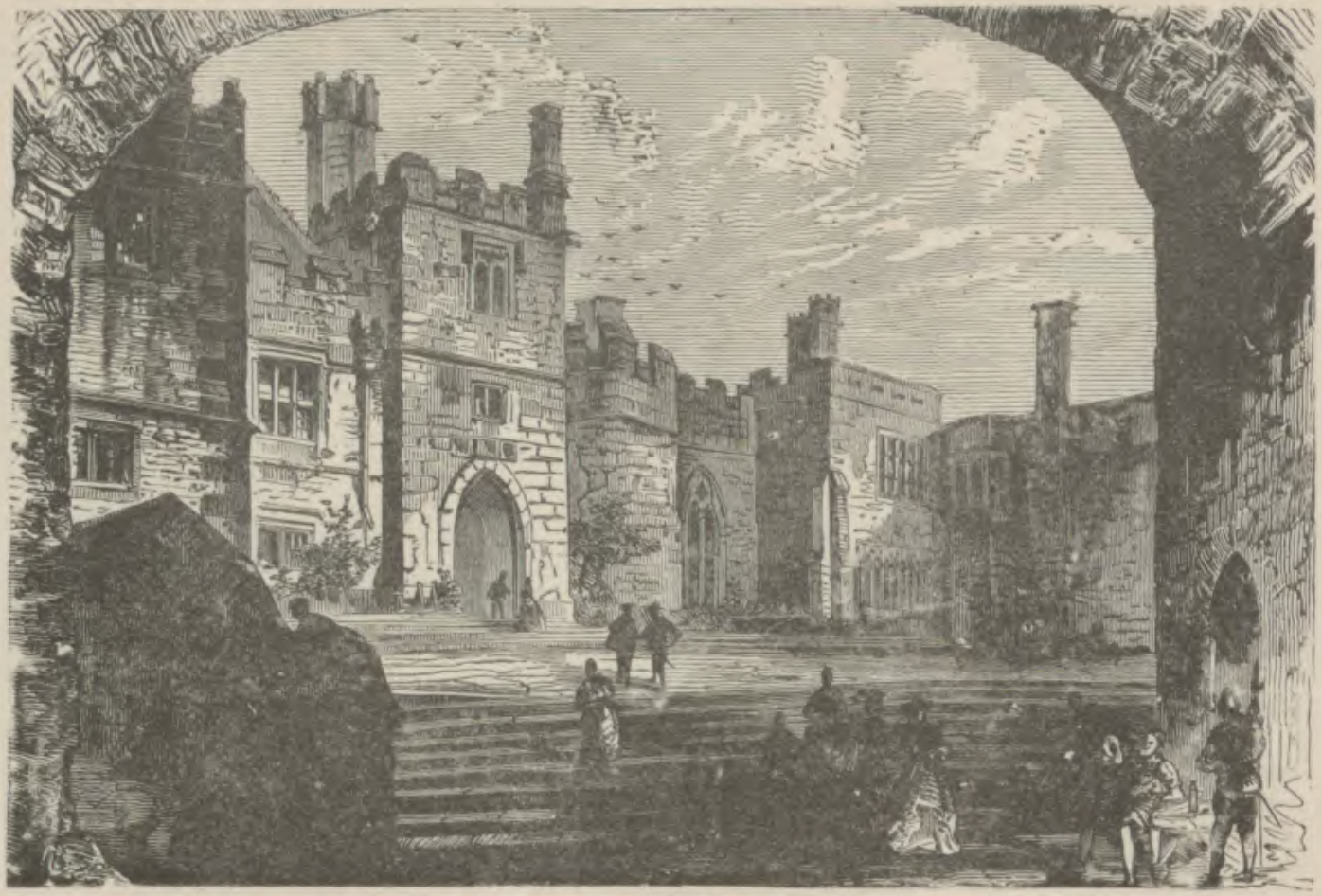
The first intimation which he received that the facile, capricious mind of James was in process of being still further influenced against him, was a message, requiring him to render up the seal of the high offices which he had held, and which had been entrusted to him by Elizabeth. This token of vanished power he immediately returned, along with a letter, in which he besought the King, in consideration of his innocence, to look into and judge his case favourably. 'If,' he said, 'I am to be detained here until my powers of body and mind are so enfeebled that I shall no longer be able to do your Majesty or the State any good or lasting service, God doth know it had been better for me to have died long since.'

James took no notice of this pathetic appeal, and, far from being moved by it, proceeded to inflict upon his helpless captive a still more severe and crushing blow. Robert Carr, his new favourite, afterwards so well known to the world as the infamous Earl of Somerset, had his fortune to make after the manner of such adventurers, out of his master's weakness, and, casting his eyes around, was seized with an avaricious longing for Sherborne, the estate bestowed by Elizabeth upon Raleigh, and which in his happier days he had beautified and embellished until it seemed a paradise of rural beauty. This property he had, in the last year of Elizabeth's reign, conveyed to his eldest son, and the King had, when solicited, readily granted him his life-interest in it; but no sooner was it desired by the favourite, than all this easy complaisance on the part of James was changed. The deed of conveyance was consigned for examination to the Lord Chief-Justice Popham, who had presided at the unjust trial of the father, and was now selected as the instrument to be used in defrauding the helpless son. With eyes sharpened by malignity, and a desire for court favour, he scrutinized the document, and declared that he had found a legal flaw in it. This was enough for the infatuated King; justice and mercy were thrown to the winds, that Carr might have the Naboth's vineyard which he coveted.

From the moment Raleigh heard what was designed, he gave up the inheritance of his boy for lost, but, that he might neglect nothing that could possibly save it, he wrote to the favourite, expostulating with him

upon the injustice he was about to commit. In this letter he urged him not to darken the dawn of his fair day of court favour by the commission of such a cruel deed of spoliation, or thus wilfully draw down upon himself the curse decreed against those who should wrongfully enter upon the fields of the fatherless. Carr was unmoved by this remonstrance, and so was his master. The case was brought on, and Sherborne, as every one expected in the circumstances, was forfeited to the Crown. Upon this, Lady Raleigh made a last attempt to obtain justice. With her boy Walter in one hand, and her little prison-born child Carew in the other, she threw herself on her knees before the King, and with tears implored him not to forget his most glorious attribute of mercy; but the abject crowned puppet she addressed shrank away from her appeal, muttering as he did so, 'I maun ha'e the land, I maun ha'e it for Carr.'

At this repulse the unfortunate woman, seeing nothing but poverty before her children, fell into an agony of grief, and in the bitterness of her soul implored the God of the oppressed to punish, in His own time and way, those cruel and unjust persecutors who had brought ruin upon her husband and his house. If James could have looked in this moment of pride and power a little forward, down into the dark vista of the future, the sight of a scaffold soon to drip with Stewart blood might have made him hold his hand, and forbear to bring the curse of the wronged upon his doomed house; but as it was, he saw himself only as a creature made of



'The Courtyard of an English Country Mansion.'—AFLOAT AND ASHORE, *page* 120.

different clay from other men, elect, chosen, deputed of Heaven to ride roughshod over the necks and fortunes of his subjects, and so he not only bestowed Sherborne upon his profligate minion, but added to it the lands of Barton, Brimsley, and Penford, which Raleigh had bought with his own money.

He perpetrated this injustice with a high hand, but not without remonstrances which might have been supposed to influence him. His eldest son, Prince Henry, an amiable and promising youth, who had imbibed a great aversion to Cecil, interceded for Raleigh and his family, but was not more successful than Lady Raleigh had been. Cost what it might, Carr must have the land.

The interest, however, which had been awakened in the Prince's mind by his father's illustrious prisoner did not terminate with his fruitless endeavour to help him. He entered into a correspondence with him, and asked his advice on many subjects, particularly on matters relating to navigation and war; and partly in answer to his letters, Raleigh wrote a series of short essays embodying his views on these important questions. By command of Henry, he also wrote two letters or essays, proving the inexpediency of a double matrimonial scheme which had been proposed to James by the ambassador of the Duke of Savoy. This nobleman was empowered by his master to solicit the hand of the Princess Elizabeth, the only daughter of James, for his son, the Prince of Piedmont, while for Prince Henry, he recommended as a wife his own eldest daughter.

Both of these marriages Raleigh strongly condemned. It seemed to him that they were suggested by the crooked policy of Spain; and in the essays which he wrote upon the subject, he proved that they were not such alliances as could conduce either to the profit or honour of England, but such as could scarcely fail to awaken jealousy and uneasiness on the part of the Netherlands. In conclusion, he recommended such a marriage as was ultimately brought about, not with Henry, who was then in his grave, but with his brother Charles, namely, an alliance with a daughter of the King of France, a marriage which he seems to have considered as affording a guarantee against the undue influence of Spain.

These essays, which are vigorously written, show great political wisdom and foresight, and exhibit their author in the light of a man who had devoted much time to the study of the true resources and greatness of England, and who had made himself a master of European statecraft. This friendship with the heir-apparent soothed and occupied many an otherwise irksome hour of Raleigh's prison-life, and in part atoned for the continued hostility of James, by shedding a ray of light and hope upon the future. Nor was the Tower in those days without a society varied and brilliant of its own. When Raleigh was its inmate, there was also within its gloomy walls the eccentric Earl of Northumberland, who, during his long imprisonment of fifteen years, established in his apartments a literary and philosophical club, and sought to alleviate the *ennui* of confinement by keeping open

table for all the learned and eminent men who were allowed to visit him. On many poor scholars he bestowed pensions. Warner, Huges, and Heriot, who had been Raleigh's mathematical master, were of this number, and were often called the Earl's Three Magi, from the regularity with which they attended at his apartments, and assisted him with the chemical experiments and abstruse astronomical calculations in which he delighted. Raleigh, who was also a great dabbler in chemistry, had transformed a small house in the garden into a laboratory, and there and in Northumberland's apartments he was often in company with the Three Magi. In the course of these experiments he invented a cordial, which in the reign of Charles II. was in much repute as a medicine, under the title of 'Le grand Cordial de Sir Walter Raleigh,' and which, although credited with many cures, probably did as little good and as much harm as the majority of quack medicines do. Then, when weary of chemistry, philosophy, and politics, he had the Muses, whom he had long courted, to fall back upon, and sons of the lyre to share with him the few pleasures and many hardships of the Tower. Sergeant Hoskins, a poet, gratefully mentioned by Ben Jonson as his own master in the divine art, was an inmate of the State prison during part of the term of Raleigh's imprisonment there. In addition to all these varied pursuits and friendships, Raleigh wrote during his sojourn in the Tower, and published in 1614, the greatest work of his life, his *History of the World.* In eloquence and beauty of style, and in the research

and learning which it displays, this work may not disadvantageously compare with other great monuments of human industry and genius, and justifies the indignant reflection which Prince Henry is said to have made upon the harsh treatment of its author, 'None but my father would keep such a bird in a cage.'

James was, however, alike indifferent to the wrongs and literary fame of his captive, and the remonstrances of his son. It was enough for him that Cecil's hatred was not yet slaked, and that his infamous favourite Somerset, who was enjoying the prisoner's spoils, had the strongest objection to his being set at liberty. It was in vain that Raleigh made unintermitting efforts to procure a remission of his sentence. Those secret agents behind the scenes baffled his most earnest efforts, until at last his heart began to sink with the bitterness of hope deferred. To continual disappointment and its depressing effects, there was added also much hardship from the strictness with which he was guarded, and at last his health, which had been very vigorous, began to give way. His breathing became hurried and laborious, and in an affecting letter which he wrote to the Queen, he sought to obtain her pity, by representing to her the cold and discomfort of his apartments, and the fact that after eight years of confinement, he was locked up as strictly, and used with as much rigour, as he had been on the first day of his abode in the Tower, having many times petitioned in vain to be allowed the favour of walking with his keeper to the top of the hill within the precincts of the prison. These complaints were not unfounded. The

symptoms of decaying health to which he alluded became more urgent and alarming, and in a short time he was seized with paralysis, which disabled the whole of his left side, and perceptibly affected his speech. To Dr. Turner, his physician, his case seemed so full of danger that he resolved to do what he could to procure some amelioration of the rigours of his confinement, and with this end in view he drew up a statement of his condition, and of the causes which, in his opinion, had conduced to it, and sent it to Cecil, entreating that his patient might be allowed the favour of a warmer room, which he had built in the earlier years of his imprisonment near his laboratory in the garden.

There is a curious document referring to this subject preserved in the State Paper Office. It seems to have been written immediately after the Secretary had received Dr. Turner's remonstrance, and represents him as nicely weighing the prisoner's sufferings, and deliberating with himself whether the indulgence craved should be granted or not.

Whether it was bestowed or withheld, there is no evidence to show. Cecil's own death, which was drawing near, removed the greatest and most insuperable obstacle to Raleigh's freedom. It happened towards the close of the month of May, in the year 1612, and was the result of a painful and loathsome disease. He died as he had lived, unloved; and even envy forbore to follow the powerful Secretary into the solitary room where ambition could do no more for him, where the threads of his many plots fell in inex-

tricable confusion from his nerveless hands; and, satiated at last with power, he could say to one of his most favoured and intimate servants, 'Ease and pleasure quake to hear of death; but my life, full of cares and miseries, desireth to be dissolved.'

With him died his hatreds, and Raleigh, in the continued friendship of the Prince of Wales, fondly hoped at last for some alleviation of his miseries. But human hopes, like human joys and fears, are often based on sand. Before Prince Henry could avail himself of the favourable opening afforded by Cecil's death, he himself was seized with a malignant fever, of which after some days of suffering he died.

From the first his illness was alarming, and the physicians who surrounded him seem to have possessed neither the courage nor skill requisite for coping with it. One of them, Sir Theodore Meyerne, proposed that he should be bled, and this operation appeared to give relief to the patient, who earnestly, but in vain, requested that it might be repeated. The other physicians would not agree to run the risk of such an experiment, but proposed instead to apply to the soles of his feet a cock cloven down the back. As might have been expected, this curious remedy had no power to arrest the course of the putrid fever, and Raleigh's cordial, which the Queen sent for, and which was administered along with a host of other nauseous compounds, was equally inefficacious.

In a letter which Raleigh sent along with this cordial, which the Queen had on a former occasion, when attacked with fever, found beneficial to herself,

he, after expressing a lively concern for the Prince, and tender affection for him, declared his belief that it would cure him of any illness whatever, except it were caused by poison. This expectation was disappointed. After an illness of little more than a fortnight, Prince Henry died on the 6th November 1612, to the great grief of the whole nation, among whom rumours of poisoning were speedily spread. These suspicions of foul play were, however, unfounded, and seem in part to have arisen from the fact that the Queen, in the first transports of her grief, showed Raleigh's letter to those around her.

Lamented by all, this brave and promising Prince was regretted by none more sincerely than by the prisoner in the Tower. No severer trial could have befallen him. Had Prince Henry lived, he might have looked forward not only to restoration to liberty, but also to the re-establishment of his fortunes and power; now all these hopes were laid low in the dust with his young protector. For some time he was almost in despair, and then the rise of a new favourite revived hope once more in his breast.

A favourite was necessary to James, and he had for some time past begun to tire of Carr, who, weighed down by a burden of secret guilt, and a continual apprehension of discovery, had become moody and morose. The gaiety and graces of his youth had disappeared, and he contrasted unfavourably with George Villiers, a young man of graceful carriage and remarkable personal beauty, who had been sent to court by his relatives with the intention and hope

that he would push his fortune by trading on the weakness of the King.

Accordingly, James in his folly soon cast the eyes of capricious fondness upon him; he was first made cup-bearer, and then admitted to serve his doting master at all his meals, which gave him an opportunity of listening to his familiar conversation, and adapting himself to his various humours,—a task which he performed with so much dexterity, that it required no prophetical eye to discern that Carr's tenure of court favour, long insecure, would soon be numbered among the things that were. This anticipation was soon fulfilled. James, weary of him, transferred his love to Villiers; and no sooner were the King's fickle affections alienated from him, than he and his infamous wife were arraigned for the murder by poison of Sir Thomas Overbury. Both were found guilty, and condemned to death, but while some of their humbler accomplices were executed, they were suffered to live. A pardon was finally bestowed upon his wife; and Carr, who had been created Earl of Somerset, was retained in the Tower, where, with the sentence of death continually hanging over him, he was suffered to remain until the last year of James' reign, when he also obtained his liberty, and retiring to the country, lived with his Countess, hated and despised by all, upon a sum of four thousand pounds a year which the King assigned him for his maintenance out of his forfeited estates. His disgrace, which was welcome to all, removed another barrier to Raleigh's restoration to liberty. As the unjust pos-

sessor of Sherborne, he had hated the man he had wronged and supplanted; but Villiers had no such hostile prepossession—he was as impartially open to bribes from that quarter as from any other. Accordingly the friends of Sir Walter soon found means to influence the new favourite, and the greater liberty so urgently required by the illustrious prisoner in the Tower was granted to him. He was allowed to extend his walks, and other indulgences which he much required were bestowed upon him. Hope, the irrepressible hope of a brave and self-reliant nature, again began to revive in his breast; he renewed his petitions for liberty to the Queen, who was disposed to regard him with favour, and he also addressed himself to Sir Ralph Winwood, the new Secretary of State, proposing to him a plan for the settlement of Guiana. To this project Winwood was inclined to listen. Less complaisant than Cecil, he had no great love for Spain, and he accordingly recommended the scheme to the King. James, on his part, was not inclined to view it with much favour; he regarded Raleigh with invincible suspicion and distrust, and as he had formed the design of marrying his son Charles to a Spanish princess, he ardently desired to remain on good terms with that court. But then, on the other hand, he was poor, his extravagant habits and foolish waste of money had made him very necessitous indeed; and Raleigh's assertion that there was a rich gold mine in Guiana prevented him from giving, as he would have liked to do, a negative answer to the proposals,

and induced him to take the affair into consideration.

In the meantime Gondemar, the Spanish ambassador, got a hint of what was going on, and immediately remonstrated warmly against the proposed project, which he declared veiled nothing more nor less than an attack upon the possessions of his master. This interference would have been sufficient to turn the trembling scale against Raleigh, had not his friends come forward at the moment with a bribe of fifteen hundred pounds, which they paid to Sir William St. John and Sir Edward Villiers, the uncles of the all-powerful Buckingham. This at once called the omnipotent favourite into the field, and his influence was supreme. There was nothing which the weak and despicable monarch could refuse him; and early in March 1615, Raleigh was informed that he would shortly be set at liberty. He thereupon wrote to Villiers a short and dignified letter of thanks, and three days after the date of that letter the Tower gates were opened to him, and he walked out into the glad spring sunshine, a free man once more;—free, but with his old sentence unrevoked, and still hanging over him like the sword of Damocles. If, in the first intoxication of recovered freedom, he had forgotten that, James had not. A sarcastic remark which Raleigh had made on the fall of Somerset and his own restoration to liberty was repeated to the King, who coldly observed, 'Ay, did he prate of Mordecai and Haman? He may chance to die in that belief yet.' An observation which showed that James was con-

scious that he still retained the power of punishing, and while willing to make use, in the meantime, of his quondam captive, was ungenerously looking forward, even then, to a day still to come of sanguinary reckoning. It was equally sure, however, that he could refuse Buckingham nothing. Neither public interest nor private dislike were of any avail, when weighed in the scale with his doting fondness for his new minion; and the uncles of Villiers, from whom Sir Walter had already purchased his liberation, intimated to him that for the payment of a like sum they would procure for him a free and unconditional pardon.

This proposal, Bacon, then the Lord Keeper, advised him not to agree to. 'The commission,' he said, 'which Winwood has procured from the King, empowering you to proceed to Guiana, is a virtual pardon for all past treasons, and you will need all your money to fit out and carry through this expedition.'

This advice seemed so prudent and good, that Raleigh resolved to take it, the more especially as the whole expenses of the proposed adventure were to be borne by him, and those of his friends who chose to embark in the speculation. James, although he was to have a fifth part of all the bullion imported from the new country, was not to be at the cost of so much as a single seaman employed in the fleet. It was to be all profit and no loss, an arrangement which the empty state of the royal exchequer made very desirable indeed in the eyes of the British Solomon.

CHAPTER X.

One Chance more for Fortune and Honour.

THE commission which James granted, empowering Raleigh to proceed on his last expedition to Guiana, was dated in August 1616, and Sir Walter at once proceeded to make the necessary preparations for it. Hume seems to allege that plunder was the only real object he had in view in this voyage ; but this estimate of his intentions is confuted by the ample scale on which his preparations were made. He embarked in the enterprise the whole wreck of his private fortunes, and even induced Lady Raleigh to sell Micham, a small estate belonging to her, the proceeds of which were applied in the same way. Many private persons and merchants, both English and foreign, took part also in the adventure, fellow-workers whose co-operation Raleigh expressly tells us he would not have encouraged, had not the main design of the speculation been the settlement of the new country. As it was, the presence of these non-combatants was

afterwards found to be a great drawback, and not an advantage in any way.

Meanwhile, every possible obstacle was thrown in the way of the expedition by Count Gondemar, the Spanish ambassador. This man, who added to a strong and clear mind all the supple arts of the most insinuating courtier, was an immense favourite with James. Apparently the most frank, gay, jolly, good-natured fellow in the world, he concealed under this agreeable exterior a loose and Jesuitical morality, great cunning, a steady tenacity of purpose, and a penetration so acute and discerning that nothing seemed to escape his eagle glance, which detected all that passed around him without appearing to see anything. Of this man, supple and dangerous, and the hereditary foe besides of his adopted country, the King had the weakness to make a bosom friend. A curious friendship it must have been, savouring somewhat of the fabled amity between the wolf and the lamb. Imagination can readily call up before the mind's eye the strangely assorted pair, as in the utmost good fellowship and familiarity they jabbered together in the bad Latin in which Gondemar delighted to talk to his Majesty; the adroit Castilian turning from time to time to hide the irrepressible scorn that flashed from his keen eyes, as James, supporting himself on his shoulder after his usual fashion, rolled his huge tongue in his mouth, and laughed, and slavered, and mowed, and grinned over some lightly-uttered jest, which served, perchance, to conceal a deep truth, which the royal fool did not so much as perceive. In these, to

James, delightful hours of privacy and relaxation, Gondemar impressed upon the mind of his dupe the love which his master the King of Spain felt for him. He was very desirous, he assured him, of bestowing the hand of his daughter, the Infanta, with an immense dowry, upon the Prince of Wales. As for his being a heretic, that was of course a drawback, but not an insuperable obstacle, only the King must be careful not to do or allow anything to be done which could be hurtful to the interests of such a loving ally; and this Gondemar more than hinted he was about to do, in permitting the expedition of Raleigh to Guiana.

This projected enterprise caused him the utmost alarm; he affected to believe that it was secretly directed against the West India possessions of the Spanish crown, and fiercely denounced it to James as a scheme of piracy and plunder. In vain the King answered that it was only a mining adventure. Gondemar was not to be put off in that way, but renewed his angry expostulations and latent threats, until the King, sending for Raleigh, compelled him to write down the whole plan of his voyage, and to define exactly the precise situation of the mine which Captain Keymis had discovered. This he was very unwilling to do, and when he did at last yield to necessity, and commit his plans to writing, he acknowledged afterwards that he wilfully concealed a fact well known to him, namely, that the Spaniards had already built a small town called St. Thomas, and were working mines in the very locality to which he was bound.

As it was, Gondemar immediately made such use

of the statement supplied to him as to ensure the failure of the expedition. Having easily obtained it from James, he sent it at once to his master, by whom orders were without delay conveyed to the governors of all the adjacent Spanish colonies to be prepared to meet the English, and give them a warm reception wherever they seemed inclined to land. Having thus effectually baulked the enterprise before it was well begun, the Spanish ambassador artfully affected to withdraw his opposition. 'If it was only an expedition to settle Guiana,' he said, 'he had nothing to do with it, and the English were of course perfectly at liberty to work any mines they could find there.'

The preparations for the expedition upon this went on with renewed alacrity. There was no lack of volunteers for Guiana. The passion for discovery and the desire for gold combined to fill the ranks of the adventurers, and fourteen small vessels were soon armed and fitted out. Sir Walter himself hoisted his flag on board the *Destiny*, a ship of thirty-six guns, built entirely at his own expense. He had under him a crew of two hundred men, of whom eighty were gentlemen volunteers, many of them relations of his own.

For the use of his small fleet he published, before they were out of the Thames, an admirable code of instructions, drawn up with much good sense, clearness, and religious feeling. On the 28th of March 1617 they dropped down the river, but the course of this ill-omened voyage was tedious and dangerous from the first. The weather they encountered in the

Channel was so stormy, that they were forced to put back into the harbour of Cork, where Raleigh met and was generously entertained by Boyle, who in happier days had purchased from him his Irish estates. Not content with simply affording him hospitality, the same open-hearted friend bestowed upon him and his crews a large quantity of stores and necessaries, and at last, towards the end of August, the fleet, completely refitted, put out to sea.

The eldest son of the admiral, who was named like himself Walter, acted as captain of the *Destiny* under him. In September they reached the Canary Islands, in October the Cape de Verde, and in the beginning of November they sighted the golden land of promise.

Extreme sickness and great suffering had prevailed throughout the whole voyage, as the following letter of Raleigh to his wife will show.

'Sweetheart,' he begins, 'I can write you but with a weak hand, for I have suffered the most violent calenture for fifteen days that ever man had and lived. But God, that gave me a strong heart in all my adversity, hath also now strengthened me in this hell-fire of heat. We have had two most grievous sicknesses in our ship, of which forty-two have died; and there are yet many sick. But having recovered the land of Guiana this 12th of November, I hope we shall also recover them. We are yet two hundred men, and the rest of our fleet are reasonably strong; strong enough, I hope, to perform what we have undertaken, if the diligent care at London to make

our strength known to the Spanish king by his ambassador have not taught that monarch to fortify all the entrances against us. However, we must make the adventure; and if we perish, it shall be no honour for England, nor gain for his Majesty, to lose, among many other, one hundred as valiant gentlemen as England hath in it. In my passage to the Canaries, I stayed at Gomera, where I took water in peace, because the country dared not deny it to me. I received there of an English race a present of oranges, lemons, quinces, and pomegranates, without which I could not have lived. These I preserved in fresh sand, and I have some of them yet, to my great refreshing.

'Your son had never so good health, having no distemper in all the heat under the line. All my servants have escaped but Crab and my cook, yet all have had the sickness. Remember my service to my Lord Carew and Mr. Secretary Winwood. I write not to them, for I can write of nought but miseries. By the next, I trust that you shall hear better of us; in God's hands we are, and in Him we trust. The bearer of this, Captain Alley, for the infirmity of his head I have sent back; an honest, valiant man, who can deliver you all that is past. Commend me to my worthy friends at Lothbury, and my most devoted and humble service to her Majesty.

'To tell you that I might be here king of the Indians were a vanity. But my name hath still lived among them here. They feed me with fresh meat, and all that the country yields. All offer to obey

me. Commend me to poor Carew my son. From Caliana in Guiana, the 14th of November.'

It is evident from this letter that Raleigh, although not unaware of the difficulties before him, was still sanguine of success. The Indians had received him with open arms, and although he was aware that the general outline of his plans was known to the Spaniards, his honourable nature had been unable to fathom the abysses of baseness and treachery to which King James had stooped. He had pretended great interest in the proposed expedition, and had flattered and compelled Raleigh into drawing out for him a minute written account of all that he intended to do, only, as he soon found, to hurry with it to Gondemar, who had made such good use of it, that when the English attempted to proceed, they found instead of the free passage which had been promised to them, that the country was fortified and secured against them at every point of access. To add to and enhance the bitterness of this betrayal at the very hands of the unworthy master he had come so far to serve, Raleigh's health, miserably shattered by the rigours and privations of his Tower life, again gave way, and he was so sick as to be unable to leave his ship except in a litter. Still he resolved to advance; his honour, perhaps his life, depended on success, and he determined to make one last effort to obtain it. His own state of health precluded him from accompanying the expedition; but he despatched in search of the mine five small vessels, carrying fifty men each, under the command of his son and Captain Keymis,

an officer who had been long in his employment and confidence, and who had explored the country in 1596. This small force he directed to sail up the Orinoco, towards the point where the mine was supposed to be situated, while he himself with the rest of the fleet would remain at Trinidad, to await the attack of the Spanish fleet which had been sent against him, and afford an asylum to his countrymen in case of their possible repulse.

The names of the ships sent up the river were *The Encounter*, commanded by Captain Whitney; *The Confidence*, under Captain Woolaston; *The Supply*, under Captain King; and two smaller vessels under Captains Smith and Hall.

Keymis, who with young Walter Raleigh commanded the expedition, had formed a plan of his own for obtaining access to the mine; but it seemed to Raleigh so impracticable, that he desired him to give it up, and furnished him with minute written instructions, which he particularly requested him not to deviate from. He was to lead his soldiers, of whom he had five companies of foot of fifty men each, westward by a mountain called Aio to a place within three miles of the mine. He was then to ascertain its depth and breadth, and if he found it promised well, he was to repel the Spaniards by force if they should attack him; but if the mine appeared not to be rich, he was to content himself with taking from it a few basketfuls of ore, in order to convince the King that it had a real existence, and was not altogether a myth, as had been represented to him. On

another point Raleigh also charged him to be very careful. If he found that a report was true which they had recently heard, that Spanish troops had been sent up the Orinoco, he was to avoid if possible all collision with them, and was not to attempt to land without the utmost precaution, lest the common soldiers, who had been recruited from the dregs of the populace, should desert and dishonour their nation.

Having promised faithfully to fulfil these injunctions, Keymis sailed with his little squadron on the 10th of December, and soon reached the town of St. Thomas, which had been recently built by the Spaniards, on the right bank of the river. It was small, consisting only of two hundred and forty houses; but, like all the approaches to the mine, was strongly garrisoned. This fact does not seem to have entered into the calculations of Keymis, and it deranged his plans altogether. He seems to have been afraid that the garrison in St. Thomas would get between him and his boats; and taking it upon himself to deviate from his instructions, he landed, and encamped his men in a position in which he hoped to be left unmolested until the morning. This expectation proved futile. The Spaniards, who were on the look-out for him, attacked his bivouac during the night, and finding many of the companies sunk in profound repose, made a merciless slaughter of them. It seemed at first as if the English would be annihilated; but the courage of the officers, who fought with desperate valour, gave the soldiers time to rally, and plucking up a spirit, they attacked the Spaniards with much

resolution, and drove them back into the town. Here the governor met his flying countrymen with reinforcements, and the battle was renewed with the utmost fury. Young Walter Raleigh especially distinguished himself in the combat that ensued. Placing himself at the head of a company of pikemen, he called upon them to follow him, declaring, his father's enemies afterwards affirmed, 'that this alone was the true mine, and only fools looked for any other.' Scarcely had he uttered these words, when he fell, pierced by many wounds. The sight of his bleeding and lifeless body inspired his companions with tenfold fury; they fought like demons rather than men, drove the Spaniards out of the town, and having plundered it, set it on fire. Very little treasure of any kind was discovered in it; four refining houses were found, but their contents had been removed, with the exception of four ingots of gold.

Keymis then determined to proceed to the mine, with the precise situation of which he was well acquainted. He took with him Sir John Hampden, Captain Thornhurst, and a small party; but his reverses do not yet seem to have taught him the requisite prudence, for before he had travelled far he fell into an ambuscade. While advancing up the river a volley was fired upon them from an invisible foe, killing two of his little company outright, and wounding six. Thus weakened, it seemed hopeless to persevere, and they began immediately to retreat to the main body of their companions, and the whole party evacuating with all haste the ruins of the town, made

the best of their way back with their tale of disaster to Raleigh, at Penita de Gallo. What they told him plunged him at once into the deepest despair. He had pledged himself to the King to bring back such a quantity of ore as should prove that he was a true man, and not the false and boastful braggart which his enemies affirmed him to be. The return of Keymis thus repulsed and empty-handed at once cruelly dashed his hopes to the ground. His gallant son too was gone, and in the bitterness of his soul he reproached his unfortunate lieutenant with having undone him, and ruined his credit with the King past recovery.

Keymis attempted to defend himself, but Raleigh would listen to no excuses, and after a time he withdrew, only to return in a few days with a letter in his hands, which he had written to the Earl of Arundel. In this he adduced many circumstances in defence of his conduct, which went far to justify the manner in which he had acted, and he now wished Sir Walter to read and approve of it. This Raleigh indignantly refused to do, upon which Keymis, who had passed the greater part of his life in his service, retired in despair to his cabin, and there committed suicide.

We can imagine, but scarcely exaggerate, Raleigh's feelings on this occasion. Struggling with the languor of disease, bowed down with sorrow for the death of his son, betrayed by his king, and with every earthly prospect wrecked, he was now rendered almost heart-broken by the death under such awful circumstances of his old companion in arms; and his misery

found vent in the following pathetic letter to his wife:—

'I was loath to write,' he begins, 'because I know not how to comfort you, and God knows I never knew what sorrow meant till now. All that I can say to you is, that you must obey the will and providence of God, and remember that the Queen's Majesty bore the loss of Prince Henry with a magnanimous heart, and the Lady Harrington that of her only son. Comfort your heart, dearest Bess. I shall sorrow for both of us. And I shall sorrow the less, because I have not long to sorrow, because I have not long to live. I refer you to Mr. Secretary Winwood's letter, who will give you a copy of it if you send for it.

'Therein you shall know what hath passed, which I have written by that letter, for my brains are broken, and it is a torment to me to write, especially of misery. I have desired Mr. Secretary to give my Lord Carew a copy of his letter. I have cleansed my ship of sick men and sent them home, and hope that God will send us somewhat before we return. Commend me to all at Lothbury. You shall hear from me, if I live, from Newfoundland, where I mean to clear my ships and re-victual, for I have tobacco enough to pay for it. The Lord bless and comfort you, that you may patiently bear the death of your most valiant son. This 22d March, from the Isle of St. Christopher's. Yours—W. RALEIGH.'

Then follows a postscript, written apparently immediately after the catastrophe of Keymis' death.

'I protest,' he says, 'before the Majesty of God, that as Sir Francis Drake and Sir John Hawkins died heart-broken, when they failed of their enterprise, I could willingly do the like, did I not contend against sorrow for your sake, to provide somewhat for you, to comfort and relieve you. If I live to return, resolve yourself, that it is care for you that hath strengthened my heart. It is true that Keymis might have gone directly to the mine, and meant it. But after my son's death, he made them believe that he knew not the way, and excused himself upon the want of water in the river, and counterfeiting many impediments, left it unfound. When he came back, I told him that he had undone me, and that my credit was lost for ever. He answered that when my son was lost, and that he had left me so weak that he thought not to find me alive, he had no reason to enrich a company of rascals, who after my son's death made no account of him. He further told me that the English sent up in Guiana could hardly defend the Spanish town of St. Thome, which they had taken, and, therefore, for them to pass through thick woods was impossible, and more impossible still to have victuals brought them into the mountains. And it is true that the Governor, Diego Palameca, and other four captains being slain—whereof my son Wat slew one, Plessington, Wat's sergeant, and John of Morocco, one of his men, slew two—I say five of them being slain in the entrance to the town, the rest went off in a whole body, and each took more care to defend the passages to their mines

(of which they had three within a league of the town, besides a mine about five miles off), than they did of the town itself. Yet Keymis at the first was resolved to go to the mines. But when he came to the bank of the river to land, he had two of his men slain outright from the bank, and six others hurt, and Captain Thornhurst shot in the head, of which wound, and the accident thereof, he hath pined away these twelve weeks. Now when Keymis came back and gave me the reasons which moved him not to open the mine (the one the death of my son; the second the weakness of the English, and their impossibilities to work it, and to be victualled; the third, that it were a folly to discover it for the Spaniards; and lastly, my weakness and being unpardoned), and that I rejected all these his arguments, and told him that I must leave it to himself to answer it to the King and to the State, he shut himself into his cabin, and shot himself with a pocket pistol, which broke one of his ribs; and finding that he had not prevailed, he thrust a long knife under his short ribs, up to the handle, and so died.

'Thus much have I written to Mr. Secretary, to whose letters I refer you. But because I thought my friends will rather hearken after you than any other to know the truth, I did, after the sealing, break open the letter again, to let you know in brief the state of that business, which I pray you to impart to my Lord of Northumberland, and Silvanus Scorie, and to Sir John Leigh.

'For the rest. there was never poor man so ex-

posed to the slaughter as I am. For being commanded upon my allegiance to set down not only the country, but the very river by which I was to enter it, to name my ships' number, men, and my artillery, this was sent by the Spanish ambassador to his master the King of Spain. The King wrote his letters to all parts of the Indies, especially to the Governor Palameca of Guiana, El-Dorado, and Trinidado, of which the first letter bore date March the 19th, at Madrid, and when I had not yet left the Thames; which letter I have sent to Mr. Secretary. I have also two other letters of the King of Spain's, which I reserve, and one of the Council's. The King also sent a commission to levy three hundred soldiers out of his garrisons of Nuovo Regno de Granada and Porto Rico, with the pieces of brass ordnance to entertain us. He also prepared an armada by sea to set upon us. It were too long to tell you how we were preserved. If I live I shall make it known. My brains are broken, and I cannot write much. I live yet, and I told you why.

'Whitney, for whom I sold all my plate at Plymouth, and to whom I gave more credit and countenance than to all the other captains of my fleet, ran from me at the Granadoes, and Woolaston with him. So I have now but five ships, and one of these I have sent home, and in my fly-boat a rabble of idle rascals, which I know will not spare to wound me. But I care not; I am sure there is never a base slave in all the fleet hath taken the pains and care that I have done, that hath slept so little and travelled so much.

My friends will not believe them, and for the rest I care not. God in heaven bless you, and strengthen your heart. Yours—W. RALEIGH.'

Having written these letters, Raleigh, still very weak and ill, went, as he had told his wife he should go, to Newfoundland.

Here a discontented and mutinous spirit broke out on board his own ship the *Destiny*, and spreading to the other vessels in the squadron, they were all upon the point of separating and sailing each their several ways, when Sir Walter, aided by Sir John Ferne, succeeded in persuading them to remain together, holding out as a bait to induce them to do so, the hope of falling in with and capturing the whole or part of the Mexican plate-fleet.

Having thus composed for the time this disturbance, Raleigh then resolved to return home. He was quite conscious of the danger to which such a course of action exposed him; but before he left England, his friends the Earls of Pembroke and Arundel had given their word that he would return, and he resolved to act honourably towards them, whatever evil to himself should come of it.

He accordingly left Newfoundland, as soon as he had re-victualled his ships, and after a voyage unmarked by any incident of interest, he reached the coast of Ireland in safety.

CHAPTER XI.

A Bribe for the Infanta's Hand.

BAD news travel fast. When Raleigh landed at Plymouth in July 1618, it was only to find that the whole tale of his disasters had preceded him. His failing to reach the mine; his fighting with the Spaniards; the burning of St. Thomas; the mutiny that had broken out on board his fleet, were all in the mouths of his enemies, and were continually repeated, with every form and variety of exaggeration. Where every one was having a fling at him, Gondemar of course was not idle. Desirous to impress as much as possible upon the timid mind of James the consequences of offending his master, he made no formal complaint against Raleigh, and waited for no explanation, but rushing into the King's presence, bawled out three times in an excited manner, '*Piratas! piratas! piratas!*' and then rushed out again, apparently in the deepest affliction for the death of his near relative, Don Diego Palameca, the Governor of St. Thomas, who

had fallen in the affray when that town was captured and burned by the English.

This conduct was in the highest degree alarming to James, who was straining every nerve to bring about a marriage between his son Charles and the Infanta of Spain. Trembling now for this beloved scheme, he tried to atone for the burning of St. Thomas by writing to Philip, employing Buckingham as his amanuensis, assuring him that if he wished it, he would send the offender to be dealt with by him, or else take care that he should receive the punishment due to his crimes in England. He also published a proclamation, in which he accused Raleigh of having scandalously violated the royal commission entrusted to him, and invited all who could give information to the Privy Council concerning his doings, to repair thither without delay. It was in vain that Lord Carew, the fast friend of the absent admiral, continued for a long time on his knees before the King, pleading earnestly in his behalf. James was frantic with fear lest the Spanish match, on which his heart was set, should slip between his fingers, and the utmost he could be got to say was, 'Why, what more can you expect, than that I should give him a hearing?'

All this happened while Raleigh was still upon the high seas. As has been mentioned before, he arrived at Plymouth in July, and having been warned of the proclamation, he yet, conscious of innocence, resolved to anchor his ship, and come ashore and surrender himself.

Meanwhile Gondemar, having obtained privately a promise from James that this great enemy of Spain should be put to death, had left for his own country, carrying with him proposals of marriage from the Prince of Wales for the Infanta, to which he well knew his master would never accede. He had left behind him, however, to fill his vacant post, a species of *locum tenens*, a popish pervert named Matthews, who was much in his confidence; and this man he charged to convey an intimation to James, that any slackness or undue leniency in dealing with Raleigh would at once serve to put an end to the marriage he so much desired. This threat was conveyed by Matthews in a letter to the Lord Chancellor Bacon, who had been a former acquaintance of his, and served to confirm the King in his resolution to sacrifice one of his greatest and most unfortunate subjects to the fears and hatred of Spain.

Unconscious of all this, the doomed admiral had set out for London, to lay his defence before the King and the Privy Council, and had reached Ashburton, when he was met by his relative, Sir Lewis Stukely, the Vice-Admiral of Devon, who had a warrant to arrest him, and by whom he was conveyed back to Plymouth.

Here they remained for eight or ten days at the house of Sir Christopher Harris, and here he wrote to the King, defending himself, and remonstrating against the injustice with which he was treated. 'May it please your most excellent Majesty,' he began, 'if in my journey outward-bound, I had my men murdered at the islands, and yet spared to take revenge; if I

did discharge some Spanish barques taken without spoil; if I forbore all parts of the Spanish Indies, wherein I might have taken twenty of their towns on the sea-coasts, and did only follow the enterprise I undertook for Guiana, where, without any directions from me, a Spanish village was burned, which was new set up within three miles of the mine;—by your Majesty's favour, I find no reason why the Spanish ambassador should complain of me. If it were lawful for the Spaniards to murder twenty-six Englishmen in cold blood, tying them back to back and cutting their throats, after they had traded with them a whole month, and come to them on the land without so much as one sword, may it not be lawful for your Majesty's subjects, being charged first by them, to repel force by force? If it is not so we may justly say, Oh, miserable English! If Parker and Mecham took Campeachy and other places in the Honduras, situated in the heart of the Spanish Indies, burned towns and killed the Spaniards, and had nothing said to them at their return; and myself, who forbore to look into the Indies because I would not offend, must be accused, I may justly say, Oh, miserable Raleigh! If I have spent my poor estates, lost my son, suffered by sickness and otherwise a world of hardships; if I have resisted, with manifest hazard of my life, the robberies and spoils with which my companions would have made me rich; if, when I was poor, I could have made myself rich; if, when I had gotten my liberty, which all men, and nature itself, do much prize, I voluntarily

lost it; if, when I was sure of my life, I rendered it again; if I might elsewhere have sold my ship and goods, and put £5000 or £6000 in my purse, and yet brought her into England, I beseech your Majesty to believe that all this I have done, because it should not be said that your Majesty had given liberty and trust to a man whose end was but the recovery of his liberty, and who had betrayed your Majesty's trust.

'My mutineers told me that if I returned to England I should be undone. But I believed in your Majesty's goodness more than in all their arguments. Sure, I am the first that, being free and able to enrich myself, yet hath embraced poverty and peril, and as sure I am, an example shall make me the last. But your Majesty's wisdom and goodness I have made my judges, who have ever been, and shall ever be, your Majesty's most humble vassal.—W. RALEIGH.'

This spirited letter produced no effect upon the selfish, callous heart of James. As on a previous occasion, when about to perpetrate a gross injustice, he could only reiterate in reply to the remonstrances addressed to him, 'I maun ha'e the land, I maun ha'e it for Carr,' so now he was deaf to all pleas for justice or mercy. The Spanish king, like Herodias of old, demanded the head of Raleigh, and our foolish, doting English Herod decided that the head of Raleigh he should have, as a bribe for the Infanta's hand.

Meanwhile, Sir Lewis Stukely, during the eight or ten days they remained at Plymouth, left his prisoner

very much at liberty, and here, after the interval of a day or two, he was joined by Lady Raleigh. This faithful and loving woman, who had laboured assiduously for his interests during his absence, brought him a true account of the motives which had actuated, and were likely to actuate James, and showed him that, in the opinion of all his friends, the King had resolved, in defiance of justice and honour, to sacrifice him to the hatred of Spain. This revelation of the King's secret motives produced, as might have been expected, a complete revolution in his mind. The natural love of life; the hope that he might still one day successfully achieve the settlement of Guiana; a desire still to live, that he might vindicate his honour even in the prejudiced eyes of his sovereign,—all these motives awoke in his breast a longing to escape, and so far modified his resolution to surrender himself, that he determined to flee to France if he could.

An old officer named Captain King, who had been long in his service and was much attached to him, volunteered to procure him the means of going thither, and by his aid a vessel was chartered, which was to lie off the shore out of reach of the guns of the fort. Towards this barque, Raleigh and he, having taken a boat, were quickly rowed one dark night. Liberty now seemed within his reach. Sir Lewis did not even suspect him; he might have disappeared secretly and silently, without any of his enemies being a bit the wiser, had not a curious fit of irresolution seized him. When he had almost reached the vessel that was to bear him to safety and freedom, he changed

his mind, and commanding the rowers to put about, returned to his lodgings as secretly as he had left them. Next day he sent a present of money to the captain of the ship, and desired him to wait for him on the following night; but when it came, although the wind and tide were fair, his painful uncertainty continued, and he once more allowed the favourable opportunity to escape him, and elected to remain in the custody of Stukely.

At this juncture, the party were joined by a French physician or quack, named Manourie. This man, who had agreeable manners, and an affectation of learning and chemical knowledge, soon insinuated himself into the confidence of the unfortunate admiral. Raleigh's mind at this time was so tossed to and fro between doubts and fears, that we cannot wonder that any proffer of friendship or counsel was welcome to him. At one moment, proudly conscious of innocence, he longed to be in London, that he might effectually convince all friends and foes alike how false the charges against him were, the next he remembered the inveterate hostility which the King had now for many years displayed towards him, and the experience, anything but reassuring, which he had of the manner in which a jury were likely to behave towards him. When this mood of feeling became predominant in his mind, the thought of an escape again suggested itself to him; and Manourie, at first cautiously, and then more openly, artfully lent himself to the project, and at last boldly suggested to him the desirability of escaping to France. To this advice, however,

Raleigh would not at once agree. What he wanted was to gain time, and he therefore resolved to feign sickness, that he might not at once be sent to the Tower, privately determining all the while so to arrange his affairs, that if matters looked threatening, he should still have it in his power to escape. Accordingly, when he reached Salisbury, he complained of being so unwell that he could not proceed, and by his desire Lady Raleigh, Captain King, and his servants went on to London, leaving him behind. Scarcely had they gone, when he declared that his illness had increased very much, and having procured some drugs from Manourie, he was seized with such a violent vomiting that he seemed reduced to the gates of death. His appearance, also, was ghastly in the extreme. He had rubbed his whole body with a chemical preparation, which had produced a plentiful growth of red pustules, and such a discoloration of the skin, that he looked like nothing so much in the world as a man just prostrated by an attack of the plague. It was an artifice lamentably unworthy of his genius and great intellectual powers; but it was carried out with the thoroughness which marked everything he did. Soon his illness passed into another stage, and he resolved to feign delirium, which he did so effectually as almost to frighten his servant out of his wits. Rushing from the room, this man hurried to the apartment where Sir Lewis Stukely and Manourie were sitting together, and implored them to come without delay, for his master had gone mad, and having leaped out of

bed, was biting and scratching the rushes upon the floor.

Stukely at once went to his apartment, where he found him rather more composed; but his appearance was so frightful, and the blisters that covered his skin, with their mingled hues of yellow and purple, were so fearfully suggestive of the worst form of some contagious disease, that he was seized with terror, and at once sent two doctors and a bachelor of physic to visit his prisoner. These gentlemen were soon at his bedside, and found their patient to all appearance very ill indeed, struggling with the effects of the dose which he had just taken. Symptoms so complicated and so astounding proved more than the slender medical knowledge of the age could grapple with. Raleigh's grave visitors did not even pretend to name his malady, but they all agreed that it was very serious indeed, and united in certifying that he could not without manifest danger to his life be exposed to the open air. The stratagem was so far successful, that he gained a delay of a few days, during which he was confined to his room and attended by Manourie, who was in his secret. This short reprieve, so unworthily procured, he devoted to writing an eloquent defence of himself, addressed to the King. This document, which he entitles an apology for his conduct, is written in a very masterly style, and compels admiration for the man who could in such circumstances defend himself with such singular ability and spirit. Again, as so often before in the course of his life, his sanguine temperament

shook off the depressing influence of the many ills which surrounded him, his spirits rose, he felt all a schoolboy's glee in his successful ruse. It seemed to him an omen of the fortunate and speedy termination of all his distresses. No man perhaps had ever experienced so much of the treachery of others, and yet retained so little mistrust of his kind; it was his misfortune now, as it had been often before, to have no suspicion of the baseness of those who surrounded him. He was inclined to trust both Stukely and Manourie, and seemed not to have the least idea that they were agents employed by the King to lure him into courses which might if possible afford a pretext for his condemnation. Manourie especially he was inclined to treat with much familiarity, and the apparent friendliness of the French quack so won upon his confidence, that he entrusted him with all his projects for escape, and confided to him among other things, that Captain King was to procure a boat, which was to wait for him at Gravesend, in order to carry him to France.

This intelligence Manourie immediately conveyed to his confederate Stukely, who maintained so close a watch upon his prisoner, as to render all attempts to execute the project futile. In this dilemma it occurred to Raleigh to take Stukely also into his confidence, and offer him a bribe to secure his connivance. He accordingly sent Manourie to him, with the present of a rich jewel and a promise of fifty pounds besides, if he would relax somewhat the vigilant care he took of him, and give him an opportunity to save himself.

He thus fell into the very snare which the King and his tools had set for him, and found of course very little apparent difficulty in overcoming the scruples of his gaolers.

Stukely was all complaisance, so very accommodating, indeed, that the facility with which he lent himself to the scheme would have aroused suspicion in most minds. He agreed with the utmost readiness not only to accept the bribe offered to him, but even to accompany Sir Walter himself in his flight.

Manourie having now very dexterously played out his role, hurried off to London, leaving Stukely and his prisoner, who had recovered from the effects of his indisposition at Salisbury, to follow him by slower stages. When they reached London, Raleigh was met by his old and faithful friend Captain King, who informed him that he had got everything prepared for the proposed escape. Cotterel, one of his old servants, and a seaman named Hart, on whose fidelity he might rely, were to have a boat waiting for him at Tilbury, and he had best, King thought, go on board that very night. To this Sir Walter objected that it would be impossible to get away without being seen by Stukely. 'Besides,' he said, 'he had good hope that Stukely himself would accompany him;' and he finished by faithfully promising to meet King on the following evening at the Tower Dock.

All seemed going on as smoothly as his best friends could wish; he was already in imagination a free man once more, and his spirits were raised to a still further pitch of elation by a visit which was

privately paid him by Le Clerc, the French agent. This man was deputed by his Government to make him a *bona fide* offer of assistance; the hostility which he had constantly displayed towards Spain had recommended him to France, and Le Clerc came to place at his disposal the use of a ship to convey him to Calais, and letters of safe-conduct to the Governor there.

'The vessel,' Sir Walter said, 'he did not need, having already provided one of his own; but for the letters he professed much gratitude, having,' he said, 'survived all the little acquaintance he had ever had with France or Frenchmen.'

This friendly offer was made to him on Saturday evening, and having declined it, he got up early on Sunday morning, intent on carrying out his own scheme. After dressing with his usual care, he disguised himself by means of a false beard; and then, accompanied by his page and the still complaisant Sir Lewis, he proceeded to the place where he had appointed to meet with Captain King. Two wherries were in waiting, and Raleigh, Stukely, and the page leapt into one, while King and the seaman Hart took their places in the other. At this moment, just when they were about to set out, Stukely called out in a loud voice to King, 'What do you say, captain? Have I not proved myself thus far an honest man?'

'You have,' answered the veteran, who had not the blind trust in him which his late commander displayed, 'if it but continue.'

Hitherto Raleigh had shown singular cheerfulness

and alacrity, but his spirits were now damped by one of the bargemen, who pointed out to him that one Mr. Herbert, whom he knew to be his enemy, and who had taken a boat at the same time as they did, instead of proceeding under the bridge, as he seemed at first to have intended, had changed his direction, and was following them down the river.

A suspicion of treachery seems at this moment, for the first time, to have crossed the mind of the unfortunate prisoner, and observing a wherry pass before them, he declared that he thought it was a spy, and that they had better return.

This resolution was, however, violently opposed by Stukely, who seemed so sincerely anxious to facilitate his escape, that even Captain King's suspicions were lulled to rest, and he was convinced that he had wronged him by his doubts. The wherries upon this proceeded, and continued their course until they had passed Woolwich, and gained a reach of the river near Plumstead. Here it had been arranged that Hart's vessel was to be in waiting for them ; and on approaching the place, three small craft were actually seen at anchor, but Hart, in a well-simulated transport of disappointment, cried out like a man undone, 'that none of them were his.'

'I am betrayed,' said Raleigh calmly, at the same time ordering them to row back with all haste, that he might if possible regain his own house without observation.

He was at once obeyed ; but his boatmen had proceeded only a very little way, when they were met by

the wherry manned by Herbert and his servants, the appearance of which had first made him suspicious of evil. Afraid of falling into the hands of this man, he then made a last attempt to propitiate the friendship or win the compassion of Stukely. He drew him aside, and after some earnest conversation he was observed to take something from his pocket and give it to him, upon receiving which, Stukely was heard to make loud protestations of fidelity to him, and zeal for his interests. Sir Lewis, then turning to King, proposed to him that they should pretend that they had inveigled Raleigh so far only that they might, if possible, discover his intentions, and thus betray him; and this story being believed, Stukely might be continued in charge of the prisoner, and so have it in his power to afford him other and better opportunities of escape. Thus cloaking his treachery to the end with a mask of hypocrisy, Stukely, having still further robbed his poor victim, might have retained his confidence to the last, if it had not been for the blunt, honest straightforwardness of Captain King.

Having reached the landing-place, Herbert's wherry came alongside at the same time, and his men, pressing forward, mingled with the crew of Raleigh's boat. Upon this Stukely took King aside, and with consummate audacity said, 'That he could not now serve Sir Walter better than by pretending to be his accomplice in betraying him.'

'I,' said the honest seaman, aghast at what was required of him, 'I will never betray Sir Walter;'

and then in language more forcible than polished, he positively refused to lend himself to any such deceit, and further gave Sir Lewis to understand plainly what he thought of him.

Stukely upon this threw off the mask. Calling loudly for assistance, he arrested King, and handing him over to Herbert's men, desired them to keep him safe, and not suffer him to have any communication with Raleigh. He then conveyed the whole party to a tavern, where he arranged that they should remain all night, as it was now too late in the afternoon to convey his prisoner to the Tower.

The scales had at last fallen from Sir Walter's eyes with a vengeance, but he had sufficient command of himself to break out into no transports of passion; the only reproach which he addressed to his Judas-like kinsman was contained in the calmly uttered words, 'Sir Lewis, these actions will not turn out much to your credit.'

Sir Lewis, however, was of a different opinion. His exultation at having outwitted a man so much his superior in intellectual ability knew no bounds; and next day he conveyed his betrayed and deceived relative to the gloomy State prison, in which he had already spent thirteen sad, monotonous years. On passing under the arch of the ponderous gateway, Raleigh turned and said to his faithful and attached friend King, 'Stukely and Cotterel have betrayed me, but for your part, you need be in fear of no danger. It is I am the mark that is shot at.'

He was then conducted to his apartment, and the door locked upon him, while King, deeply affected, bade him farewell, and recommended him to the mercy and keeping of God.

CHAPTER XII.

Raleigh must die, but for what?

RALEIGH was once more safely lodged in his old quarters in the Tower, and the great object of James and his ministers, now that they had secured him, was to discover some plea or pretext on which they might put him to death with an appearance of justice. The King had promised to Gondemar that he should be sacrificed to Spanish jealousy and distrust, and he was determined to keep his promise; but even he felt that the true motive for his unrelenting malignity could not be assigned; some excuse, however flimsy, must be found for it. In order, if possible, to discover this, several men who had deserted from Sir Walter's ships, or whom he had sent home for misconduct, were examined, in the anxious hope that something might be gleaned from their evidence which would convict him of piracy or other crimes. Nothing, however, at all of such a kind could be discovered, and the depositions of several Spanish merchants, who alleged that they

had been plundered, having been carefully taken, the result was that it appeared very plainly that the Spaniards had been the aggressors in the affair of St. Thomas, and in all the affrays which had followed between them and the English in Guiana. It was impossible, even James felt, to convict Raleigh upon such evidence; and yet what was to be done? Gondemar's parting threat had been, that if he were not put to death, there should be no match with the Infanta. In this dilemma it occurred to some of the members of the King's obsequious Government, that he might be induced to attempt to escape, or to enter into such a correspondence with France as might be construed into treason.

To bring about, if possible, such a desirable consummation, Stukely and Manourie had received secret instructions to work upon his fears, to remind him of the unrecalled sentence of death still hanging over him, and to enlarge upon the hostility of the Spanish ambassador, and the dislike which the King had always entertained for him.

Their artifices, as we have seen, were successful. Although so little inclined to escape at Plymouth that he actually returned to his lodgings after being almost alongside of the vessel which would have conveyed him to France, he was yet so wrought upon at last by their continual hints and suggestions, as to fall a victim to their cunning, and so furnish the Government with the plea which it had hitherto fruitlessly sought after, and long ardently desired in vain.

Shortly after he was brought back to the Tower,

a Commission, composed of some members of the Privy Council, was appointed to examine him, amongst whom were Sir Edward Coke, whose malice he had already experienced, Abbot, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and Bacon, the Lord Chancellor.

The charges brought against him were, first, that he had falsely alleged that he wished to go to Guiana, in order to discover a mine there, whereas his real object was to recover his liberty, that he might engage in piracy; second, that he had made an attempt to involve the country again in a war with Spain; third, that he had abandoned his ship's company, and spoken disrespectfully of the King; and fourth, that he had feigned madness in order to excite the royal compassion, and had attempted to escape.

All these accusations, except the two last, Raleigh denied, and cleared himself from them so conclusively, that the united ingenuity of his judges failed to exhibit against him a shadow of proof. As to the two last charges, he admitted them frankly, but declared that they were justified by a natural desire to preserve his life.

The Attorney-General then alluded to what he was pleased to term the royal clemency, in so long sparing his life after his condemnation at Winchester; to which Raleigh answered with spirit, 'That he believed the King did in his conscience clear him from all guiltiness of the fact then charged against him;' and indeed he said, 'I know that his Majesty hath been heard to say, in speaking of these proceedings against me, that he would not wish to be tried by a Middle-

sex jury.' He then went on to say, that Dr. Turner, the physician who attended him in the Tower, had told him that one of his judges at Winchester, Sir Francis Gawdy, had said as he lay upon his death-bed, 'that he had never seen the justice of England so degraded and injured as it had been by the condemnation of Sir Walter Raleigh.'

The Commission upon this left him, so completely foiled by his acuteness, eloquence, and command of temper, that they had been unable to extract any admission from him except upon one point. He did not deny that he had attempted to escape, which in his circumstances might be held as an endeavour, unfortunately unsuccessful, to fulfil the requirements of the sixth commandment.

As soon as they were gone, and he was again left to the solitude of his prison, he addressed as a forlorn hope a letter to Buckingham, in which he vindicated himself in the following spirited manner:—

'That which doth comfort my soul,' he begins, 'in this offence is, that even in the offence itself I had no other intent than his Majesty's service, and to make his Majesty know that my late enterprise was grounded upon a truth, and which with one ship speedily set out, I meant to have assured or have died, being resolved, as is well known, to have done it at Plymouth, had I not been restrained. Hereby I hoped not only to recover his Majesty's gracious opinion, but to have destroyed all those malignant reports which have been spread of me. That this is true, that gentleman whom I so much trusted (my

keeper), and to whom I opened all my heart, cannot but testify; and wherein if I cannot be believed living, my death shall witness. Yea, that gentleman cannot but avow it, that when we came back toward London, I desired to save no other treasure than the exact description of those places in the Indies.

'That I meant to go hence a discontented man, God, I trust, and mine own actions, will dissuade his Majesty from believing, whom neither the loss of my estate, thirteen years' imprisonment, or the denial of my pardon could beat from his service; and the opinion of being accounted a fool, or rather distract, by returning as I did unpardoned, balanced with my love to his Majesty's person and estate, had no place at all in my heart.

'It was the last severe letter of my lords for the speedy bringing of me up, and the impatience of dishonour, that first put me in fear of my life, or enjoying it in a perpetual imprisonment, never to recover my reputation lost, which strengthened me in my late, and too late, lamented resolution. If his Majesty's mercy do not abound; if his Majesty do not pity my age, and scorn to take the extremest and utmost advantage of my errors; if his Majesty in his great charity do not make a difference between offences proceeding from a life-saving natural impulsion, without all ill intent, and those of an ill heart; and that your lordship, remarkable in the world for the nobleness of your disposition, do not vouchsafe to become my intercessor, whereby your lordship shall bind a hundred gentlemen of my kindred to honour your

memory, and bind me for all the time of that life, which your lordship shall beg for me, to pray to God that you may ever prosper, and ever bind me to remain your most humble servant,

'W. RALEIGH.'

This letter, as might have been expected, produced no effect upon the profligate and venal favourite. His intercessions with James were principally for gratuities either for himself or for his family. So long as he could supply his shameless profuseness out of the royal purse, the death of a hundred such men as Raleigh was nothing to him; nor would his interference perhaps have availed much, for James, besottedly set upon the Spanish match, was determined that Raleigh should die. His commissioners were baffled; but he was determined that he should not be defeated. If nothing could be discovered to furnish matter for a new trial, he was resolved to fall back upon the old, and carry into execution the still unrepealed sentence passed at Winchester. It was suspected that Raleigh still kept up a correspondence with France; but such was his prudence that it was found impossible to obtain any proof of secret communications passing between him and the French agent. In these circumstances it was judged requisite to subject him to a system of perpetual espionage, and the King and Council looked around for a tool base enough for their purpose.

The Lieutenant of the Tower at that time was Sir Allan Apsley, a man whose just and honourable nature altogether precluded him from the office of a

spy. It was necessary, of course, in the first place, to withdraw Raleigh from his charge, and then the King, with the advice of Secretary Naunton, committed him to the custody of Sir Thomas Wilson, the Keeper of the State Papers, a man who possessed all the infamous qualifications requisite for his new office. Sir Thomas had many and diverse gifts; he was learned and polished; he had a cloak of religion which he could assume at pleasure; and he had much specious benevolence of manner, under which he concealed a cunning, mean, and treacherous disposition. The instructions which he received from the Government were as follows:—He was to keep Raleigh safe in the Tower, and to suffer no one to come near him, except such persons only as were necessary for his diet, while he himself was to draw from him such information, either with respect to his communication with the French ambassador, or his Guiana expedition in general, as might conduce to the object which the King and his ministers had in view; this object, of course, being the discovery of some pretext which might serve for the immediate condemnation of the prisoner.

Sir Thomas, as might have been expected from his disposition, took to his new duties *con amore*, and with commendable industry has reared an imperishable monument to his own disgrace, in the shape of a series of papers preserved in the office over which he presided, in which are embodied original minutes of his conversations with his illustrious prisoner, and notes on the conduct of Sir Walter, while under his

charge in the Tower. On the 11th of September he entered upon his new office, and from that time until the 15th of October the unfortunate prisoner was never allowed a moment's respite from his artful espionage and treacherous suggestions. That no solace, however humble, might be allowed him, his servant was discharged, and a man selected by Wilson placed in his room, who had orders to report to him the most trivial, common-place phrases uttered by the captive. Then came an experiment still more cruel, a veritable seething of the kid in its mother's milk,—an attempt to extract matter to condemn the imprisoned man from his free and unreserved communications to his wife. Lady Raleigh and her son were no longer allowed to visit him as before; but she was permitted and even pressed to correspond frequently with him. She did so, and her letters were intercepted, as were also his to her, and over these melancholy effusions, prompted by love and despair, the King and his Council gloated with malignant eyes, hoping to discover from them something upon which a charge of treason might be founded. Wilson himself, with cur-like fidelity, never stirred from his captive's side during the whole day. At his meals, during the visits of his physician and surgeon, even while he knelt in prayer, he was never alone. The prying eyes of his gaoler were for ever upon him, from the hour when he opened his door in the morning, until he locked him up again with his own hands at night. This constant companionship did not awaken, as might have been expected, any compunction or compassion in the

breast of Sir Thomas. In his letters and reports he rarely mentions his prisoner except in terms of railing. Hypocrite, arch impostor, and other epithets of reproach seem to him the most fitting appellations by which he can designate one of the greatest Englishmen of his time. James, no doubt, approved of his conduct, for he himself filled with much satisfaction the office of Inquisitor-in-chief; he personally directed all Wilson's measures of seclusion, approved of his vigilant personal superintendence of his prisoner, opened and read the letters which passed between the unhappy husband and wife, and loudly expressed his disappointment when so much dishonourable ingenuity ended in nothing. There was no treason to conceal, and therefore no treason was discovered.

Raleigh, at the time when he was withdrawn from the charge of the humane Lieutenant of the Tower, Sir Allan Apsley, and delivered over to the tender mercies of Wilson, was in very bad health, and, as might have been expected, the rigorous restraint to which he was subjected increased his sufferings. An intermitting fever and ague consumed his strength; his body was covered with painful abscesses; his left side was much swollen, and the old wound which he had received in the Cadiz expedition made him lame, and occasioned him continual uneasiness. He was in bed when Sir Allan Apsley brought Wilson and introduced him to him as his new gaoler; and Sir Walter, after bidding him welcome, said in a melancholy listless way, 'Let the King do with me what he will, no man was ever more desirous to die than I am.'

Wilson at once reported this speech to Naunton the Secretary, and there is preserved in the State Paper Office an original document of his, which is entitled, 'A relation of what hath passed and been observed by me, since my coming to Sir Walter Raleigh, upon Friday the 11th of September,' which is very curious, and which testifies both to his own high qualifications as a spy, and to the low moral tone of the King and Government which could employ him as such. He first describes the debility and disease under which he found the prisoner labouring, and then goes on to say that he introduced himself to him as a man sent by the King to take charge of him, out of his Majesty's gracious and princely goodness, because the King knew him to be a man of more honesty than cunning. Having thus artfully, as he thought, invited confidence, he then urged his captive to disclose whatever he knew that might be of importance to the public service, declaring that if he did so, there could be no doubt but that he would experience the royal clemency. To this Raleigh answered very earnestly, 'That if he knew of any such thing, he would, sick as he was, write it that very night to his Majesty.

This was not the sort of answer which Wilson desired, and he therefore took no notice of it, but proceeded to charge the infirm and suffering man with a treasonable correspondence with France. He told him with much duplicity, that he might as well make a virtue of necessity, and confess what was already known, to wit, his conference with the French agent when he

came home, and his interview with Le Clerc before setting out upon his attempted flight. He pressed him to reveal to him the real objects which he had in view in his projected escape; what promises were made to him by the French ambassador; what employment or rewards were to be bestowed upon him in France; and what were the plots and designs depending thereupon. He then goes on to say to Secretary Naunton, he, Raleigh, made me a long answer, saying, 'Whatsoever is confessed by others, sure I am there is nothing which can touch my fidelity to my king and country.' The conference he had with the French agent he affirmed to be only courtesy, a compliment paid him by a gentleman with whom he had no intimate acquaintance. It was quite true, he also said, that the French ambassador had come to see him before he left for Guiana, but the visit was simply one of curiosity; he wished to see his ship, and was actuated by no other motives than those which brought the ambassadors of Venice and Savoy, and even some Spaniards, to visit him. As for his purpose in escaping to France, he had none, except the natural desire to shield himself from danger, designing to shelter himself there until the storm had blown past, and he might through the intercession of the Queen, or in some other way, recover favour.

No promises of any kind, he protested, had ever been made to him; and as to employment, he had hoped to undertake some service against the Spaniards, with whose resources and weak points he was well

acquainted. As for plots and designs, he knew nothing of them: the only plot he had formed was to save his life, by escaping from England; and having resolved to fly, France seemed to him the country in which he could best find the asylum of which he was in quest.

These clear and ingenuous answers were all that Wilson could gain by his craft and duplicity, but his want of success only made him the more persevering. 'After Raleigh had made me answer in this fashion,' he goes on to say, 'I told him that I saw plainly that I had no place in his confidence and affection, for that he would entrust no more to me than to others; "But, sir," said I, "if you would have opened unto me the closets of your heart, and faithfully let me know what is there, I would have engaged myself for you as far as my life and poor estate would reach, in an assurance of your life, safety, and recovery of his Majesty's favour."

'"Oh, sir," quoth he, "how should a man be assured of that? The King will say when all is told, if a man could tell anything more: Why, the knave was afraid of his life, else I should never have known it, and therefore, no, God a mercy." Then I fell again,' continues the abject gaoler, 'into the true commonplace of the actions and example of his Majesty,—how that there never was a better king since King David, nor before, and I did remind him how mercifully King David did behave to Joab, Abiather, Shimei, and others, who had so grievously offended him, yet would he not suffer them to be put to death in his time.

'"No," quoth he; "but he left a commission to his son to do it, and so did Henry VII. by Poole, that was sent unto him by the Emperor. But"—saith he, and then he made a long pause, as if he had some great matter to impart, looking upon me with an assured contemplative countenance; then, as he was about to speak, supper came in, and because I would not have him forget, I staid and supped with him, and after supper would have drawn him unto that mind where I left him before, but he had gotten hard. What he feareth most seems to be, that if the match with Spain hold, the Spaniard will pursue him to death or worse punishment; and if it break off, then we must needs couple with France, and he shall mar his market by betraying the trust which they have perhaps put in him.'

With patient assiduity Wilson again and again returned to his task, and repeatedly interrogated his prisoner as to his interview with the French agent, without being able to obtain any other answer than that which he had got at first, that Le Clerc had come to visit him out of mere civility, and had offered to facilitate his escape to France.

Unable to obtain any proof of a treasonable correspondence with the French ambassador, Sir Thomas, in his daily reports, was at last driven to record and exaggerate the merest trifles that passed, which are interesting as showing us how the last days of the great soldier and sailor were spent. 'This evening,' he says in one of his reports to Secretary Naunton, 'coming in upon Raleigh unawares, I did find him

reading the Psalms, whereupon I told him that he had there the best comfort; that there he had a man and a king, and the best man and the best king that ever was, who had as great affliction as ever any had, and yet by his constancy and faithfulness overcame all, and so perchance might he.

'Upon this, he began and told me from the beginning to the end all his misfortunes, which he dated from his Majesty's accession, and ascribed to the plotting against him of Cecil, Suffolk, and Northampton. His arraignment and condemnation at Winchester he characterized as most unjust. He then spoke of his imprisonment in the Tower, his expedition to Guiana, and the conduct of Sir Lewis Stukely in betraying him; whereupon,' continues the spy, 'I did assure him, that if he would but disclose what he knew, the King would forgive him, and do him all favour. "Ay," quoth he, "how shall I be assured of that? The King will say when it is all told, The craven was afraid of his life, else he would not have disclosed it."'

This was on the 12th September. On the 13th, Sir Thomas found his prisoner very dejected, and got matter for his brains to work upon, by hints which Raleigh threw out about suicide, affecting to admire what he called the magnanimity of the ancient Romans, who would rather seek death by their own hands, than suffer anything which was base or disgraceful. That this was his sincere opinion there is no evidence to show. What he was really in earnest about was permission to write to the King, a request

which Sir Thomas at last agreed to forward to the Council, suggesting, at the same time, that his wife, Lady Wilson, should be sent to the Tower, to perform the office of gaoler during the short intervals of time in which he was unavoidably absent from his prisoner's side. This double request produced a letter from Secretary Naunton, in which Wilson was informed that the King was graciously pleased to grant that he should have his lady to act as his substitute, which she was fitter to do than any servant. His Majesty was also willing that Raleigh should have the privilege of writing to him, with this limitation, that he hoped in what he wrote he would unfold all the truth sincerely.

This letter was dated on the 16th September, and next day, on the 17th, Wilson removed his prisoner into a higher, and what he considered a safer apartment in the Tower. He also availed himself of this change to take an inventory of his jewels, and of all the effects which he had with him. These had so dwindled down and decreased in value, that he adds, in enclosing the list to the King, 'It will be seen that there is not in it anything of much importance.'

A great diamond which Sir Walter was alleged to have received from Queen Elizabeth, and after which Wilson inquired, Raleigh denied having ever possessed; 'All that he had of any value,' he said, 'Sir Lewis Stukely had taken from him, except a sapphire ring which he used as his seal.' Wilson then recurred to his old charge of treasonable correspondence with the French ambassador, upon which Raleigh

asked him 'what sort of a man the French ambassador was.'

'Surely you should know better than me,' retorted the spy; and he again pressed his prisoner to tell him the true nature of the conference which he and the French agent had had together on the Sunday morning before his flight.'

'"If I may have leave," said Raleigh, "I will write it to the King;" upon which the Lieutenant of the Tower being announced, entered, and saying he had come from court, therewith in my hearing,' records Sir Thomas, 'delivered to the prisoner the desired permission.'

This letter of Sir Walter's to the King has not been preserved, a piece of negligence from which it may be inferred that it contained too many home truths to find favour in the royal eyes. The letter of Wilson's which enclosed it, however, remains, and on the back of it a curious memorandum has been scribbled down: 'Mem. to take means to certify the truth of what Sir W. Raleigh saith of one Christofero, that he brought home with him from Guiana, who was the Governor's man there, who will take it on his life that he is able to say and show that there are there seven or eight several mines of gold; and he wisheth this man may be entertained in some nobleman's service, for occasion that may ensue.'

Raleigh had before, in his apology, alluded to this man, and he seems now to have entreated the King and Council to convince themselves by the evidence of this impartial witness of the truth of the allega-

tions which he had made concerning the gold mines in Guiana. This, however, it did not suit the King to do, and he had even the effrontery to assert afterwards, in the face of this direct evidence, that no such mine as Raleigh went in search of was in existence at all.

CHAPTER XIII.

A King's Justice.

RALEIGH now awaited, we cannot doubt, with much anxiety, the effect which his letter might have upon the mind of James; but he was no longer sanguine of a good result being produced by any defence which he could offer for himself, and prepared to meet death with serenity and even cheerfulness.

Wilson tells us that after Sir Walter had despatched his letter to the King, he, Sir Thomas, was sitting beside him, while the barber was trimming and combing his hair, whereupon Raleigh said 'that he had been accustomed to comb his hair for a whole hour every day before he came into the Tower.'

'You do not now do so,' said Wilson.

'No,' he answered, 'I would know first who shall have it. Why should I bestow so much cost upon it for the hangman?'

It appears from Wilson's journal that he had held out hopes of pardon to Raleigh, and that Sir Walter

had pleaded these in his letter to the King,—a liberty on the part of the gaoler which his Majesty deeply resented. He was resolved not to let anything come in the way of his determination to sacrifice Raleigh to Spain, and he showed his displeasure in such a manner as to produce an humble and earnest apology from Sir Thomas.

'It was true,' he said, writing to Secretary Naunton, 'that he had at divers times held out hopes of the King's mercy to his prisoner, finding that hope wrought in him much more powerfully than fear; but I did it,' he pleads, 'altogether as coming from myself, and in no way engaging or binding his Majesty.'

It appears plainly from this, that Raleigh was induced by groundless hopes of pardon to disclose in this letter to the King all he knew upon the subjects on which he had been so often examined, and that this all amounted to so little, that James was both enraged and mortified to find that it contained nothing which the most prying malice could turn against the prisoner. Disappointed, but in nowise shaken in his resolution to take his life, he thereupon intimated to Raleigh that he would not extend his forgiveness to him, because Wilson, in the hopes which he had held out of pardon, had acted without his authority.

Secretary Naunton and Wilson having thus failed to extract anything which could incriminate him from Raleigh himself, the King directed them to try in every other possible way to obtain such matter of accusation against him as might serve for a pretext to condemn him.

By the express commands of his Majesty, Lady Raleigh was confined a prisoner in her own house, and encouraged to write to her husband, in order that her letters and his replies might be meanly intercepted and read by his Majesty. Lady Carew also, who was a connection of Raleigh, and had always been intimate with him, was strictly examined with regard to his interview with the French agent; but her evidence, and that which was gleaned from Lady Raleigh's letters, all went to show that the simple and straightforward statements of the prisoner were true.

The ill success of his letter seems at last to have convinced Sir Walter that all hopes of mercy fixed upon the chance of the King's relenting were vain. He had looked death too often in the face in the course of his life to be unfamiliar with it, and he now resigned himself to the contemplation of its near approach with tranquillity and courage. Wilson says in his journal, that on the night of the 26th September 1618, upon his taking occasion to say to his prisoner, that he hoped he, Wilson, would not have much longer to stay in the Tower, Raleigh answered him, '"I suppose when you are gone, I shall be straightway delivered over to the secular power as they call it; and yet," he continued, "if the Spanish match hold, it were no policy to have me put to death, for I have," saith he, "a great store of friends in England, and my death will but preserve envy." I marvelled at this discourse; but considering further of it, I remembered that it had agreement with his

former discourse in the afternoon, telling what great kindred he had, naming the greatest, and almost all in the west country.'

On the 27th September Wilson writes down: 'This night after supper, the servant of the Lieutenant, Sir Allan Apsley, came to say that his master could not return home that night. I told Raleigh this when I went up to see him, before he went to bed, upon which he at once said that he thought the Lieutenant would be detained to make arrangements about his death. And after a short interval of silence, he went on to tell me that Stukely had been so afraid that he would commit violence against himself, that he would not suffer him to have knives or drugs of any kind in his possession. "But there was no need," he said, "for such precautions; he would surely desire to die in the light, and not in the darkness, that he might have it in his power to make known what some were."'

Meanwhile, vain attempts were being made to soften the inveterate malignity of James. The Queen, mindful, perhaps, of the love which her dead son had borne to Raleigh, made repeated and fruitless endeavours to obtain his pardon; and the dying Earl of Winchester made a last effort to prevent his sovereign from staining his soul with the blood of his innocent and illustrious subject. This nobleman being laid upon his death-bed, the King came to visit him a little while before he died, whereupon he roused himself, and said: 'That he had never expected to see his Majesty again, and therefore he would beg but one last boon of him, and that was, the life of an old servant that

had incurred his Majesty's grievous indignation; yet because he had been so dearly respected by that noble Queen, his predecessor, he would entreat of his Majesty that he would save his life, and let him die in peace, and not come to an untimely end.'

To this appeal the King returned no answer, and events soon proved that it was destined to be as unavailing as the entreaties of the Queen.

While these fruitless intercessions were being made, our trusty Sir Thomas, who still filled the office of spy-in-chief, had many misgivings about himself; he was conscious that he had not been able to extract from his prisoner anything which could form even the most flimsy pretext for his condemnation, and he was afraid that his enemies would represent him to the King as having failed in the task he had undertaken. To meet this possible accusation, he therefore busied himself in drawing up a paper for James to inspect, which he entitled, *Observations of Contrarieties in Sir Walter Raleigh's Speeches or Discourses.*

This curious paper, which contains every ground of suspicion, however trivial, which Wilson's self-interest and cunning malice could discover in his prisoner, goes rather to prove Raleigh's innocence than his guilt; but James seems not to have perceived this, for he was so highly satisfied with the document, that the next day after receiving it he read it aloud to the lords assembled in council. The last scene of this prison drama was now drawing on apace, the curtain was about to fall. On the

4th October, the Secretary Naunton enclosed to Wilson an intercepted letter of Lady Raleigh's, which he directed him to give to his prisoner in order that they might see what discoveries they could make from his answer to it. In due course, Raleigh sent back a reply, and his letter in its turn was opened by the King, and its contents communicated to the Council, and duly weighed by them, with such a total failure of the desired results, that it seemed as if it would be necessary still, after all their pains and trouble, to fall back upon the sentence passed at Winchester so many years before.

Foiled in all his attempts to discover a treason which did not exist, the cry of the King was still for death.

Meanly, and with the true spirit of a slave, he had written to the King of Spain, to know in plain English what were his Majesty's commands concerning Raleigh; and about the 15th October, 'Philip's orders,' for so they may be truly called, arrived. They were brief and to the point. 'He had received,' he said, 'through Gondemar, King James' letter. It would be more agreeable to him that the punishment of Raleigh should take place in England than in Spain; and as his offence was notorious, so its chastisement should be exemplary and immediate.'

James had no sooner received this despatch, than he set himself, with the obstinate and selfish credulity of his vain and weak nature, to execute the instructions contained in it. While holding himself up to the scorn and contempt of all succeeding ages, he

seems to have fancied that the haste he made to anticipate the wishes of Philip would not only endear him to that monarch, but much increase the admiration and respect felt for him at the courts of Vienna and Madrid.

Accordingly, he hastily recalled Sir Thomas Wilson from the Tower, and directed that Raleigh should be again committed to the charge of Sir Allan Apsley. This change seemed to Raleigh, what indeed it was, an intimation of his approaching death. His immediate execution, he concluded, was agreed upon; but, with his usual self-command, he uttered no reproaches against the King, and expressed no regret for his impending death. 'My age,' he said calmly, 'is fit for the grave. What have I to do with life? My reputation is lost; my body is weak and full of pain. Nothing can be more welcome to me than death.'

As nothing more could be gained by the further imprisonment of Lady Raleigh, she was at this juncture set at liberty; and James, assembling the Lords of the Council, gave them to know that there was no longer time to pursue what seemed a hopeless hunt after treason; Sir Walter must die, and they must report instantly upon the proper means of proceeding against him.

Our attention must now be transferred from the base and perfidious King to the Council who so obsequiously transformed themselves into the instruments of his tyranny. The case was one of great difficulty, and of that they were well aware. There was on the King's part an irrevocable and fixed

resolution, that whatever course of action was adopted must end in death, and what they had to do was to discover a legal method of accomplishing their sovereign's will. A great many tedious and revolting discussions ensued, but the result of all their consultations was, that they were forced to fall back upon the still unrevoked sentence passed at Winchester. They declared that, in their opinion, the prisoner having been then attainted of high treason, could not be judicially tried for any crime since committed; and they recommended that the King, when addressing a warrant for his execution, based upon the former sentence, to the Lieutenant of the Tower, should append to it a narrative of his late offences.

James at once proceeded to act upon this recommendation; and a writ of the Privy Seal was despatched to the judges, directing them to order the execution of the sentence passed upon Raleigh at Winchester fifteen years before. The judges, however, demurred at the duty required of them, and protested against the manifest injustice of such a course of action. They declared that no writ of the Privy Seal, that not even a warrant under the Great Seal itself to the judges of the King's Bench, could justify them in passing sentence of execution against any person after so long an interval, without at least giving him an opportunity of pleading against it. For anything they knew to the contrary, he might have a pardon to show, or might urge that he was a different person altogether from the individual condemned before; the only way they could see out

of the difficulties of the case, was to bring him to the bar by a writ of *habeas corpus*, and there demand of him what reasons he had to urge why sentence of immediate execution should not be pronounced against him. To this method the King was forced to agree. It should be but a farce, he resolved; and having delivered his final orders to the judges, he signed the warrant for execution, and commanded the prisoner to be informed that it was his royal will that he should immediately prepare for death.

This intimation was conveyed to Raleigh on the 24th October. He was then in bed, suffering from a violent attack of fever and ague; but, sick as he was, he was forced to rise and dress at eight in the morning, and was then conveyed, all shaking and trembling with the ague fit, to the King's Bench at Westminster. Having been placed at the bar, Yelverton, the Attorney-General, explained that fifteen years before the prisoner before them had been convicted of high treason and sentenced to death; that during that long interval his Majesty had mercifully abstained from ordering his execution, but that it was now his royal pleasure that the former judgment should be carried into effect.

He then read over the record of conviction, and asked the prisoner, in the usual form, what he had to say why execution against him should not proceed? Upon which Raleigh, speaking in a very weak voice, craved the indulgence of the Court on account of his recent illness. On being told that he was quite audible, he then with a painful effort summoned up all his

remaining strength, and proceeded to answer for himself.

'My lords,' he began, 'all I have to say is this, that the judgment I received to die so long since, cannot now, I hope, be strained to take away my life; for since it was his Majesty's pleasure to grant me a commission to proceed on a voyage beyond the seas, wherein I had power as marshal over the life and death of others, so under favour, I presume, I am discharged of that judgment. By that commission I gained new life and vigour, for he that hath power deputed to him over the lives of others must surely be master of his own. Under my commission, I undertook a voyage to honour my sovereign, and enrich his kingdom with gold, of the ore whereof this hand hath found and taken in Guiana; but the enterprise, notwithstanding my endeavours, had no other success than what was fatal to me, the loss of my son, and the wasting of my whole estate.'

He was then about to explain at length the causes to which he attributed his failure, when he was stopped by the Lord Chief-Justice, who told him 'that such details were foreign to the matter then in hand, and that such a commission as had been granted to him could not be held to imply the pardon of a crime so heinous as treason, and if he had nothing else to allege in his own behalf, judgment must be awarded against him.'

To this Raleigh answered, 'That if such was his lordship's opinion, all that he could do was to put himself under the mercy of the King, his Majesty

himself, as well as some others who were now present, having been of opinion that in his former trial he had received but hard measure. Had not his Majesty,' he went on to say, 'been anew exasperated against me, certain I am that I might have lived a thousand years before he would have taken advantage thereof.'

Here the Lord Chief-Justice, Sir Henry Montague, again interrupted him, but kindly, and with the air of a man who regretted what he was compelled to do. In passing sentence upon him, he also displayed much of this feeling, and exhibited in what he said a great deal both of compassion and sympathy. When he had finished with the usual words, 'Execution is awarded,' Sir Walter again with much composure addressed the Court.

'My lords,' he said, 'I desire this much favour, that I may not be cut off suddenly, but may be granted some time before my execution to settle my affairs and my mind more than they yet are; for I have something to do in discharge of my conscience, and somewhat to satisfy his Majesty in. I would beseech the favour of pen, ink, and paper, thereby to discharge myself of some trusts of a worldly nature that were put upon me. I crave not this to gain one minute of life, for now being old, sickly, disgraced, and certain to go to death, life is wearisome unto me. And now I beseech your lordships, that when I come to die, I may have leave to speak freely at my farewell. And here,' he continued, with much earnestness and solemnity, 'I take God to be my judge, before whom I shall shortly appear, that I was never disloyal to

his Majesty, which I shall justify where I shall not fear the face of any king on earth; and so I beseech you all to pray for me.'

He was then removed to the Gatehouse, and immediate preparations were made for his execution. He had been condemned in the original sentence to be hanged; but the warrant now issued bore that this ignominious form of death was dispensed with, and that he was to be beheaded.

This was on the 28th October, and James, who seemed unable to rest until he had satisfied himself that he was dead, did not think fit to comply with his last request, that he might be allowed some time to set his affairs in order before he was brought to the scaffold. On returning to prison, after sentence had been passed upon him, he was curtly informed, by the King's desire, that he must die on the following morning at nine o'clock. This cruel and indecent haste served no good purpose, and is very characteristic of the King's stolid selfishness and want of heart. As for his victim, he received the intimation with the cheerful fortitude and serenity which distinguished his last moments. As he was being conducted from the Court to the prison, some of his friends who were waiting for him began loudly to deplore his misfortunes; but he observed to them with a smile, 'that the world itself was but a prison on a larger scale, out of which some were daily selected for execution.'

He was then told that the King had rejected all the petitions presented in his favour, and had even declined to listen to the intercessions of the Queen;

but this result, which was in all probability what he expected, extorted from him no expressions of disappointment. He had now only to die, and he prepared to meet the King of Terrors with a very quiet, natural, and unaffected courage.

In the evening, Lady Raleigh came to bid him farewell, and continued with him until past midnight. He told her, among other things, that he had drawn out a paper, which he meant to leave with her, in order that all men might know what his last sentiments were, in case they should refuse him leave to speak upon the scaffold. He then began to talk about his little son Carew; but his feelings so overmastered him, that in an agony of distress he entreated her to leave him, as he had still much to do. Weeping bitterly, she then prepared to take her departure, telling him as she did so, that she had obtained the favour of disposing of his body. 'It is well, Bess,' he said with a smile, 'that thou mayest dispose of that dead which thou hadst not always the disposing of when alive.'

This affecting interview being over, he sat down and wrote out a paper which he entitled, *An Answer to some things at my Death.*

'First, I did never receive any direction from my Lord Carew to make my escape. Second, I did never name my Lord Hay and my Lord Carew to Stukely, in any other words or sense than as my honourable friends among other lords. Third, I did never show unto Stukely any letter wherein there was ten thousand pounds named, or any one pound;

only I told him that I hoped to procure the payment of his debts in his absence. Fourth, I never had a commission from the French king. Fifth, I never saw the French king's hand or seal in my life. Sixth, I never had any plot or practice with the French, directly or indirectly—nor with any other prince or state unknown to the King. Seventh, my true intent was to go to a gold mine in Guiana; it was not feigned, but it is true that such a mine there is, within three miles of St. Thome. Eighth, I never had in my thought to go from Trinidad, and leave my companies to come after to the Savage Island, as Hatby Fearn hath falsely reported. Ninth, I did not carry with me one hundred pieces; I had with me about sixty, and brought back nearly the same number. Tenth, I never spake to the Frenchman Manourie any one disloyal word or dishonourable speech of the King; nay, if I had not loved the King truly, and trusted in his goodness somewhat too much, I know that I had not now suffered death. These things are most true, as there is a God, and as I am now to appear before His tribunal seat, where I renounce all mercy and salvation if this be not truth. At my death.—WALTER RALEIGH.'

He then drew up a few notes containing the heads of the different subjects upon which he intended to address the people, if he were permitted to speak to them from the scaffold before his death, and wrote on the fly-leaf of his Bible the following lines, the last and most mournful effusion of his muse :—

'Even such is Time, that takes on trust
Our youth, our joys, our all we have,
And pays us but with age and dust;
Who in the dark and silent grave,
When we have wandered all our ways,
Shuts up the story of our days!
But from this earth, this grave, this dust,
The Lord shall raise me up, I trust.'

The last lines bespeak the tranquil confidence, the serene glow of Christian cheerfulness and hope, that peculiarly distinguished this man, whom Coke had not been ashamed falsely to characterize as an atheist. The simple and affecting verses, moreover, show how calm his mind was, and how little shaken by the near approach of what is so often to most men an object of terror.

He was not permitted the indulgence of choosing his own clergyman, but the Dean of Westminster, Dr. Tounson, received orders to attend him both in prison and on the scaffold.

From some notes on the subject which this clergyman has left behind him, it appears that early in the morning he administered to the condemned man the Holy Communion, which Raleigh received in a most reverent and becoming manner, pleading the assurance which he had of the love and forgiveness of God, and declaring that he forgave all his enemies, and especially Manourie and Sir Lewis Stukely, who had betrayed him. He spoke much and very frankly about his death, in a fearless manner, as if he made light of the fashion of it, saying to Dr. Tounson, 'that although it might appear grievous to many,

he would rather, if the choice had been his, have ended his days in this way than in a burning fever.'

Upon this, the Dean cautioned him not to be too hardy, reminding him that many of the dearest servants of God had shrunk back, and trembled a little in the view of death. Sir Walter acknowledged the truth of this advice, expressing himself, Dr. Tounson tells us, very christianly, but giving thanks at the same time to the Almighty, who had given him the strength of mind not to fear death. 'He was persuaded,' he said, 'that no man who knew God and feared Him could die with cheerfulness and courage, unless he were assured of His love and favour;' and it seemed to the Dean, who was himself a pious man, that a fixed and well-grounded religious hope was at the bottom of the remarkable courage and tranquillity which he displayed. Nothing escaped him which did not show a sweet, patient, and forgiving spirit. He did not reproach Manourie or Sir Lewis Stukely for the Judas-like part they had played. He uttered no complaints about the injustice with which he had been treated, and indulged in no disparaging remarks upon the King, the judges, or the jury who had condemned him. All he did was to assert his innocence, and to declare that he died as he had lived, loyal to the unworthy Prince who was about to sacrifice him as a means to bring about the supposed aggrandizement of his own family. 'By the course of the law,' he said to Tounson, 'I must die, yet leave must be given me to stand upon my innocency of the fact.'

His cheerfulness seemed to increase after he had received the Sacrament, and he said confidently, that he hoped the world would yet be convinced that the charges brought against him were groundless.

He then ate a hearty breakfast, and smoked, as was his custom after it, a pipe of tobacco, and on a cup of sack being brought to him he drank it. The attendant asking him if he liked it, he said, 'Yes, it is good drink, if a man might but tarry by it.' He then, with that sedulous care for his person which had always distinguished him, retired for a short time to make his last toilet. The taste for splendid apparel which had characterized him during his palmy days of court favour still remained with him, and he dressed as carefully now as if he had been still Elizabeth's Captain of the Guard, about to attend her on one of her progresses; but the dress which he chose, instead of glittering as then with jewels, was a plain mourning suit of black satin, over which was thrown a rick black wrought-velvet gown, while on his head he wore under his hat a richly embroidered night-cap.

He had been in health and strength a remarkably handsome man, and although now bent by premature old age, enfeebled by sickness, emaciated by long imprisonment and the weary bitterness of hope deferred, his appearance was still marked by the stately dignity and natural nobleness of person and bearing which James had always disliked in him.

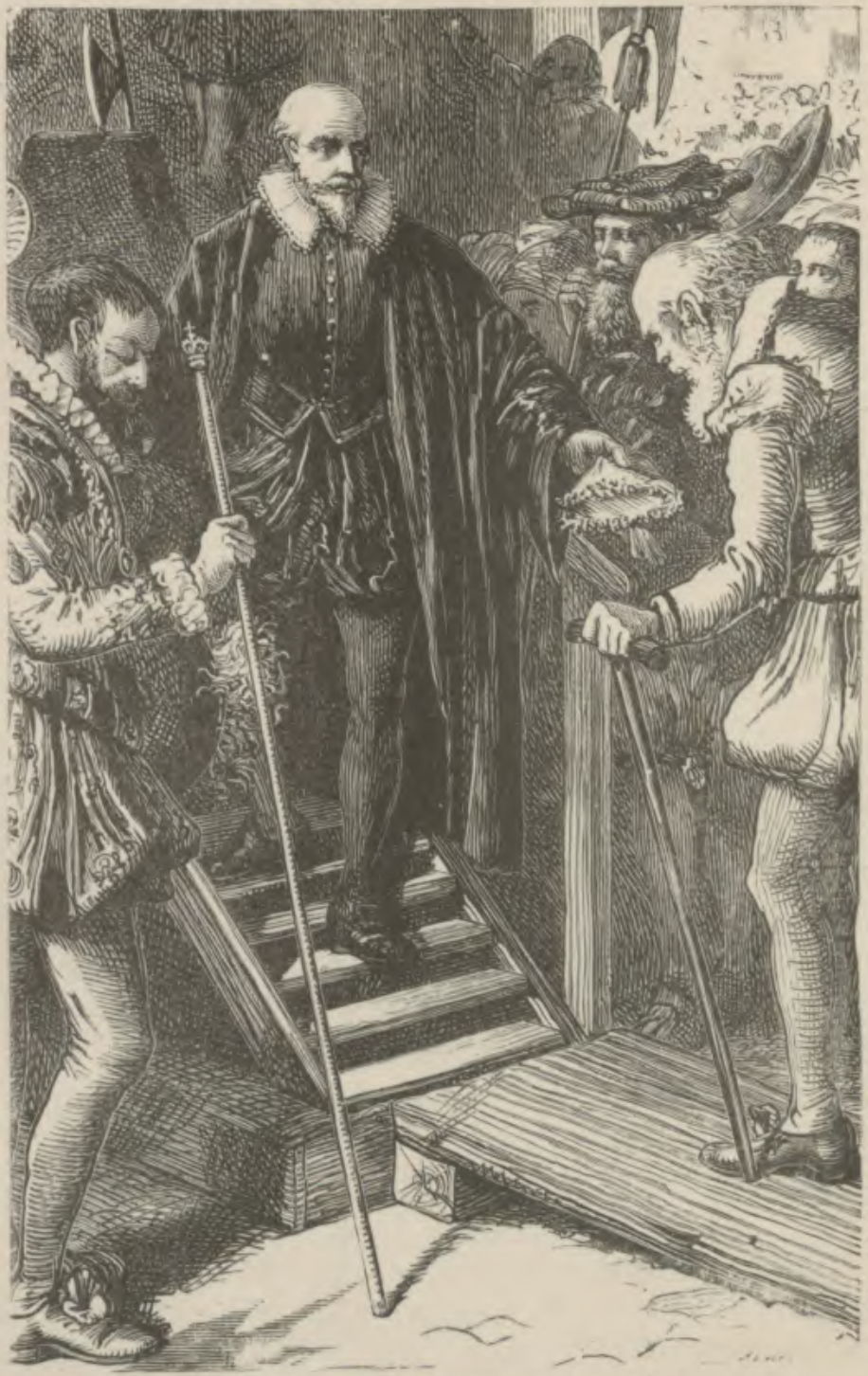
CHAPTER XIV.

'He's truly valiant who can wisely suffer.'

THE hour was now drawing very near which Raleigh had seen slowly approaching him for the long period of fifteen years, during which he had continued to live on sufferance from day to day, a doomed and unpardoned man. It was now nearly nine o'clock on the morning of Friday the 29th of October, and having intimated to the officials that he was ready, he was conducted to the place of execution, in the Old Palace Yard, by the Sheriffs of London and Dr. Tounson, the Dean of Westminster, with whom he had spent his last hours. A great crowd had assembled in the streets, and as he passed, the people pushed forward to look at him; one old man coming so near, that Raleigh turned, and asked if he wished to speak to him.

'No,' said the old man, 'I only desire to see you, and to pray to God for you.'

'I thank thee, good friend,' said Sir Walter, 'and am sorry I am in no case to return thee anything



'He reached the place of execution, and recovering a little, mounted the steps.'—AFLOAT AND ASHORE. *page* 199.

for thy good-will; but,' he added, looking at the bald head of his well-wisher, 'here, take this night-cap of mine,' at the same time taking off that which he wore under his hat, 'thou hast more need of it now than I.'

The scaffold was erected in front of the Parliament House, and the multitudes of people around it were so great, and the crowd pressed so upon the sheriffs and their prisoner, that Raleigh, who was feeble from the effects of his long sickness, was seized with faintness, and almost swooned away. At last he reached the place of execution, and recovering a little, mounted the steps and saluted with all his accustomed grace some of his friends who stood near, among whom were the Earls of Arundel, Oxford, and Northampton, and the Lords Sheffield, Doncaster, and Percy, with many others of his kindred and acquaintances.

Silence was then proclaimed, and standing up, he addressed those around him in a weak and feeble voice. 'I have had,' he said, 'for these two days past, two fits of an ague. Yesterday I was, notwithstanding, taken out of my bed in one of my fits, and whether I shall escape it this day or not I cannot tell. If, therefore, you perceive any weakness in me, I beseech you ascribe it to my sickness, rather than to myself. I thank God of His infinite goodness that He hath vouchsafed me to die in the sight of so noble an assemblage, and not in darkness, neither in the Tower, where I have suffered so much adversity and a long sickness. And I thank God that my

fever hath not taken me at this time, as I prayed God it might not.'

When he had proceeded thus far, his weakness overpowered him, and he was obliged to sit down, but after a few minutes' rest he rose somewhat invigorated, and turning to the lords who were seated in Sir Randal Crue's window, he said 'he was afraid that they would not be able to distinguish what he said, but he would,' he added, 'speak as loud as he could in order that they might hear him.'

'We will rather come down to you,' said Lord Arundel, and he accordingly came down with Lord Northampton and the Viscount Doncaster. Sir Walter then proceeded with his speech, referring from time to time to a paper which he held in his hand.

'There are two main points,' he said, 'which, as I conceive, have hastened my coming hither, of which his Majesty hath been informed against me. The first is, that I had some practice with France; and the reason which his Majesty hath to believe so was, that when I first arrived at Plymouth, I had a desire in a small barque to have passed to Rochelle, and afterwards, because the French agent came to my house in London. Now, my lords, for a man at any time to call God to witness a falsehood is a sin, a greater than which cannot well be imagined; but for a man to do so at the hour of death, when he hath no time to repent, is still more grievous and impious. Yet I do now call that great God to witness, before whom I am presently to render an account of what I say, that as I hope to see God, or to live in the

world to come, or to have any comfort or benefit by the passion of my Saviour, I did never entertain any conspiracy, nor never had any plot or intelligence with the French king, his ambassador or agent, neither did I ever see the French king's hand or seal, as some reported I had a commission from him at sea. Neither, as I have a soul to save, did I know of the French agent's coming to my house, till I saw him in the gallery.

'The other matter alleged against me was, that I had spoken disloyally and dishonourably of the King. But my accuser was a base Frenchman, a runagate fellow, one who had no dwelling, a kind of chemical impostor, whom I afterwards knew to be perfidious. For being drawn by him into the attempt of escaping at Winchester, in which I confess my hand was touched, he, being sworn to secrecy over night, revealed it the next morning. It is now no time to fear or to flatter kings,—I am now a subject of death, and have only to do with my God, in whose presence I stand, and I do now here solemnly declare I never spake disloyally or dishonestly of the King, either to this Frenchman or to any other. And it seemeth somewhat unjust that such a base fellow should be credited so far as he hath been.

'I confess I did attempt to escape, but it was only to save my life. I likewise confess that I feigned myself to be indisposed at Salisbury, but I hope it was no sin; for the prophet David did make himself a fool, and suffered spittle to fall upon his beard, to escape from the hands of his enemies, and it was not

imputed unto him as a sin. What I did was to prolong time till his Majesty came, in hopes of some commiseration from him.

'I forgive that Frenchman, and Sir Lewis Stukely also, the wrongs he hath done me, with all my heart, for I have received the Sacrament this morning of Mr. Dean, and I have forgiven all men. But that these two men are perfidious, I am bound in charity to speak, that all men may take heed of them. Sir Lewis, my keeper and kinsman, hath affirmed that I told him my Lord Carew and my Lord Doncaster here had advised me to escape; but I protest before God I never told him any such thing, neither did these lords advise me to any such matter. It is not likely I should acquaint two Privy Councillors of my plan of escape, nor that I should tell him, my keeper, it was their advice; neither was there any reason to tell it to him, or that he should report it, for it is well known he left me six, eight, or ten days together alone, to go where I chose, whilst he rode about the country. He further accused me of having shown him a letter, in which I promised him ten thousand pounds if he assisted me to escape. But this is another falsehood; had I then been possessed of ten, or even of one thousand pounds, I could have made my peace better than by bestowing it on Stukely. The only thing I showed him was a letter, wherein it was promised that order should be taken for the payment of his debts, should he consent to accompany me. One further injury he did me, which, although it may appear a slight one, affects me

sensibly. In our journey to London we lodged at Sir Edward Parham's, an ancient friend of mine, whose lady is my cousin-german; and there he not only gave out, but himself told me, he thought I had some dram of poison given me, to which I answered that I feared no such thing, and bade him dismiss the thought, as I was well assured of those in the house. Thus far have I said on this matter, because I know it grieves the gentleman that such a conceit should be held; and now I take my leave of Sir Lewis. God is not only a God of revenge, but also of mercy; and I pray God to forgive him, as I myself hope to be forgiven.'

He then looked at the paper he held in his hand, and after having refreshed his memory proceeded: 'It was told the King that I was brought by force into England, and that when the voyage miscarried I had no intention to return again; yet Captain Parker, Mr. Fresham, Mr. Leck, and divers others, who knew how I was treated, can give witness to the contrary.

'It was reported that I meant not to go to Guiana at all, and that I knew not of any mine, nor intended any such matter; but only to get my liberty, which I had not the good sense to keep. But I solemnly declare it was my full intent to go for gold, for the benefit of his Majesty, myself, and those who went with me; but all was crossed and undone by Keymis, who, seeing my son slain and myself unpardoned, would not discover the head of the mine, but afterwards slew himself.' He then made a pause, and

turning to the Earl of Arundel, said: 'My lord, you being in the gallery of my ship at my departure, I remember you took me by the hand, and said you would request one thing of me, which was, whether I made a good voyage or a bad, that I would return again into England, which I then promised. I gave you my faith I would, and so I have.'

'You did so,' said the Earl; 'it is quite true, and they were the last words I spoke to you.'

'That is enough,' said Raleigh; 'I am glad your lordship is here to justify my words.'

He then went on to say: 'Another slander has been raised against me, that I had a design to go away from my ship's company, and leave them at Guiana; but there are a great many worthy men who were always with me, as my sergeant-major, and others, naming them as he went on, that knew such was never my intention. It was said, too, that I stinted them of fresh water; to which I answer, that every one was then, as they always must be in a ship, served by measure, and not according to their appetite, a course which all seamen know must be used amongst them; and to this strait we were then driven.

'These are the principal things upon which I thought it good to speak. Yet before I make an end, let me borrow yet further a little time of Mr. Sheriff, to answer an accusation laid against me through the jealousy of the people, which hath made my heart bleed. It is said that I was a prosecutor of the death of the Earl of Essex, and stood in a

window over against him when he suffered, and puffed out tobacco in disdain of him. But I take God to witness that I had no hand in his blood, and was none of those that procured his death. My lord of Essex did not see my face at the time of his death, for I had retired far off into the armoury, where I indeed saw him, and shed tears for him, but he saw not me. It is most true I was of a contrary faction, and helped to pluck him down; but I knew my lord of Essex to be a noble gentleman, and always believed it would have been better for me that his life had been preserved; for after his fall I got the hatred of those that wished me well before, and those who set me against him set themselves afterwards against me, and were my greatest enemies. Nay, I will further say, that my soul hath many times grieved that I was not nearer to him when he suffered; because, as I understood afterwards, he asked for me at his death, and desired to have been reconciled to me. And now I entreat that you all will join with me in prayer to that great God of Heaven whom I have grievously offended, that He will of His almighty goodness extend to me forgiveness, being a man full of all vanity, and one who hath lived a sinful life in such callings as have been most inducing to it; for I have been a soldier, a sailor, and a courtier, all of them courses of wickedness and vice. But I trust He will not only cast away my sins from me, but will receive me into everlasting life; and so, having made my peace with God, I bid you all heartily farewell.'

In spite of his great weakness, he delivered this

speech with much of his old vigour and animation, and when he had finished it, turned to the lords who were standing near him; and having embraced them and others of his friends, he said to Lord Arundel, 'I beseech you, my lord, use your influence with the King, that no defamatory writing be published against me after I am dead.'

Dr. Tounson then asked him in what faith he was about to die, to which he answered, 'That he died in the faith of the Church of England, in which he had lived, hoping to be saved, and to have his sins washed away by the precious blood and merits of our Saviour Jesus Christ.'

The morning was cold and frosty, and the Sheriff, after Sir Walter had answered the Dean's question, courteously offered to bring him down from the scaffold, that he might warm himself at the fire before he engaged in his last devotions.

This kindness, however, Raleigh refused. 'Good Mr. Sheriff,' he said, 'let us rather despatch, for within this quarter of an hour my ague will come upon me, and if I be not dead before that, mine enemies will say I quake for fear.'

He then knelt down and prayed aloud, after which, rising and clasping his hands, he exclaimed, 'Now I am going to God!'

The Sheriff then ordered the scaffold to be cleared, and Sir Walter, throwing off his gown and doublet, asked the executioner to show him the axe. It was an unusual request, and the man hesitated; but the prisoner reiterated his entreaty, saying earnestly, 'I

prithee, let me see it; dost thou think I am afraid of it?'

It was then given to him, and taking it up he kissed the blade, and running his finger slightly along the edge, he said to the Sheriff, ''Tis a sharp medicine, but a sound cure for all diseases.'

He then walked to the corner of the scaffold, and again kneeling down, requested the people to pray for him, and remained for some time himself absorbed in silent devotion. After which he rose, and approaching the block, examined it carefully, and lying down, fitted his neck to it, so as to choose for himself the easiest and most becoming attitude. He then rose again, and said that he was ready. Upon which the executioner, coming forward, knelt down before him, and asked him to forgive him. 'You have my hearty forgiveness,' said Raleigh, laying his hand on his shoulder; he then charged him not to strike until he gave the signal, and when he did so, to fear nothing, but strike home.

He then lay down, and placed his head on the block, but was asked to alter his position, so that his face might look to the east. With this direction he complied, muttering, however, as he did so, 'that it mattered little how the head lay, provided the heart were right.'

To this succeeded a short but awful pause, during which each man in the vast crowd held his breath with awe, and it could be seen by the motion of his hands and lips that Raleigh was again engaged in prayer. He then, as he had said he would, gave the

signal for death; but the executioner, less cool than his victim, was too agitated to strike, upon which Sir Walter raised his head, and said aloud, 'What! dost thou fear? Strike, man.'

Thus admonished, the faltering official raised the axe and swung it round his shoulders, the blade descended, and at two strokes the head was severed from the body, and the executioner lifting it, held it up to the people with the hackneyed words, 'This is the head of a traitor.'

Thus perished, in his sixty-fifth year, one of the most remarkable and accomplished Englishmen of his day; a man of varied and versatile gifts, an accomplished courtier, a successful captain both by land and sea, an erudite scholar, a profound thinker, and an eloquent author.

So keen was his love of science and natural history, that even in his last fatal voyage, when he had difficulties of every kind to contend with, when he was worn out with sickness, harassed with disappointment, and almost heart-broken with grief and mortification, he yet found it possible to devote a portion of his time to the objects of interest around him. Amid hunger and weariness, and every conceivable kind of hardship, he managed to land at intervals, in order to examine the different plants and trees that grew upon the banks of the Orinoco.

Shut up in the Tower, debarred from the exercise of those tastes which had made Sherborne an earthly paradise, his love of experiment and chemical research helped to while away many a weary hour of

hopeless imprisonment. He did not discover, indeed, the lost art by which the philosophers of the Rosicrucian school vainly toiled to transmute the baser metals into gold. The copper and zinc which he threw into his retort remained zinc and copper still; no marvellous change took place, transmuting them into ingots of gold wherewith to appease the wrath of James. Like the mines of Guiana, his furnace was barren of all such results; but homelier discoveries from time to time rewarded his labours, and a few days before his death he imparted to his gaoler, Sir Thomas Wilson, the secret of a machine which he had constructed for turning salt water into fresh.

Some historians have taken an unfavourable view of his character; and there is no doubt that it was darkened by many shades of inconsistency, but there was nothing petty or mean about him. His worst faults flowed from ambition, and from the exuberance of genius and power that made it a necessity for him to aspire.

To us he seems at times credulous, because in the infancy of geographical science, the glow and fire of his fervid imagination painted the strange unknown worlds of which he went in quest with gorgeous, many-hued tints of glory, which the sober realities of later discoveries dispelled.

To his contemporaries he seemed at times an avaricious, self-seeking man, fond of display, and not over scrupulous about the source from which he derived the diamonds and rubies that flashed and shone on his stately person; but even his acquisitive-

ness was a thing apart and distinct from the vulgar desire to obtain and hoard money. When he lay in wait on the open seas for Philip's richly-laden argosies, and reft from him the gold won by the toil and tortures of his Indian slaves, it was less from a sordid lust for gain, than from a patriot's desire to advance his country and gratify his Queen by filling her ports with the treasure-laden carracks of the Indies and Peru. That he was possessed by a restless, unsatisfied ambition there can be no doubt, but his ambition, like his love of money, was not a purely selfish or personal failing. He was ambitious for his country: he longed to make England great, to found for her a naval supremacy, to rear for her in the New World a vast empire, to protect and extend her commerce, to secure her against foreign invasion; and all that, it seemed to him, could only be done by combating the overgrown power of Spain.

It was his misfortune, rather than his fault, that the master whom it was latterly his fate to serve was a vain, weak pedant, who neither cared for nor understood any of these things. The King's views of statecraft, like his strangely complex character, were not without a certain share of plausibility and common sense, but they wanted reach and grasp; they were shallow, petty, selfish, beginning and ending with the aggrandizement of himself and his family. The most important event in the world to him seemed the Spanish marriage. For many a busy year he toiled to win the hand of the Infanta for his son. For this end he wheedled and flattered, and tried in his poor

way to cajole Gondemar, who was a thousand times his intellectual superior; and when the insatiable Moloch of Spanish revenge demanded blood, he did not hesitate, as we have seen, to lay Raleigh's noble head a bleeding sacrifice at the shrine of the Spanish Princess. All these efforts were in vain; Buckingham and Charles returned from Madrid to London without the bride so many sacrifices had been made to win; and the only result of the King's toil and care was the renewal of war between Spain and England.

Raleigh was dead. His once great possessions had gone to enrich first one favourite and then another, and from the wreck of his fortunes nothing remained to support his helpless wife and child. An affecting letter from Lady Raleigh has been preserved, in which she entreats Lady Carew to use her influence with Sir Thomas Wilson, that her late husband's library might at least be spared to her,—'It being,' she says, 'all the lands or heritage he has left to his poor child.'

This child, born in a prison, and reared in poverty and misfortune, grew up so strikingly like Sir Walter, that when he was presented by one of his father's friends to the King, James shuddered, and turning away from him, muttered peevishly, 'He looks like his father's ghost; I cannot bear to see him.'

This hint was enough; his kinsman, Lord Pembroke, who had introduced him at court in the vain hope that James might be disposed to atone to the son for the injustice done to the father, withdrew him

at once, and considered it prudent to send him abroad, where he remained until the death of the King and the accession of Charles I.

Of all Raleigh's discoveries, the one whose effects have been most widespread and enduring is perhaps his discovery of tobacco, with the properties and uses of which he became acquainted in Virginia. For a time he indulged his love for it in secret, but one day at Sherborne, while smoking in his study, he called for a glass of ale, which was brought to him by a servant, who, seeing smoke issuing from his mouth, supposed his master to be on fire, and instead of placing the flagon he carried on the table, dashed the contents of it full in the face of Sir Walter, in the hope of thereby extinguishing the flames which were consuming him. This incident occurred in the palmy days of good Queen Bess. James, who disliked tobacco almost as much as he hated its discoverer, published a pamphlet against the use of it, which he called a counterblast,—a blast which, however strong he might consider it, proved all too weak to blow tobacco out of England. The memory of Raleigh, dear to many, was cherished with the utmost affection by Lady Raleigh and her son, who continued to mourn for him as long as they lived. His body, which was given up to his widow, she caused to be buried near the high altar of St. Margaret's Church in Westminster, but she did not venture to raise any monument to mark the spot. His head, which she caused to be embalmed and enclosed in a case, she kept constantly near her, and at her own death, which took place

twenty-nine years afterwards, she bequeathed it as her most precious heirloom to her son.

Carew Raleigh passed through life a quiet, unobtrusive, unprosperous man. The Nemesis of misfortune, which had frowned beside his cradle, continued to dog his steps through life. Some of his powerful friends made intercession with Charles I. that the lands of Sherborne which had belonged to his father should be restored to him, but Charles, although he admitted the justice of the claim, declared his utter inability to do what was asked of him, and Carew Raleigh died as he had lived, poor and obscure, leaving directions in his will that the head of his illustrious father should be buried with him.

Raleigh suffered on the 29th October 1618, and immediately after his death James caused a declaration to be published, setting forth his motives for putting Sir Walter Raleigh to death.

What these were, and how miserably they failed to secure the Spanish alliance which he had in view, are now palpably clear and transparent to all. Weak and vain, cruel and tyrannical, James, unlike his victim, died unwept and almost alone, leaving behind him a harvest of evil resulting from misgovernment, the bitter fruits of which were reaped by his unfortunate son.

'THREE RULES OF CONDUCT.

BY SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

'AMONGST all other things of the world, take care of thy estate, which thou shalt ever preserve if thou observe three things:—First, that thou know what thou hast, what everything is worth that thou hast, and to see that thou art not wasted by thy servants and officers. The second is, that thou never spend anything before thou have it, for borrowing is the canker and death of every man's estate. The third is, that thou suffer not thyself to be wounded for other men's faults, and scourged for other men's offences, which is the surety for another, for thereby millions of men have been beggared and destroyed, paying the reckoning of other men's riot, and the charge of other men's folly and prodigality. If thou smart, smart for thine own sins, and above all things, be not made an ass to carry the burdens of other men; if any friend desire thee to be his surety, give him a part of what thou hast to spare; if he press thee further, he is not thy friend at all, for friendship rather chooseth harm to itself than offereth it. If thou be bound for a stranger, thou art a fool; if for a merchant, thou puttest thy estate to swim; if for a

churchman, he hath no inheritance; if for a lawyer, he will find an invasion by a word or syllable to abuse thee; if for a poor man, thou must pay it thyself; if for a rich man, he needs not; therefore for suretyship, as from a manslayer or enchanter, bless thyself, for the best profit and return will be this, that if thou force for whom thou art bound to pay it himself, he will become thy enemy; if thou use to pay it thyself, thou wilt be a beggar; and believe thy father in this, and print it in thy thought, that what virtue soever thou hast, be it never so manifold, if thou be poor withal, thou and thy qualities shall be despised. Besides, poverty is ofttimes sent as a curse of God; it is a shame amongst men, an imprisonment of the mind, a vexation of every worthy spirit; thou shalt neither help thyself nor others; thou shalt drown thee in all thy virtues, having no means to show them; thou shalt be a burden and an eyesore to thy friends; every man will fear thy company; thou shalt be driven basely to beg and depend on others, to flatter unworthy men, to make dishonest shifts; and, to conclude, poverty provokes a man to do infamous and detested deeds. Let no vanity, therefore, or persuasion, draw thee to that worst of worldly miseries.

'If thou be rich, it will give thee pleasure in health, comfort in sickness, keep thy mind and body free, save thee from many perils, relieve thee in thy elder years, relieve the poor and thy honest friends, and give means to thy posterity to live, and defend themselves and thine own fame. Where it is said in the Proverbs, that "he shall be sore vexed that is

surety for a stranger, and he that hateth suretyship is sure;" it is further said, "The poor is hated even of his own neighbour, but the rich have many friends." Lend not to him that is mightier than thyself for if thou lendest him, count it but lost; be not surety above thy power, for if thou be surety, think to pay it.'

THE END.

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