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Raleigh and His  
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SIR WALTER RALEIGH AND HIS TIME {1}

by Charles Kingsley

‘Truth is stranger than fiction.’ A trite remark. We all say it again and again: but how few of us believe it! How few of us, when we read the history of heroical times and heroical men, take the story simply as it stands! On the contrary, we try to explain it away; to prove it all not to have been so very wonderful; to impute accident, circumstance, mean and commonplace motives; to lower every story down to the level of our own littleness, or what we (unjustly to ourselves and to the God who is near us all) choose to consider our level; to rationalise away all the wonders, till we make them at last impossible, and give up caring to believe them; and prove to our own melancholy satisfaction that Alexander conquered the world with a pin, in his sleep, by accident.

And yet in this mood, as in most, there is a sort of left-handed truth involved. These heroes are not so far removed from us after all. They were men of like passions with ourselves, with the same flesh about them, the same spirit within them, the same world outside, the same devil beneath, the same God above. They and their deeds were not so very wonderful. Every child who is born into the world is just as wonderful, and, for aught we know, might, ‘mutatis mutandis, do just as wonderful deeds. If accident and circumstance helped them, the same may help us: have helped us, if we will look back down our years, far more than we have made use of.

They were men, certainly, very much of our own level: but may we not put that level somewhat too low? They were certainly not what we are; for if they had been, they would have done no more than we: but is not a man’s real level not what he is, but what he can be, and therefore ought to be? No doubt they were compact of good and evil, just as we: but so was David, no man more; though a more heroical personage (save One) appears not in all human records but may not the secret of their success have been that, on the whole (though they found it a sore battle), they refused the evil and chose the good?

It is true, again, that their great deeds may be more or less explained, attributed



to laws, rationalised: but is explaining always explaining away? Is it to degrade a thing to attribute it to a law? And do you do anything more by 'rationalising' men's deeds than prove that they were rational men; men who saw certain fixed laws, and obeyed them, and succeeded thereby, according to the Baconian apophthegm, that nature is conquered by obeying her?

But what laws?

To that question, perhaps, the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews will give the best answer, where it says, that by faith were done all the truly great deeds, and by faith lived all the truly great men who have ever appeared on earth.

There are, of course, higher and lower degrees of this faith; its object is one more or less worthy: but it is in all cases the belief in certain unseen eternal facts, by keeping true to which a man must in the long run succeed. Must; because he is more or less in harmony with heaven, and earth, and the Maker thereof, and has therefore fighting on his side a great portion of the universe; perhaps the whole; for as he who breaks one commandment of the law is guilty of the whole, because he denies the fount of all law, so he who with his whole soul keeps one commandment of it is likely to be in harmony with the whole, because he testifies of the fount of all law.

I shall devote a few pages to the story of an old hero, of a man of like passions with ourselves; of one who had the most intense and awful sense of the unseen laws, and succeeded mightily thereby; of one who had hard struggles with a flesh and blood which made him at times forget those laws, and failed mightily thereby; of one whom God so loved that He caused each slightest sin, as with David, to bring its own punishment with it, that while the flesh was delivered over to Satan, the man himself might be saved in the Day of the Lord; of one, finally, of whom nine hundred and ninety-nine men out of a thousand may say, 'I have done worse deeds than he: but I have never done as good ones.'

In a poor farmhouse among the pleasant valleys of South Devon, among the white apple-orchards and the rich water-meadows, and the red fallows and red kine, in the year of grace 1552, a boy was born, as beautiful as day, and christened Walter Raleigh. His father was a gentleman of ancient blood: few older in the land: but, impoverished, he had settled down upon the wreck of his estate, in that poor farmhouse. No record of him now remains; but he must have been a man worth knowing and worth loving, or he would not have won the wife he did. She was a Champernoun, proudest of Norman squires, and could probably boast of having in her veins the blood of Courtneys, Emperors of Byzant. She had been the wife of the famous knight Sir Otho Gilbert, and lady of Compton Castle, and had borne him three brave sons, John, Humphrey, and Adrian; all three destined to win knighthood also in due time, and the two latter already giving promises, which they well fulfilled, of becoming most remarkable men of their time. And yet the fair Champernoun, at her husband's death, had chosen to wed Mr. Raleigh, and share life with him in the little farmhouse at Hayes. She must have been a grand woman, if the law holds true that great men always have great mothers; an especially grand woman, indeed; for few can boast of having borne to two different husbands such sons as she bore. No record, as far as we know, remains of her; nor of her boy's early years. One can imagine them, nevertheless.

Just as he awakes to consciousness, the Smithfield fires are extinguished. He can recollect, perhaps, hearing of the burning of the Exeter martyrs: and he does not forget it; no one forgot or dared forget it in those days. He is brought up in the simple and manly, yet high-bred ways of English gentlemen in the times of 'an old courtier of the Queen's.' His two elder half-brothers also, living some thirty miles away, in the quaint and gloomy towers of Compton Castle, amid the apple-orchards of Torbay, are men as noble as ever formed a young lad's taste. Humphrey and Adrian Gilbert, who afterwards, both of them, rise to knighthood, are—what are they not?—soldiers, scholars, Christians, discoverers and 'planters' of foreign lands, geographers, alchemists, miners, Platonical philosophers; many-sided, high-minded men, not without fantastic enthusiasm; living heroic lives, and destined, one of them, to die a heroic death. From them Raleigh's fancy has been fired, and his appetite for learning quickened, while he is yet a daring boy, fishing in the gray trout-brooks, or going up with his father to

the Dartmoor hills to hunt the deer with hound and horn, amid the wooded gorges of Holne, or over the dreary downs of Hartland Warren, and the cloud-capt thickets of Cator's Beam, and looking down from thence upon the far blue southern sea, wondering when he shall sail thereon, to fight the Spaniard, and discover, like Columbus, some fairyland of gold and gems.

For before this boy's mind, as before all intense English minds of that day, rise, from the first, three fixed ideas, which yet are but one—the Pope, the Spaniard, and America.

The two first are the sworn and internecine enemies (whether they pretend a formal peace or not) of Law and Freedom, Bible and Queen, and all that makes an Englishman's life dear to him. Are they not the incarnations of Antichrist? Their Moloch sacrifices flame through all lands. The earth groans because of them, and refuses to cover the blood of her slain. And America is the new world of boundless wonder and beauty, wealth and fertility, to which these two evil powers arrogate an exclusive and divine right; and God has delivered it into their hands; and they have done evil therein with all their might, till the story of their greed and cruelty rings through all earth and heaven. Is this the will of God? Will he not avenge for these things, as surely as he is the Lord who executeth justice and judgment in the earth?

These are the young boy's thoughts. These were his thoughts for sixty-six eventful years. In whatsoever else he wavered, he never wavered in that creed. He learnt it in his boyhood, while he read 'Fox's Martyrs' beside his mother's knee. He learnt it as a lad, when he saw his neighbours Hawkins and Drake changed by Spanish tyranny and treachery from peaceful merchantmen into fierce scourges of God. He learnt it scholastically, from fathers and divines, as an Oxford scholar, in days when Oxford was a Protestant indeed, in whom there was no guile. He learnt it when he went over, at seventeen years old, with his gallant kinsman Henry Champernoun, and his band of a hundred gentlemen volunteers, to flesh his maiden sword in behalf of the persecuted French Protestants. He learnt it as he listened to the shrieks of the San Bartholomew; he

learnt it as he watched the dragonnades, the tortures, the massacres of the Netherlands, and fought manfully under Norris in behalf of those victims of 'the Pope and Spain.' He preached it in far stronger and wiser words than I can express it for him, in that noble tract of 1591, on Sir Richard Grenville's death at the Azores—a Tyrtæan trumpet-blast such as has seldom rung in human ears; he discussed it like a cool statesman in his pamphlet of 1596, on 'A War with Spain.'

He sacrificed for it the last hopes of his old age, the wreck of his fortunes, his just recovered liberty; and he died with the old God's battle-cry upon his lips, when it awoke no response from the hearts of a coward, profligate, and unbelieving generation. This is the background, the keynote of the man's whole life. If we lose the recollection of it, and content ourselves by slurring it over in the last pages of his biography with some half-sneer about his putting, like the rest of Elizabeth's old admirals, 'the Spaniard, the Pope, and the Devil' in the same category, then we shall understand very little about Raleigh; though, of course, we shall save ourselves the trouble of pronouncing as to whether the Spaniard and the Pope were really in the same category as the devil; or, indeed, which might be equally puzzling to a good many historians of the last century and a half, whether there be any devil at all.

The books which I have chosen to head this review are all of them more or less good, with one exception, and that is Bishop Goodman's Memoirs, on which much stress has been lately laid, as throwing light on various passages of Raleigh, Essex, Cecil, and James's lives.

Having read it carefully, I must say plainly, that I think the book an altogether foolish, pedantic, and untrustworthy book, without any power of insight or gleam of reason; without even the care to be self-consistent; having but one object, the whitewashing of James, and of every noble lord whom the bishop has ever known: but in whitewashing each, the poor old flunkey so bespatters all the rest of his pets, that when the work is done, the whole party look, if possible, rather dirtier than before. And so I leave Bishop Goodman.

Mr. Fraser Tytler's book is well known; and it is on the whole a good one;

because he really loves and admires the man of whom he writes: but he is sometimes careless as to authorities, and too often makes the wish father to the thought. Moreover, he has the usual sentiment about Mary Queen of Scots, and the usual scandal about Elizabeth, which is simply anathema; and which prevents his really seeing the time in which Raleigh lived, and the element in which he moved. This sort of talk is happily dying out just now; but no one can approach the history of the Elizabethan age (perhaps of any age) without finding that truth is all but buried under mountains of dirt and chaff—an Aegaeon stable, which, perhaps, will never be swept clean.

Yet I have seen, with great delight, several attempts toward removal of the said superstratum of dirt and chaff from the Elizabethan histories, in several articles, all evidently from the same pen (and that one, more perfectly master of English prose than any man living), in the ‘Westminster Review’ and ‘Fraser’s Magazine.’ {2}

Sir Robert Schomburgk’s edition of the Guiana Voyage contains an excellent Life of Raleigh, perhaps the best yet written; of which I only complain, when it gives in to the stock-charges against Raleigh, as it were at second-hand, and just because they are stock-charges, and when, too, the illustrious editor (unable to conceal his admiration of a discoverer in many points so like himself) takes all through an apologetic tone of ‘Please don’t laugh at me. I daresay it is very foolish; but I can’t help loving the man.’

Mr. Napier’s little book is a reprint of two ‘Edinburgh Review’

articles on Bacon and Raleigh. The first, a learned statement of facts in answer to some unwisdom of a ‘Quarterly’ reviewer (possibly an Oxford Aristotelian; for ‘we think we do know that sweet Roman hand’). It is clear, accurate, convincing, complete. There is no more to be said about the matter, save that facts are stubborn things.

The article on Raleigh is very valuable; first, because Mr. Napier has had access to many documents unknown to former biographers; and next, because he clears

Raleigh completely from the old imputation of deceit about the Guiana mine, as well as of other minor charges.

With his general opinion of Raleigh's last and fatal Guiana voyage, I have the misfortune to differ from him *toto coelo*, on the strength of the very documents which he quotes. But Mr. Napier is always careful, always temperate, and always just, except where he, as I think, does not enter into the feelings of the man whom he is analysing. Let readers buy the book (it will tell them a hundred things they do not know) and be judge between Mr. Napier and me.

In the meanwhile, one cannot help watching with a smile how good old Time's scrubbing-brush, which clears away paint and whitewash from church pillars, does the same by such characters as Raleigh's. After each fresh examination, some fresh count in the hundred-headed indictment breaks down. The truth is, that as people begin to believe more in nobleness, and to gird up their loins to the doing of noble deeds, they discover more nobleness in others. Raleigh's character was in its lowest nadir in the days of Voltaire and Hume.

What shame to him? For so were more sacred characters than his.

Shall the disciple be above his master? especially when that disciple was but too inconsistent, and gave occasion to the uncircumcised to blaspheme? But Cayley, after a few years, refutes triumphantly Hume's silly slanders. He is a stupid writer: but he has sense enough, being patient, honest, and loving, to do that.

Mr. Fraser Tytler shovels away a little more of the dirt-heap; Mr.

Napier clears him (for which we owe him many thanks), by simple statement of facts, from the charge of having deserted and neglected his Virginia colonists; Humboldt and Schomburgk clear him from the charge of having lied about Guiana; and so on; each successive writer giving in generally on merest hearsay to the general complaint against him, either from fear of running counter to big names, or from mere laziness, and yet absolving him from that particular charge of which his own knowledge enables him to judge. In the trust that I may be able to clear him from a few more charges, I write these pages, premising that I do not profess to have access to any new and recondite documents. I merely take

the broad facts of the story from documents open to all; and comment on them as every man should wish his own life to be commented on.

But I do so on a method which I cannot give up; and that is the Bible method. I say boldly that historians have hitherto failed in understanding not only Raleigh and Elizabeth, but nine-tenths of the persons and facts in his day, because they will not judge them by the canons which the Bible lays down—by which I mean not only the New Testament but the Old, which, as English Churchmen say, and Scotch Presbyterians have ere now testified with sacred blood, is ‘not contrary to the New.’

Mr. Napier has a passage about Raleigh for which I am sorry, coming as it does from a countryman of John Knox. ‘Society, it would seem, was yet in a state in which such a man could seriously plead, that the madness he feigned was justified’ (his last word is unfair, for Raleigh only hopes that it is no sin) ‘by the example of David, King of Israel.’ What a shocking state of society when men actually believed their Bibles, not too little, but too much. For my part, I think that if poor dear Raleigh had considered the example of David a little more closely, he need never have feigned madness at all; and that his error lay quite in an opposite direction from looking on the Bible heroes, David especially, as too sure models. At all events, let us try Raleigh by the very scriptural standard which he himself lays down, not merely in this case unwisely, but in his ‘History of the World’ more wisely than any historian whom I have ever read; and say, ‘Judged as the Bible taught our Puritan forefathers to judge every man, the character is intelligible enough; tragic, but noble and triumphant: judged as men have been judged in history for the last hundred years, by hardly any canon save those of the private judgment, which philosophic cant, maudlin sentimentality, or fear of public opinion, may happen to have forged, the man is a phenomenon, only less confused, abnormal, suspicious than his biographers’

notions about him.’ Again I say, I have not solved the problem: but it will be enough if I make some think it both soluble and worth solving. Let us look round, then, and see into what sort of a country, into what sort of a world, the young adventurer is going forth, at seventeen years of age, to seek his fortune.

Born in 1552, his young life has sprung up and grown with the young life of England. The earliest fact, perhaps, which he can recollect is the flash of joy on every face which proclaims that Mary Tudor is dead, and Elizabeth reigns at last. As he grows, the young man sees all the hope and adoration of the English people centre in that wondrous maid, and his own centre in her likewise. He had been base had he been otherwise. She comes to the throne with such a prestige as never sovereign came since the days when Isaiah sang his paeon over young Hezekiah's accession. Young, learned, witty, beautiful (as with such a father and mother she could not help being), with an expression of countenance remarkable (I speak of those early days) rather for its tenderness and intellectual depth than its strength, she comes forward as the champion of the Reformed Faith, the interpretress of the will and conscience of the people of England—

herself persecuted all but to the death, and purified by affliction, like gold tried in the fire. She gathers round her, one by one, young men of promise, and trains them herself to their work. And they fulfil it, and serve her, and grow gray-headed in her service, working as faithfully, as righteously, as patriotically, as men ever worked on earth. They are her 'favourites'; because they are men who deserve favour; men who count not their own lives dear to themselves for the sake of the queen and of that commonweal which their hearts and reasons tell them is one with her. They are still men, though; and some of them have their grudgings and envyings against each other: she keeps the balance even between them, on the whole, skilfully, gently, justly, in spite of weaknesses and prejudices, without which she had been more than human. Some have their conceited hopes of marrying her, becoming her masters. She rebukes and pardons. 'Out of the dust I took you, sir! go and do your duty, humbly and rationally, henceforth, or into the dust I trample you again!' And they reconsider themselves, and obey. But many, or most of them, are new men, country gentlemen, and younger sons. She will follow her father's plan, of keeping down the overgrown feudal princes, who, though brought low by the wars of the Roses, are still strong enough to throw everything into confusion by resisting at once the Crown and Commons. Proud nobles reply by rebellion, come down southwards with ignorant Popish henchmen at their backs; will restore Popery, marry the Queen of Scots, make the middle class and the majority submit to the feudal lords and the minority. Elizabeth, with her 'aristocracy of genius,' is too strong for them: the people's heart is with her, and not with dukes. Each mine only blows up its diggers; and there are many dry eyes at their ruin. Her people



ask her to marry. She answers gently, proudly, eloquently: 'She is married—the people of England is her husband. She has vowed it.' And yet there is a tone of sadness in that great speech. Her woman's heart yearns after love, after children; after a strong bosom on which to repose that weary head. More than once she is ready to give way. But she knows that it must not be. She has her reward.

'Whosoever gives up husband or child for my sake and the gospel's, shall receive them back a hundredfold in this present life,' as Elizabeth does. Her reward is an adoration from high and low, which is to us now inexplicable, impossible, overstrained, which was not so then.

For the whole nation is in a mood of exaltation; England is fairyland; the times are the last days—strange, terrible, and glorious. At home are Jesuits plotting; dark, crooked-pathed, going up and down in all manner of disguises, doing the devil's work if men ever did it; trying to sow discord between man and man, class and class; putting out books full of filthy calumnies, declaring the queen illegitimate, excommunicate, a usurper; English law null, and all state appointments void, by virtue of a certain 'Bull'; and calling on the subjects to rebellion and assassination, even on the bedchamber—woman to do to her 'as Judith did to Holofernes.' She answers by calm contempt. Now and then Burleigh and Walsingham catch some of the rogues, and they meet their deserts; but she for the most part lets them have their way. God is on her side, and she will not fear what man can do to her.

Abroad, the sky is dark and wild, and yet full of fantastic splendour. Spain stands strong and awful, a rising world-tyranny, with its dark-souled Cortezes and Pizarros, Alvas, Don Johns, and Parmas, men whose path is like the lava stream; who go forth slaying and to slay, in the name of their gods, like those old Assyrian conquerors on the walls of Nineveh, with tutelary genii flying above their heads, mingled with the eagles who trail the entrails of the slain. By conquest, intermarriage, or intrigue, she has made all the southern nations her vassals or her tools; close to our own shores, the Netherlands are struggling vainly for their liberties; abroad, the Western Islands, and the whole trade of Africa and India, will in a few years be hers. And already the Pope, whose 'most Catholic' and faithful servant she is, has repaid her services in the cause of

darkness by the gift of the whole New World—a gift which she has claimed by cruelties and massacres unexampled since the days of Timour and Zinghis Khan. There she spreads and spreads, as Drake found her picture in the Government House at St. Domingo, the horse leaping through the globe, and underneath, Non sufficit orbis. Who shall withstand her, armed as she is with the three-edged sword of Antichrist—superstition, strength, and gold?

English merchantmen, longing for some share in the riches of the New World, go out to trade in Guinea, in the Azores, in New Spain: and are answered by shot and steel. ‘Both policy and religion,’ as Fray Simon says, fifty years afterwards, ‘forbid Christians to trade with heretics!’ ‘Lutheran devils, and enemies of God,’ are the answer they get in words: in deeds, whenever they have a superior force they may be allowed to land, and to water their ships, even to trade, under exorbitant restrictions: but generally this is merely a trap for them. Forces are hurried up; and the English are attacked treacherously, in spite of solemn compacts; for ‘No faith need be kept with heretics.’ And woe to them if any be taken prisoners, even wrecked. The galleys, and the rack, and the stake are their certain doom; for the Inquisition claims the bodies and souls of heretics all over the world, and thinks it sin to lose its own. A few years of such wrong raise questions in the sturdy English heart. What right have these Spaniards to the New World? The Pope’s gift? Why, he gave it by the same authority by which he claims the whole world.

The formula used when an Indian village is sacked is, that God gave the whole world to St. Peter, and that he has given it to his successors, and they the Indies to the King of Spain. To acknowledge that lie would be to acknowledge the very power by which the Pope claims a right to depose Queen Elizabeth, and give her dominions to whomsoever he will. A fico for bulls!

By possession, then? That may hold for Mexico, Peru, New Grenada, Paraguay, which have been colonised; though they were gained by means which make every one concerned in conquering them worthy of the gallows; and the right is only that of the thief to the purse, whose owner he has murdered. But as for the rest—Why the Spaniard has not colonised, even explored, one-fifth of the New World, not even one-fifth of the coast. Is the existence of a few petty factories,

often hundreds of miles apart, at a few river-mouths to give them a claim to the whole intermediate coast, much less to the vast unknown tracts inside? We will try that. If they appeal to the sword, so be it.

The men are treacherous robbers; we will indemnify ourselves for our losses, and God defend the right.

So argued the English; and so sprung up that strange war of reprisals, in which, for eighteen years, it was held that there was no peace between England and Spain beyond the line, i.e., beyond the parallel of longitude where the Pope's gift of the western world was said to begin; and, as the quarrel thickened and neared, extended to the Azores, Canaries, and coasts of Africa, where English and Spaniards flew at each other as soon as seen, mutually and by common consent, as natural enemies, each invoking God in the battle with Antichrist.

Into such a world as this goes forth young Raleigh, his heart full of chivalrous worship for England's tutelary genius, his brain aflame with the true miracles of the new-found Hesperides, full of vague hopes, vast imaginations, and consciousness of enormous power. And yet he is no wayward dreamer, unfit for this work-day world. With a vein of song 'most lofty, insolent, and passionate,' indeed unable to see aught without a poetic glow over the whole, he is eminently practical, contented to begin at the beginning that he may end at the end; one who could 'toil terribly,' 'who always laboured at the matter in hand as if he were born only for that.' Accordingly, he sets to work faithfully and stoutly, to learn his trade of soldiering, and learns it in silence and obscurity. He shares (it seems) in the retreat at Moncontour, and is by at the death of Conde, and toils on for five years, marching and skirmishing, smoking the enemy out of mountain-caves in Languedoc, and all the wild work of war. During the San Bartholomew massacre we hear nothing of him; perhaps he took refuge with Sidney and others in Walsingham's house.

No records of these years remain, save a few scattered reminiscences in his works, which mark the shrewd, observant eye of the future statesman.

When he returned we know not. We trace him, in 1576, by some verses prefixed to Gascoigne's satire, the 'Steele Glass,' solid, stately, epigrammatic, 'by Walter Rawley of the Middle Temple.' The style is his; spelling of names matters nought in days in which a man would spell his own name three different ways in one document.

Gascoigne, like Raleigh, knew Lord Grey of Wilton, and most men about town too; and had been a soldier abroad, like Raleigh, probably with him. It seems to have been the fashion for young idlers to lodge among the Templars; indeed, toward the end of the century, they had to be cleared out, as crowding the wigs and gowns too much; and perhaps proving noisy neighbours, as Raleigh may have done. To this period may be referred, probably, his Justice done on Mr. Charles Chester (Ben Jonson's Carlo Buffone), 'a perpetual talker, and made a noise like a drum in a room; so one time, at a tavern, Raleigh beats him and seals up his mouth, his upper and nether beard, with hard wax.' For there is a great laugh in Raleigh's heart, a genial contempt of asses; and one that will make him enemies hereafter: perhaps shorten his days.

One hears of him next, but only by report, in the Netherlands under Norris, where the nucleus of the English line (especially of its musquetry) was training. For Don John of Austria intends not only to crush the liberties and creeds of the Flemings, but afterwards to marry the Queen of Scots, and conquer England: and Elizabeth, unwillingly and slowly, for she cannot stomach rebels, has sent men and money to the States to stop Don John in time; which the valiant English and Scotch do on Lammas day, 1578, and that in a fashion till then unseen in war. For coming up late and panting, and 'being more sensible of a little heat of the sun than of any cold fear of death,'

they throw off their armour and clothes, and, in their shirts (not over-clean, one fears), give Don John's rashness such a rebuff, that two months more see that wild meteor, with lost hopes and tarnished fame, lie down and vanish below the stormy horizon. In these days, probably, it is that he knew Colonel Bingham, a soldier of fortune, of a 'fancy high and wild, too desultory and over-voluble,' who had, among his hundred and one schemes, one for the plantation of America as poor Sir Thomas Stukely (whom Raleigh must have known well), uncle of the

traitor Lewis, had for the peopling of Florida.

Raleigh returns. Ten years has he been learning his soldier's trade in silence. He will take a lesson in seamanship next. The court may come in time: for by now the poor squire's younger son must have discovered—perhaps even too fully—that he is not as other men are; that he can speak, and watch, and dare, and endure, as none around him can do. However, there are 'good adventures toward,' as the 'Morte d'Arthur' would say; and he will off with his half-brother Humphrey Gilbert to carry out his patent for planting Meta Incognita-

-'The Unknown Goal,' as Queen Elizabeth has named it—which will prove to be too truly and fatally unknown. In a latitude south of England, and with an Italian summer, who can guess that the winter will outfreeze Russia itself? The merchant-seaman, like the statesman, had yet many a thing to learn. Instead of smiling at our forefathers' ignorance, let us honour the men who bought knowledge for us their children at the price of lives nobler than our own.

So Raleigh goes on his voyage with Humphrey Gilbert, to carry out the patent for discovering and planting in Meta Incognita; but the voyage prospers not. A 'smart brush with the Spaniards' sends them home again, with the loss of Morgan, their best captain, and 'a tall ship'; and Meta Incognita is forgotten for a while; but not the Spaniards. Who are these who forbid all English, by virtue of the Pope's bull, to cross the Atlantic? That must be settled hereafter; and Raleigh, ever busy, is off to Ireland to command a company in that 'common weal, or rather common woe', as he calls it in a letter to Leicester. Two years and more pass here; and all the records of him which remain are of a man valiant, daring, and yet prudent beyond his fellows. He hates his work, and is not on too good terms with stern and sour, but brave and faithful Lord Grey; but Lord Grey is Leicester's friend, and Raleigh works patiently under him, like a sensible man, just because he is Leicester's friend. Some modern gentleman of note—I forget who, and do not care to recollect—says that Raleigh's 'prudence never bore any proportion to his genius.'

The next biographer we open accuses him of being too calculating, cunning, timeserving; and so forth. Perhaps both are true. The man's was a character very

likely to fall alternately into either sin—doubtless did so a hundred times. Perhaps both are false. The man's character was, on occasion, certain to rise above both faults.

We have evidence that he did so his whole life long.

He is tired of Ireland at last: nothing goes right there:- When has it? Nothing is to be done there. That which is crooked cannot be made straight, and that which is wanting cannot be numbered. He comes to London and to court. But how? By spreading his cloak over a muddy place for Queen Elizabeth to step on? It is very likely to be a true story; but biographers have slurred over a few facts in their hurry to carry out their theory of 'favourites,' and to prove that Elizabeth took up Raleigh on the same grounds that a boarding-school miss might have done. Not that I deny the cloak story to be a very pretty story; perhaps it justifies, taken alone, Elizabeth's fondness for him. There may have been self-interest in it; we are bound, as 'men of the world,' to impute the dirtiest motive that we can find; but how many self-interested men do we know who would have had quickness and daring to do such a thing? Men who are thinking about themselves are not generally either so quick-witted, or so inclined to throw away a good cloak, when by much scraping and saving they have got one. I never met a cunning, selfish, ambitious man who would have done such a thing. The reader may; but even if he has, we must ask him, for Queen Elizabeth's sake, to consider that this young Quixote is the close relation of three of the finest public men then living, Champernoun, Gilbert, and Carew. That he is a friend of Sidney, a pet of Leicester; that he has left behind him at Oxford, and brought with him from Ireland, the reputation of being a *rara avis*, a new star in the firmament; that he had been a soldier in her Majesty's service (and in one in which she has a peculiar private interest) for twelve years; that he has held her commission as one of the triumvirate for governing Munster, and has been the commander of the garrison at Cork; and that it is possible that she may have heard something of him before he threw his cloak under her feet, especially as there has been some controversy (which we have in vain tried to fathom) between him and Lord Grey about that terrible Smerwick slaughter; of the results of which we know little, but that Raleigh, being called in question about it in London, made such good play with his tongue, that his reputation as an orator and a man of talent was fixed once and for ever.

Within the twelve months he is sent on some secret diplomatic mission about the Anjou marriage; he is in fact now installed in his place as 'a favourite.' And why not? If a man is found to be wise and witty, ready and useful, able to do whatsoever he is put to, why is a sovereign, who has eyes to see the man's worth and courage to use it, to be accused of I know not what, because the said man happens to be good-looking?

Now comes the turning-point of Raleigh's life. What does he intend to be? Soldier, statesman, scholar, or sea-adventurer? He takes the most natural, yet not the wisest course. He will try and be all four at once. He has intellect for it; by worldly wisdom he may have money for it also. Even now he has contrived (no one can tell whence) to build a good bark of two hundred tons, and send her out with Humphrey Gilbert on his second and fatal voyage. Luckily for Raleigh she deserts and comes home, while not yet out of the Channel, or she surely had gone the way of the rest of Gilbert's squadron.

Raleigh, of course, loses money by the failure, as well as the hopes which he had grounded on his brother's Transatlantic viceroyalty.

And a bitter pang it must have been to him to find himself bereft of that pure and heroic counsellor just at his entering into life. But with the same elasticity which sent him to the grave, he is busy within six months in a fresh expedition. If *Meta Incognita* be not worth planting, there must be, so Raleigh thinks, a vast extent of coast between it and Florida, which is more genial in climate, perhaps more rich in produce; and he sends Philip Amadas and Arthur Barlow to look for the same, and not in vain.

On these Virginian discoveries I shall say but little. Those who wish to enjoy them should read them in all their naive freshness in the originals; and they will subscribe to S. T. Coleridge's dictum, that no one nowadays can write travels as well as the old worthies who figure in Hakluyt and Purchas.

But to return to the question—What does this man intend to be? A discoverer and colonist; a vindicator of some part at least of America from Spanish claims? Perhaps not altogether: else he would have gone himself to Virginia, at least the second voyage, instead of sending others. But here, it seems, is the fatal, and yet pardonable mistake, which haunts the man throughout. He tries to be too many men at once. Fatal: because, though he leaves his trace on more things than one man is wont to do, he, strictly speaking, conquers nothing, brings nothing to a consummation. Virginia, Guiana, the ‘History of the World,’ his own career as a statesman—as dictator (for he might have been dictator had he chosen)—all are left unfinished. And yet most pardonable; for if a man feels that he can do many different things, how hard to teach himself that he must not do them all! How hard to say to himself, ‘I must cut off the right hand, and pluck out the right eye. I must be less than myself, in order really to be anything. I must concentrate my powers on one subject, and that perhaps by no means the most seemingly noble or useful, still less the most pleasant, and forego so many branches of activity in which I might be so distinguished, so useful.’ This is a hard lesson. Raleigh took just sixty-six years learning it; and had to carry the result of his experience to the other side of the dark river, for there was no time left to use it on this side. Some readers may have learnt the lesson already. If so, happy and blessed are they. But let them not therefore exalt themselves above Walter Raleigh; for that lesson is, of course, soonest learnt by the man who can excel in few things, later by him who can excel in many, and latest of all by him who, like Raleigh, can excel in all.

Few details remain concerning the earlier court days of Raleigh. He rises rapidly, as we have seen. He has an estate given him in Ireland, near his friend Spenser, where he tries to do well and wisely, colonising, tilling, and planting it: but like his Virginia expeditions, principally at second hand. For he has swallowed (there is no denying it) the painted bait. He will discover, he will colonise, he will do all manner of beautiful things, at second hand: but he himself will be a courtier. It is very tempting. Who would not, at the age of thirty, have wished to have been one of that chosen band of geniuses and heroes whom Elizabeth had gathered round her? Who would not, at the age of thirty, have given his pound of flesh to be captain of her guard, and to go with her whithersoever she went? It is not merely the intense gratification to carnal vanity—which if any man denies or scoffs at, always mark him down as especially guilty—which is to be considered; but the real, actual honour, in the mind of one who looked on



Elizabeth as the most precious and glorious being which the earth had seen for centuries.

To be appreciated by her; to be loved by her; to serve her; to guard her; what could man desire more on earth?

Beside, he becomes a member of Parliament now; Lord Warden of the Stannaries; business which of course keeps him in England, business which he performs, as he does all things, wisely and well. Such a generation as this ought really to respect Raleigh a little more, if it be only for his excellence in their own especial sphere—that of business. Raleigh is a thorough man of business. He can ‘toil terribly,’ and what is more, toil to the purpose. In all the everyday affairs of life, he remains without a blot; a diligent, methodical, prudent man, who, though he plays for great stakes, ventures and loses his whole fortune again and again, yet never seems to omit the ‘doing the duty which lies nearest him’; never gets into mean money scrapes; never neglects tenants or duty; never gives way for one instant to ‘the eccentricities of genius.’

If he had done so, be sure that we should have heard of it. For no man can become what he has become without making many an enemy; and he has his enemies already. On which statement naturally occurs the question—why? An important question too; because several of his later biographers seem to have running in their minds some such train of thought as this—Raleigh must have been a bad fellow, or he would not have had so many enemies; and because he was a bad fellow, there is an a priori reason that charges against him are true. Whether this be arguing in a circle or not, it is worth searching out the beginning of this enmity, and the reputed causes of it. In after years it will be because he is ‘damnable proud,’ because he hated Essex, and so forth: of which in their places. But what is the earliest count against him? Naunton, who hated Raleigh, and was moreover a rogue, has no reason to give, but that ‘the Queen took him for a kind of oracle, which much nettled them all; yea, those he relied on began to take this his sudden favour for an alarm; to be sensible of their own supplantation, and to project his; which shortly made him to sing, “Fortune my foe.”’

Now, be this true or not, and we do not put much faith in it, it gives no reason for the early dislike of Raleigh, save the somewhat unsatisfactory one which Cain would have given for his dislike of Abel. Moreover, there exists a letter of Essex's, written as thoroughly in the Cain spirit as any we ever read; and we wonder that, after reading that letter, men can find courage to repeat the old sentimentalism about the 'noble and unfortunate' Earl. His hatred of Raleigh—which, as we shall see hereafter, Raleigh not only bears patiently, but requites with good deeds as long as he can—

springs, by his own confession, simply from envy and disappointed vanity. The spoiled boy insults Queen Elizabeth about her liking for the 'knave Raleigh.' She, 'taking hold of one word disdain,' tells Essex that 'there was no such cause why I should thus disdain him.'

On which, says Essex, 'as near as I could I did describe unto her what he had been, and what he was; and then I did let her see, whether I had come to disdain his competition of love, or whether I could have comfort to give myself over to the service of a mistress that was in awe of such a man. I spake for grief and choler as much against him as I could: and I think he standing at the door might very well hear the worst that I spoke of him. In the end, I saw she was resolved to defend him, and to cross me.' Whereupon follows a 'scene,' the naughty boy raging and stamping, till he insults the Queen, and calls Raleigh 'a wretch'; whereon poor Elizabeth, who loved the coxcomb for his father's sake, 'turned her away to my Lady Warwick,' and Essex goes grumbling forth.

Raleigh's next few years are brilliant and busy ones; and gladly, did space permit, would I give details of those brilliant adventures which make this part of his life that of a true knight-errant. But they are mere episodes in the history; and we must pass them quickly by, only saying that they corroborate in all things our original notion of the man—just, humane, wise, greatly daring and enduring greatly; and filled with the one fixed idea, which has grown with his growth and strengthened with his strength, the destruction of the Spanish power, and colonisation of America by English. His brother Humphrey makes a second attempt to colonise Newfoundland, and perishes as heroically as he had lived. Raleigh, undaunted by his own loss in the adventure and his brother's failure, sends out a fleet of his own to discover to the southward, and finds Virginia.

One might spend pages on this beautiful episode; on the simple descriptions of the fair new land which the sea-kings bring home; on the profound (for those times at least) knowledge which prompted Raleigh to make the attempt in that particular direction which had as yet escaped the notice of the Spaniards; on the quiet patience with which, undaunted by the ill-success of the first colonists, he sends out fleet after fleet, to keep the hold which he had once gained; till, unable any longer to support the huge expense, he makes over his patent for discovery to a company of merchants, who fare for many years as ill as Raleigh himself did: but one thing one has a right to say, that to this one man, under the providence of Almighty God, do the whole of the United States of America owe their existence.

The work was double. The colony, however small, had to be kept in possession at all hazards; and he did it. But that was not enough.

Spain must be prevented from extending her operations northward from Florida; she must be crippled along the whole east coast of America.

And Raleigh did that too. We find him for years to come a part-adventurer in almost every attack on the Spaniards: we find him preaching war against them on these very grounds, and setting others to preach it also. Good old Hariot (Raleigh's mathematical tutor, whom he sent to Virginia) re-echoes his pupil's trumpet-blast.

Hooker, in his epistle dedicatory of his Irish History, strikes the same note, and a right noble one it is. 'These Spaniards are trying to build up a world-tyranny by rapine and cruelty. You, sir, call on us to deliver the earth from them, by doing justly and loving mercy; and we will obey you!' is the answer which Raleigh receives, as far as I can find, from every nobler-natured Englishman.

It was an immense conception: a glorious one: it stood out so clear: there was no mistake about its being the absolutely right, wise, patriotic thing; and so feasible, too, if Raleigh could but find 'six cents hommes qui savaient mourir.' But that was just what he could not find. He could draw round him, and did, by the spiritual magnetism of his genius, many a noble soul; but he could not organise them, as he seems to have tried to do, into a coherent body. The English spirit of independent action, never stronger than in that age, and most wisely encouraged,

for other reasons, by good Queen Bess, was too strong for him. His pupils will 'fight on their own hook' like so many Yankee rangers: quarrel with each other: grumble at him. For the truth is, he demands of them too high a standard of thought and purpose. He is often a whole heaven above them in the hugeness of his imagination, the nobleness of his motive; and Don Quixote can often find no better squire than Sancho Panza.

Even glorious Sir Richard Grenville makes a mistake: burns an Indian village because they steal a silver cup; throws back the colonisation of Virginia ten years with his over-strict notions of discipline and retributive justice; and Raleigh requites him for his offence by embalming him, his valour and his death, not in immortal verse, but in immortal prose. The 'True Relation of the Fight at the Azores'

gives the keynote of Raleigh's heart. If readers will not take that as the text on which his whole life is a commentary they may know a great deal about him, but him they will never know.

The game becomes fiercer and fiercer. Blow and counterblow between the Spanish king, for the whole West-Indian commerce was a government job, and the merchant nobles of England. At last the Great Armada comes, and the Great Armada goes again. Venit, vidit, fugit, as the medals said of it. And to Walter Raleigh's counsel, by the testimony of all contemporaries, the mighty victory is to be principally attributed. Where all men did heroically, it were invidious to bestow on him alone a crown, *ob patriam servatam*. But henceforth, Elizabeth knows well that she has not been mistaken in her choice; and Raleigh is better loved than ever, heaped with fresh wealth and honours. And who deserves them better?

The immense value of his services in the defence of England should excuse him from the complaint which one has been often inclined to bring against him,— Why, instead of sending others Westward Ho, did he not go himself? Surely he could have reconciled the jarring instruments with which he was working. He could have organised such a body of men as perhaps never went out before or since on the same errand. He could have done all that Cortez did, and more; and

done it more justly and mercifully.

True. And here seems (as far as little folk dare judge great folk) to have been Raleigh's mistake. He is too wide for real success. He has too many plans; he is fond of too many pursuits. The man who succeeds is generally the narrow mall; the man of one idea, who works at nothing but that; sees everything only through the light of that; sacrifices everything to that: the fanatic, in short. By fanatics, whether military, commercial, or religious, and not by 'liberal-minded men' at all, has the world's work been done in all ages. Amid the modern cants, one of the most mistaken is the cant about the 'mission of genius,' the 'mission of the poet.' Poets, we hear in some quarters, are the anointed kings of mankind—at least, so the little poets sing, each to his little fiddle. There is no greater mistake. It is the practical, prosaical fanatic who does the work; and the poet, if he tries to do it, is certain to put down his spade every five minutes, to look at the prospect, and pick flowers, and moralise on dead asses, till he ends a Neron malgre lui-meme, fiddling melodiously while Rome is burning. And perhaps this is the secret of Raleigh's failure. He is a fanatic, no doubt, a true knight-errant: but he is too much of a poet withal. The sense of beauty enthral him at every step. Gloriana's fairy court, with its chivalries and its euphuisms, its masques and its tourneys, and he the most charming personage in it, are too charming for him—as they would have been for us, reader: and he cannot give them up and go about the one work. He justifies his double-mindedness to himself, no doubt, as he does to the world, by working wisely, indefatigably, and bravely: but still he has put his trust in princes, and in the children of men. His sin, as far as we can see, is not against man, but against God; one which we do not nowadays call a sin, but a weakness. Be it so. God punished him for it, swiftly and sharply; which I hold to be a sure sign that God also forgave him for it.

So he stays at home, spends, sooner or later, 40,000 pounds on Virginia, writes charming court-poetry with Oxford, Buckhurst, and Paget, brings over Spenser from Ireland and introduces Colin Clout to Gloriana, who loves—as who would not have loved?—that most beautiful of faces and of souls; helps poor puritan Udall out of his scrape as far as he can; begs for Captain Spring, begs for many more, whose names are only known by being connected with some good deed of his. 'When, Sir Walter,' asks Queen Bess, 'will you cease to be a beggar?' 'When

your Majesty ceases to be a benefactor.’ Perhaps it is in these days that he set up his ‘office of address’—some sort of agency for discovering and relieving the wants of worthy men. So all seems to go well. If he has lost in Virginia, he has gained by Spanish prizes; his wine-patent is bringing him in a large revenue, and the heavens smile on him. Thou sayest, ‘I am rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art poor and miserable and blind and naked.’ Thou shalt learn it, then, and pay dearly for thy lesson.

For, in the meanwhile, Raleigh falls into a very great sin, for which, as usual with his elect, God inflicts swift and instant punishment; on which, as usual, biographers talk much unwisdom. He seduces Miss Throgmorton, one of the maids of honour. Elizabeth is very wroth; and had she not good reason to be wroth? Is it either fair or reasonable to talk of her ‘demanding a monopoly of love,’ and ‘being incensed at the temerity of her favourite, in presuming to fall in love and marry without her consent?’ Away with such cant.

The plain facts are: that a man nearly forty years old abuses his wonderful gifts of body and mind, to ruin a girl nearly twenty years younger than himself. What wonder if a virtuous woman—and Queen Elizabeth was virtuous—thought it a base deed, and punished it accordingly? There is no more to be discovered in the matter, save by the vulturine nose which smells carrion in every rose-bed.

Raleigh has a great attempt on the Plate-fleets in hand; he hurries off from Chatham, and writes to young Cecil on the 10th of March, ‘I mean not to come away, as some say I will, for fear of a marriage, and I know not what ... For I protest before God, there is none on the face of the earth that I would be fastened unto.’

This famous passage is one of those over which the virtuosity of modern times, rejoicing in evil, has hung so fondly, as giving melancholy proof of the ‘duplicity of Raleigh’s character’; as if a man who once in his life had told an untruth was proved by that fact to be a rogue from birth to death: while others have kindly given him the benefit of a doubt whether the letter were not written after a private marriage, and therefore Raleigh, being ‘joined unto’ some one already, had a right to say that he did not wish to be joined to any one. But I do

not concur in this doubt. Four months after, Sir Edward Stafford writes to Anthony Bacon, 'If you have anything to do with Sir W. R., or any love to make to Mistress Throgmorton, at the Tower to-morrow you may speak with them.' This implies that no marriage had yet taken place. And surely, if there had been private marriage, two people who were about to be sent to the Tower for their folly would have made the marriage public at once, as the only possible self-justification. But it is a pity, in my opinion, that biographers, before pronouncing upon that supposed lie of Raleigh's, had not taken the trouble to find out what the words mean. In their virtuous haste to prove him a liar, they have overlooked the fact that the words, as they stand, are unintelligible, and the argument self-contradictory. He wants to prove, we suppose, that he does not go to sea for fear of being forced to marry Miss Throgmorton. It is, at least, an unexpected method of so doing in a shrewd man like Raleigh, to say that he wishes to marry no one at all. 'Don't think that I run away for fear of a marriage, for I do not wish to marry any one on the face of the earth,' is a speech which may prove Raleigh to have been a fool, and we must understand it before we can say that it proves him a rogue. If we had received such a letter from a friend, we should have said at once, 'Why the man, in his hurry and confusion, has omitted THE word; he must have meant to write, not "There is none on the face of the earth that I would be fastened to," but "There is none on the face of the earth that I would RATHER be fastened to,"' which would at once make sense and suit fact. For Raleigh not only married Miss Throgmorton forthwith, but made her the best of husbands. My conjectural emendation may go for what it is worth: but that the passage, as it stands in Murdin's State Papers (the MSS. I have not seen) is either misquoted, or mis-written by Raleigh himself, I cannot doubt. He was not one to think nonsense, even if he scribbled it.

The Spanish raid turns out well. Raleigh overlooks Elizabeth's letters of recall till he finds out that the King of Spain has stopped the Plate-fleet for fear of his coming; and then returns, sending on Sir John Burrough to the Azores, where he takes the 'Great Carack,' the largest prize (1600 tons) which had ever been brought into England. The details of that gallant fight stand in the pages of Hakluyt. It raised Raleigh once more to wealth, though not to favour. Shortly after he returns from the sea, he finds himself, where he deserves to be, in the Tower, where he does more than one thing which brought him no credit. How far we are justified in calling his quarrel with Sir George Carew, his keeper, for not letting him 'disguise himself, and get into a pair of oars to ease his mind but with

a sight of the Queen, or his heart would break,’

hypocrisy, is a very different matter. Honest Arthur Gorges, a staunch friend of Raleigh’s, tells the story laughingly and lovingly, as if he thought Raleigh sincere, but somewhat mad: and yet honest Gorges has a good right to say a bitter thing; for after having been ‘ready to break with laughing at seeing them two brawl and scramble like madmen, and Sir George’s new periwig torn off his crown,’ he sees ‘the iron walking’ and daggers out, and playing the part of him who taketh a dog by the ears, ‘purchased such a rap on the knuckles, that I wished both their pates broken, and so with much ado they staid their brawl to see my bloody fingers,’ and then set to work to abuse the hapless peacemaker. After which things Raleigh writes a letter to Cecil, which is still more offensive in the eyes of virtuous biographers—how ‘his heart was never broken till this day, when he hears the Queen goes so far off, whom he followed with love and desire on so many journeys, and am now left behind in a dark prison all alone.’ ... ‘I that was wont to behold her riding like Alexander, hunting like Diana, walking like Venus, the gentle wind blowing her fair hair about her pure cheeks,’ and so forth, in a style in which the vulturine nose must needs scent carrion, just because the roses are more fragrant than they should be in a world where all ought to be either vultures or carrion for their dinners.

As for his despair, had he not good reason to be in despair? By his own sin he has hurled himself down the hill which he has so painfully climbed. He is in the Tower—surely no pleasant or hopeful place for any man. Elizabeth is exceedingly wroth with him; and what is worse, he deserves what he has got. His whole fortune is ventured in an expedition over which he has no control, which has been unsuccessful in its first object, and which may be altogether unsuccessful in that which it has undertaken as a *pis-aller*, and so leave him penniless.

There want not, too, those who will trample on the fallen. The deputy has been cruelly distraining on his Irish tenants for a ‘supposed debt of his to the Queen of 400 pounds for rent,’ which was indeed but fifty marks, and which was paid, and has carried off 500

milch kine from the poor settlers whom he has planted there, and forcibly thrust him out of possession of a castle. Moreover, the whole Irish estates are likely to come to ruin; for nothing prevails but rascality among the English soldiers, impotence among the governors, and rebellion among the natives. Three



thousand Burkes are up in arms; his 'prophecy of this rebellion' ten days ago was laughed at, and now has come true; and altogether, Walter Raleigh and all belonging to him is in as evil case as he ever was on earth. No wonder, poor fellow, if he behovls himself lustily, and not always wisely, to Cecil, and every one else who will listen to him.

As for his fine speeches about Elizabeth, why forget the standing-point from which such speeches were made? Over and above his present ruin, it was (and ought to have been) an utterly horrible and unbearable thing to Raleigh, or any man, to have fallen into disgrace with Elizabeth by his own fault. He feels (and perhaps rightly) that he is as it were excommunicated from England, and the mission and the glory of England. Instead of being, as he was till now, one of a body of brave men working together in one great common cause, he has cut himself off from the congregation by his own selfish lust, and there he is left alone with his shame. We must try to realise to ourselves the way in which such men as Raleigh looked not only at Elizabeth, but at all the world. There was, in plain palpable fact, something about the Queen, her history, her policy, the times, the glorious part which England, and she as the incarnation of the then English spirit, were playing upon earth, which raised imaginative and heroic souls into a permanent exaltation—a 'fairyland,' as they called it themselves, which seems to us fantastic, and would be fantastic in us, because we are not at their work, or in their days.

There can be no doubt that a number of as noble men as ever stood together on the earth did worship that woman, fight for her, toil for her, risk all for her, with a pure chivalrous affection which has furnished one of the most beautiful pages in all the book of history.

Blots there must needs have been, and inconsistencies, selfishnesses, follies; for they too were men of like passions with ourselves; but let us look at the fair vision as a whole, and thank God that such a thing has for once existed even imperfectly on this sinful earth, instead of playing the part of Ham and falling under his curse,—the penalty of slavishness, cowardice, loss of noble daring, which surely falls on any generation which is 'banausos,' to use Aristotle's word; which rejoices in its forefathers' shame, and, unable to believe in the nobleness of others, is unable to become noble itself.

As for the 'Alexander and Diana' affectations, they were the language of the time: and certainly this generation has no reason to find fault with them, or with a good deal more of the 'affectations' and 'flattery' of Elizabethan times, while it listens complacently night after night 'to honourable members' complimenting not Queen Elizabeth, but Sir Jabesh Windbag, Fiddle, Faddle, Red-tape, and party with protestations of deepest respect and fullest confidence in the very speeches in which they bring accusations of every offence short of high treason—to be understood, of course, in a 'parliamentary sense,' as Mr. Pickwick's were in a 'Pickwickian' one.

If a generation of Knoxes and Mortons, Burleighs and Raleighs, shall ever arise again, one wonders by what name they will call the parliamentary morality and parliamentary courtesy of a generation which has meted out such measure to their ancestors' failings?

'But Queen Elizabeth was an old woman then.' I thank the objector even for that 'then'; for it is much nowadays to find any one who believes that Queen Elizabeth was ever young, or who does not talk of her as if she was born about seventy years of age covered with rouge and wrinkles. I will undertake to say that as to the beauty of this woman there is a greater mass of testimony, and from the very best judges too, than there is of the beauty of any personage in history; and yet it has become the fashion now to deny even that. The plain facts seem that she was very graceful, active, accomplished in all outward manners, of a perfect figure, and of that style of intellectual beauty, depending on expression, which attracted (and we trust always will attract) Britons far more than that merely sensuous loveliness in which no doubt Mary Stuart far surpassed her. And there seems little doubt that, like many Englishwomen, she retained her beauty to a very late period in life, not to mention that she was, in 1592, just at that age of rejuvenescence which makes many a woman more lovely at sixty than she has been since she was thirty-five. No doubt, too, she used every artificial means to preserve her famous complexion; and quite right she was. This beauty of hers had been a talent, as all beauty is, committed to her by God; it had been an important element in her great success; men had accepted it as what beauty of form and expression generally is, an outward and visible sign of the inward and spiritual grace; and while the inward was unchanged, what

wonder if she tried to preserve the outward? If she was the same, why should she not try to look the same? And what blame to those who worshipped her, if, knowing that she was the same, they too should fancy that she looked the same, the Elizabeth of their youth, and should talk as if the fair flesh, as well as the fair spirit, was immortal? Does not every loving husband do so when he forgets the gray hair and the sunken cheek, and all the wastes of time, and sees the partner of many joys and sorrows not as she has become, but as she was, ay, and is to him, and will be to him, he trusts, through all eternity? There is no feeling in these Elizabethan worshippers which we have not seen, potential and crude, again and again in the best and noblest of young men whom we have met, till it was crushed in them by the luxury, effeminacy, and unbelief in chivalry, which are the sure accompaniment of a long peace, which war may burn up with beneficent fire.

But we must hasten on now; for Raleigh is out of prison in September, and by the next spring in parliament speaking wisely and well, especially on his fixed idea, war with Spain, which he is rewarded for forthwith in Father Parson's 'Andreae Philopatris Responsio' by a charge of founding a school of Atheism for the corruption of young gentlemen; a charge which Lord Chief-Justice Popham, Protestant as he is, will find it useful one day to recollect.

Elizabeth, however, now that Raleigh has married the fair Throgmorton and done wisely in other matters, restores him to favour. If he has sinned, he has suffered: but he is as useful as ever, now that his senses have returned to him; and he is making good speeches in parliament, instead of bad ones to weak maidens; so we find him once more in favour, and possessor of Sherborne Manor, where he builds and beautifies, with 'groves and gardens of much variety and great delight.' And God, too, seems to have forgiven him; perhaps has forgiven; for there the fair Throgmorton brings him a noble boy. Ut sis vitalis metuo puer!

Raleigh will quote David's example one day, not wisely or well. Does David's example ever cross him now, and those sad words,—'The Lord hath put away

thy sin, ... nevertheless the child that is born unto thee shall die?’

Let that be as it may, all is sunshine once more. Sherborne Manor, a rich share in the great carack, a beautiful wife, a child; what more does this man want to make him happy? Why should he not settle down upon his lees, like ninety-nine out of the hundred, or at least try a peaceful and easy path toward more ‘praise and pudding?’ The world answers, or his biographers answer for him, that he needs to reinstate himself in his mistress’s affection; which is true or not, according as we take it. If they mean thereby, as most seem to mean, that it was a mere selfish and ambitious scheme by which to wriggle into court favour once more—why, let them mean it: I shall only observe that the method which Raleigh took was a rather more dangerous and self-sacrificing one than courtiers are wont to take.

But if it be meant that Walter Raleigh spoke somewhat thus with himself,—‘I have done a base and dirty deed, and have been punished for it. I have hurt the good name of a sweet woman who loves me, and whom I find to be a treasure; and God, instead of punishing me by taking her from me, has rendered me good for evil by giving her to me. I have justly offended a mistress whom I worship, and who, after having shown her just indignation, has returned me good for evil by giving me these fair lands of Sherborne, and only forbid me her presence till the scandal has passed away. She sees and rewards my good in spite of my evil; and I, too, know that I am better than I have seemed; that I am fit for nobler deeds than seducing maids of honour. How can I prove that? How can I redeem my lost name for patriotism and public daring? How can I win glory for my wife, seek that men shall forget her past shame in the thought, “She is Walter Raleigh’s wife?” How can I show my mistress that I loved her all along, that I acknowledge her bounty, her mingled justice and mercy?

How can I render to God for all the benefits which He has done unto me? How can I do a deed the like of which was never done in England?’

If all this had passed through Walter Raleigh’s mind, what could we say of it, but that it was the natural and rational feeling of an honourable and right-hearted man, burning to rise to the level which he knew ought to be his, because he knew that he had fallen below it?

And what right better way of testifying these feelings than to do what, as we shall see, Raleigh did? What right have we to impute to him lower motives than these, while we confess that these righteous and noble motives would have been natural and rational;—indeed, just what we flatter ourselves that we should have felt in his place? Of course, in his grand scheme, the thought came in, ‘And I shall win to myself honour, and glory, and wealth,’—of course. And pray, sir, does it not come in in your grand schemes; and yours; and yours? If you made a fortune to-morrow by some wisely and benevolently managed factory, would you forbid all speech of the said wisdom and benevolence, because you had intended that wisdom and benevolence should pay you a good percentage? Away with cant, and let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone.

So Raleigh hits upon a noble project; a desperate one, true: but he will do it or die. He will leave pleasant Sherborne, and the bosom of the beautiful bride, and the firstborn son, and all which to most makes life worth having, and which Raleigh enjoys more intensely than most men; for he is a poet, and a man of strong nervous passions withal. But, -

‘I could not love thee, dear, so much, Loved I not honour more.’

And he will go forth to endure heat, hunger, fever, danger of death in battle, danger of the Inquisition, rack, and stake, in search of El Dorado. What so strange in that? I have known half a dozen men who, in his case, and conscious of his powers, would have done the same from the same noble motive.

He begins prudently; and sends a Devonshire man, Captain Whiddon—

probably one of The Whiddons of beautiful Chagford—to spy out the Orinoco. He finds that the Spaniards are there already; that Berreo, who has attempted El Dorado from the westward, starting from New Granada and going down the rivers, is trying to settle on the Orinoco mouth; that he is hanging the poor natives, encouraging the Caribs to hunt them and sell them for slaves,

imprisoning the caciques to extort their gold, torturing, ravishing, kidnapping, and conducting himself as was usual among Spaniards of those days.

Raleigh's spirit is stirred within him. If 'Uncle Tom's Cabin,'

fiction as it is, once excited us, how must a far worse reality have excited Raleigh, as he remembered that these Spaniards are as yet triumphant in iniquity, and as he remembered, too, that these same men are the sworn foes of England, her liberty, her Bible, and her Queen? What a deed, to be beforehand with them for once! To dispossess them of one corner of that western world, where they have left no trace but blood and flame! He will go himself: he will find El Dorado and its golden Emperor; and instead of conquering, plundering, and murdering him, as Cortez did Montezuma, and Pizarro Atahualpa, he will show him English strength; espouse his quarrel against the Spaniards; make him glad to become Queen Elizabeth's vassal tributary, perhaps leave him a bodyguard of English veterans, perhaps colonise his country, and so at once avenge and protect the oppressed Indians, and fill the Queen's treasury with the riches of a land equal, if not superior, to Peru and Mexico.

Such is his dream; vague perhaps: but far less vague than those with which Cortez and Pizarro started, and succeeded. After a careful survey of the whole matter, I must give it as my deliberate opinion, that Raleigh was more reasonable in his attempt, and had more fair evidence of its feasibility, than either Cortez or Pizarro had for theirs. It is a bold assertion. If any reader doubts its truth, he cannot do better than to read the whole of the documents connected with the two successful, and the one unsuccessful, attempts at finding a golden kingdom. Let them read first Prescott's 'Conquests of Mexico and Peru,' and then Schomburgk's edition of Raleigh's 'Guiana.' They will at least confess, when they have finished, that truth is stranger than fiction.

Of Raleigh's credulity in believing in El Dorado, much has been said.

I am sorry to find even so wise a man as Sir Robert Schomburgk, after bearing good testimony to Raleigh's wonderful accuracy about all matters which he had

an opportunity of observing, using this term of credulity. I must dare to differ on that point even with Sir Robert, and ask by what right the word is used? First, Raleigh says nothing about El Dorado (as every one is forced to confess) but what Spaniard on Spaniard had been saying for fifty years. Therefore the blame of credulity ought to rest with the Spaniards, from Philip von Hutten, Orellano, and George of Spires, upward to Berreo. But it rests really with no one. For nothing, if we will examine the documents, is told of the riches of El Dorado which had not been found to be true, and seen by the eyes of men still living, in Peru and Mexico.

Not one-fifth of America had been explored, and already two El Dorados had been found and conquered. What more rational than to suppose that there was a third, a fourth, a fifth, in the remaining four-fifths? The reports of El Dorado among the savages were just of the same kind as those by which Cortez and Pizarro hunted out Mexico and Peru, saving that they were far more widely spread, and confirmed by a succession of adventurers. I entreat readers to examine this matter in Raleigh, Schomburgk, Humboldt, and Condamine, and judge for themselves. As for Hume's accusations, I pass them by as equally silly and shameless, only saying, for the benefit of readers, that they have been refuted completely by every one who has written since Hume's days; and to those who are inclined to laugh at Raleigh for believing in Amazons and 'men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders' I can only answer thus -

About the Amazons, Raleigh told what he was told; what the Spaniards who went before him, and Condamine who came after him, were told.

Humboldt thinks the story possibly founded on fact; and I must say that, after reviewing all that has been said thereon, it does seem to me the simplest solution of the matter just to believe it true; to believe that there was, about his time, or a little before, somewhere about the Upper Orinoco, a warlike community of women. Humboldt shows how likely such would be to spring up where women flee from their male tyrants into the forests. As for the fable which connected them with the Lake Manoa and the city of El Dorado, we can only answer, 'If not true there and then, it is true elsewhere now'; for the Amazonian guards of the King of Dahomey at this moment, as all know, surpass in strangeness and in ferocity all that has been reported of the Orinocquan viragos, and thus prove once more that truth is stranger than fiction. {3}

Beside—and here I stand stubborn, regardless of gibes and sneers—it is not yet proven that there was not, in the sixteenth century, some rich and civilised kingdom like Peru or Mexico in the interior of South America. Sir Robert Schomburgk has disproved the existence of Lake Parima; but it will take a long time, and more explorers than one, to prove that there are no ruins of ancient cities, such as Stephens stumbled on in Yucatan, still buried in the depths of the forest. Fifty years of ruin would suffice to wrap them in a leafy veil which would hide them from every one who did not literally run against them. Tribes would die out, or change place, as the Atures and other great nations have done in those parts, and every traditional record of them perish gradually; for it is only gradually and lately that it has perished: while if it be asked, What has become of the people themselves? the answer is, that when any race (like most of the American races in the sixteenth century) is in a dying state, it hardly needs war to thin it down, and reduce the remnant to savagery. Greater nations than El Dorado was even supposed to be have vanished ere now, and left not a trace behind: and so may they. But enough of this. I leave the quarrel to that honest and patient warder of tourneys, Old Time, who will surely do right at last, and go on to the dogheaded worthies, without necks, and long hair hanging down behind, who, as a cacique told Raleigh, that ‘they had of late years slain many hundreds of his father’s people,’ and in whom even Humboldt was not always allowed, he says, to disbelieve (so much for Hume’s scoff at Raleigh as a liar), one old cacique boasting to him that he had seen them with his own eyes.

Humboldt’s explanation is, that the Caribs, being the cleverest and strongest Indians, are also the most imaginative; and therefore, being fallen children of Adam, the greatest liars; and that they invented both El Dorado and the dogheads out of pure wickedness. Be it so. But all lies crystallise round some nucleus of truth; and it really seems to me nothing very wonderful if the story should be on the whole true, and these worthies were in the habit of dressing themselves up, like foolish savages as they were, in the skins of the Aguara dog, with what not of stuffing, and tails, and so forth, in order to astonish the weak minds of the Caribs, just as the Red Indians dress up in their feasts as bears, wolves, and deer, with foxtails, false bustles of bison skin, and so forth. There are plenty of traces of such foolish attempts at playing ‘bogy’ in the history of savages, even of our own Teutonic forefathers; and this I suspect to be the simple explanation of the whole mare’s nest. As for Raleigh being a fool for believing it; the reasons he gives for believing it are very rational; the reasons Hume gives for calling him a



fool rest merely on the story's being strange: on which grounds one might disbelieve most matters in heaven and earth, from one's own existence to what one sees in every drop of water under the microscope, yea, to the growth of every seed. The only sound proof that dogheaded men are impossible is to be found in comparative anatomy, a science of which Hume knew no more than Raleigh, and which for one marvel it has destroyed has revealed a hundred. I do not doubt that if Raleigh had seen and described a kangaroo, especially its all but miraculous process of gestation, Hume would have called that a lie also; but I will waste no more time in proving that no man is so credulous as the unbeliever—the man who has such mighty and world-embracing faith in himself that he makes his own little brain the measure of the universe. Let the dead bury their dead.

Raleigh sails for Guiana. The details of his voyage should be read at length. Everywhere they show the eye of a poet as well as of a man of science. He sees enough to excite his hopes more wildly than ever; he goes hundreds of miles up the Orinoco in an open boat, suffering every misery, but keeping up the hearts of his men, who cry out, 'Let us go on, we care not how far.' He makes friendship with the caciques, and enters into alliance with them on behalf of Queen Elizabeth against the Spaniards. Unable to pass the falls of the Caroli, and the rainy season drawing on, he returns, beloved and honoured by all the Indians, boasting that, during the whole time he was there, no woman was the worse for any man of his crew.

Altogether, we know few episodes of history so noble, righteous, and merciful as this Guiana voyage. But he has not forgotten the Spaniards. At Trinidad he payed his ships with the asphalt of the famous Pitch-lake, and stood—and with what awe such a man must have stood—beneath the noble forest of Moriche fan-palms on its brink.

He then attacked, not, by his own confession, without something too like treachery, the new town of San Jose, takes Berreo prisoner, and delivers from captivity five caciques, whom Berreo kept bound in one chain, 'basting their bodies with burning bacon'—an old trick of the Conquistadores—to make them discover their gold. He tells them that he was 'the servant of a Queen who was the greatest cacique of the north, and a virgin; who had more caciqui under her than there were trees on that island; that she was an enemy of the Castellani

(Spaniards) in behalf of their tyranny and oppression, and that she delivered all such nations about her as were by them oppressed, and having freed all the coast of the northern world from their servitude, had sent me to free them also, and withal to defend the country of Guiana from their invasion and conquest.' After which perfectly true and rational speech, he subjoins (as we think equally honestly and rationally), 'I showed them her Majesty's picture, which they so admired and honoured, as it had been easy to have brought them idolaters thereof.'

This is one of the stock charges against Raleigh, at which all biographers (except quiet, sensible Oldys, who, dull as he is, is far more fair and rational than most of his successors) break into virtuous shrieks of 'flattery,' 'meanness,' 'adulation,'

'courtiership,' and so forth. One biographer is of opinion that the Indians would have admired far more the picture of a 'red monkey.'

Sir Robert Schomburgk, unfortunately for the red monkey theory, though he quite agrees that Raleigh's flattery was very shocking, says that from what he knows—and no man knows more—of Indian taste, they would have far preferred to the portrait which Raleigh showed them—not a red monkey, but—such a picture as that at Hampton Court, in which Elizabeth is represented in a fantastic court dress.

Raleigh, it seems, must be made out a rogue at all risks, though by the most opposite charges. The monkey theory is answered, however, by Sir Robert; and Sir Robert is answered, I think, by the plain fact that, of course, Raleigh's portrait was exactly such a one as Sir Robert says they would have admired; a picture probably in a tawdry frame, representing Queen Bess, just as queens were always painted then, bedizened with 'browches, pearls, and owches,' satin and ruff, and probably with crown on head and sceptre in hand, made up, as likely as not, expressly for the purpose for which it was used. In the name of all simplicity and honesty, I ask, why is Raleigh to be accused of saying that the Indians admired Queen Elizabeth's beauty when he never even hints at it? And why do all commentators deliberately forget the preceding paragraph—Raleigh's proclamation to the Indians, and the circumstances under which it was spoken? The Indians are being murdered, ravished, sold for slaves, basted with burning

fat; and grand white men come like avenging angels, and in one day sweep their tyrants out of the land, restore them to liberty and life, and say to them, 'A great Queen far across the seas has sent us to do this. Thousands of miles away she has heard of your misery and taken pity on you; and if you will be faithful to her she will love you, and deal justly with you, and protect you against these Spaniards who are devouring you as they have devoured all the Indians round you; and for a token of it—a sign that we tell you truth, and that there is really such a great Queen, who is the Indian's friend—here is the picture of her.' What wonder if the poor idolatrous creatures had fallen down and worshipped the picture-

-just as millions do that of the Virgin Mary without a thousandth part as sound and practical reason—as that of a divine, all-knowing, all-merciful deliverer? As for its being the picture of a beautiful woman or not, they would never think of that. The fair complexion and golden hair would be a sign to them that she belonged to the mighty white people, even if there were no bedizenment of jewels and crowns over and above; and that would be enough for them. When will biographers learn to do common justice to their fellow-men by exerting now and then some small amount of dramatic imagination, just sufficient to put themselves for a moment in the place of those of whom they write?

So ends his voyage, in which, he says, 'from myself I have deserved no thanks, for I am returned a beggar and withered.' The only thing which, as far as I can find, he brought home was some of the delicious scaly peaches of the Moriche palm—the Arbol de Vida, or tree of life, which gives sustenance and all else needful to whole tribes of Indians. 'But I might have bettered my poor estate if I had not only respected her Majesty's future honour and riches. It became not the former fortune in which I once lived to go journeys of piccory' (pillage); 'and it had sorted ill with the offices of honour which, by her Majesty's grace, I hold this day in England, to run from cape to cape and place to place for the pillage of ordinary prizes.'

So speaks one whom it has been the fashion to consider as little better than a pirate, and that, too, in days when the noblest blood in England thought no shame (as indeed it was no shame) to enrich themselves with Spanish gold. But

so it is throughout this man's life. If there be a nobler word than usual to be spoken, or a more wise word either, if there be a more chivalrous deed to be done, or a more prudent deed either, that word and that deed are pretty sure to be Walter Raleigh's.

But the blatant beast has been busy at home; and, in spite of Chapman's heroical verses, he meets with little but cold looks.

Never mind. If the world will not help to do the deed, he will do it by himself; and no time must be lost, for the Spaniards on their part will lose none. So, after six months, the faithful Keymis sails again, again helped by the Lord High Admiral and Sir Robert Cecil.

It is a hard race for one private man against the whole power and wealth of Spain; and the Spaniard has been beforehand with them, and re-occupied the country. They have fortified themselves at the mouth of the Caroli, so it is impossible to get to the gold mines; they are enslaving the wretched Indians, carrying off their women, intending to transplant some tribes and to expel others, and arming cannibal tribes against the inhabitants. All is misery and rapine; the scattered remnant comes asking piteously why Raleigh does not come over to deliver them? Have the Spaniards slain him, too? Keymis comforts them as he best can; hears of more gold mines; and gets back safe, a little to his own astonishment; for eight-and-twenty ships of war have been sent to Trinidad to guard the entrance to El Dorado, not surely, as Keymis well says, 'to keep us only from tobacco.' A colony of 500 persons is expected from Spain. The Spaniard is well aware of the richness of the prize, says Keymis, who all through shows himself a worthy pupil of his master. A careful, observant man he seems to have been, trained by that great example to overlook no fact, even the smallest. He brings home lists of rivers, towns, caciques, poison-herbs, words, what not; he has fresh news of gold, spleen-stones, kidney-stones, and some fresh specimens; but be that as it may, he, 'without going as far as his eyes can warrant, can promise Brazil-wood, honey, cotton, balsamum, and drugs, to defray charges.' He would fain copy Raleigh's style, too, and 'whence his lamp had oil, borrow light also,' 'seasoning his unsavoury speech'

with some of the 'leaven of Raleigh's discourse.' Which, indeed, he does even to little pedantries and attempts at classicality; and after professing that himself and

the remnant of his few years he hath bequeathed wholly to Raleana, and his thoughts live only in that action, he rises into something like grandeur when he begins to speak of that ever-fertile subject, the Spanish cruelties to the Indians; 'Doth not the cry of the poor succourless ascend unto the heavens?

Hath God forgotten to be gracious to the work of his own hands. Or shall not his judgments in a day of visitation by the ministry of his chosen servant come upon these bloodthirsty butchers, like rain into a fleece of wool?' Poor Keymis! To us he is by no means the least beautiful figure in this romance; a faithful, diligent, loving man, unable, as the event proved, to do great deeds by himself, but inspired with a great idea by contact with a mightier spirit, to whom he clings through evil report, and poverty, and prison, careless of self to the last, and ends tragically, 'faithful unto death' in the most awful sense.

But here remark two things: first, that Cecil believes in Raleigh's Guiana scheme; next, that the occupation of Orinoco by the Spaniards, which Raleigh is accused of having concealed from James in 1617, has been ever since 1595 matter of the most public notoriety.

Raleigh has not been idle in the meanwhile. It has been found necessary after all to take the counsel which he gave in vain in 1588, to burn the Spanish fleet in harbour; and the heroes are gone down to Cadiz fight, and in one day of thunder storm the Sevastopol of Spain. Here, as usual, we find Raleigh, though in an inferior command, leading the whole by virtue of superior wisdom. When the good Lord Admiral will needs be cautious, and land the soldiers first, it is Raleigh who persuades him to force his way into the harbour, to the joy of all captains. When hotheaded Essex, casting his hat into the sea for joy, shouts 'Intramos,' and will in at once, Raleigh's time for caution comes, and he persuades them to wait till the next morning, and arrange the order of attack. That, too, Raleigh has to do, and moreover to lead it; and lead it he does.

Under the forts are seventeen galleys; the channel is 'scoured' with cannon: but on holds Raleigh's 'Warspite,' far ahead of the rest, through the thickest of the fire, answering forts and galleys 'with a blur of the trumpet to each piece, disdainingly to shoot at those esteemed dreadful monsters.' For there is a nobler

enemy ahead.

Right in front lie the galleons; and among them the 'Philip' and the 'Andrew,' two of those who boarded the 'Revenge.' This day there shall be a reckoning for the blood of his old friend; he is 'resolved to be revenged for the "Revenge,"" Sir Richard Grenvile's fatal ship, or second her with his own life'; and well he keeps his vow. Three hours pass of desperate valour, during which, so narrow is the passage, only seven English ships, thrusting past each other, all but quarrelling in their noble rivalry, engage the whole Spanish fleet of fifty-seven sail, and destroy it utterly. The 'Philip' and 'Thomas'

burn themselves despairing. The English boats save the 'Andrew' and 'Matthew.' One passes over the hideous record. 'If any man,' says Raleigh, 'had a desire to see hell itself, it was there most lively figured.' Keymis's prayer is answered in part, even while he writes it; and the cry of the Indians has not ascended in vain before the throne of God!

The soldiers are landed; the city stormed and sacked, not without mercies and courtesies, though, to women and unarmed folk, which win the hearts of the vanquished, and live till this day in well-known ballads. The Flemings begin a 'merciless slaughter.' Raleigh and the Lord Admiral beat them off. Raleigh is carried on shore with a splinter wound in the leg, which lames him for life: but returns on board in an hour in agony; for there is no admiral left to order the fleet, and all are run headlong to the sack. In vain he attempts to get together sailors the following morning, and attack the Indian fleet in Porto Real Roads; within twenty-four hours it is burnt by the Spaniards themselves; and all Raleigh wins is no booty, a lame leg, and the honour of having been the real author of a victory even more glorious than that of 1588.

So he returns; having written to Cecil the highest praises of Essex, whom he treats with all courtesy and fairness; which those who will may call cunning: we have as good a right to say that he was returning good for evil. There were noble qualities in Essex. All the world gave him credit for them, and far more than he deserved; why should not Raleigh have been just to him; even have conceived, like the rest of the world, high hopes of him, till he himself destroyed these

hopes? For now storms are rising fast. On their return Cecil is in power. He has been made Secretary of State instead of Bodley, Essex's pet, and the spoilt child begins to sulk.

On which matter, I am sorry to say, historians talk much unwisdom, about Essex's being too 'open and generous, etc., for a courtier,'

and 'presuming on his mistress's passion for him'; and representing Elizabeth as desiring to be thought beautiful, and 'affecting at sixty the sighs, loves, tears, and tastes of a girl of sixteen,' and so forth. It is really time to get rid of some of this fulsome talk, culled from such triflers as Osborne, if not from the darker and fouler sources of Parsons and the Jesuit slanderers, which I meet with a flat denial. There is simply no proof. She in love with Essex or Cecil? Yes, as a mother with a son. Were they not the children of her dearest and most faithful servants, men who had lived heroic lives for her sake? What wonder if she fancied that she saw the fathers in the sons? They had been trained under her eye. What wonder if she fancied that they could work as their fathers worked before them? And what shame if her childless heart yearned over them with unspeakable affection, and longed in her old age to lay her hands upon the shoulders of those two young men, and say to England, 'Behold the children which God, and not the flesh, has given me!'

Most strange it is, too, that women, who ought at least to know a woman's heart, have been especially forward in publishing these scandals, and sullyng their pages by retailing pruriences against such a one as Queen Elizabeth.

But to return. Raleigh attaches himself to Cecil; and he has good reason. Cecil is the cleverest man in England, saving himself. He has trusted and helped him, too, in two Guiana voyages; so the connection is one of gratitude as well as prudence. We know not whether he helped him in the third Guiana voyage in the same year, under Captain Berry, a north Devon man, from Grenville's country; who found a 'mighty folk,' who were 'something pleasant, having drunk much that day,' and carried bows with golden handles: but failed in finding the Lake Parima, and so came home.

Raleigh's first use of his friendship with Cecil is to reconcile him, to the

astonishment of the world, with Essex, alleging how much good may grow by it; for now 'the Queen's continual unquietness will grow to contentment.' That, too, those who will may call policy. We have as good a right to call it the act of a wise and faithful subject, and to say, 'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.' He has his reward for it in full restoration to the Queen's favour; he deserves it. He proves himself once more worthy of power, and it is given to him. Then there is to be a second great expedition: but this time its aim is the Azores.

Philip, only maddened by the loss at Cadiz, is preparing a third armament for the invasion of England and Ireland, and it is said to lie at the islands to protect the Indian fleet. Raleigh has the victualling of the land-forces, and, like everything else he takes in hand, 'it is very well done.' Lord Howard declines the chief command, and it is given to Essex. Raleigh is to be rear-admiral.

By the time they reach the Azores, Essex has got up a foolish quarrel against Raleigh for disrespect in having stayed behind to bring up some stragglers. But when no Armada is to be found at the Azores, Essex has after all to ask Raleigh what he shall do next. Conquer the Azores, says Raleigh, and the thing is agreed on. Raleigh and Essex are to attack Fayal. Essex sails away before Raleigh has watered. Raleigh follows as fast as he can, and at Fayal finds no Essex. He must water there, then and at once. His own veterans want him to attack forthwith, for the Spaniards are fortifying fast: but he will wait for Essex. Still no Essex comes. Raleigh attempts to water, is defied, finds himself 'in for it,' and takes the island out of hand in the most masterly fashion, to the infuriation of Essex.

Good Lord Howard patches up the matter, and the hotheaded coxcomb is once more pacified. They go on to Graciosa, where Essex's weakness of will again comes out, and he does not take the island. Three rich Caracks, however, are picked up. 'Though we shall be little the better for them,' says Raleigh privately to Sir Arthur Gorges, his faithful captain, 'yet I am heartily glad for our General's sake; because they will in great measure give content to her Majesty, so that there may be no repining against this poor Lord for the expense of the voyage.'



Raleigh begins to see that Essex is only to be pitied; that the voyage is not over likely to end well: but he takes it, in spite of ill-usage, as a kind-hearted man should. Again Essex makes a fool of himself. They are to steer one way in order to intercept the Plate-fleet. Essex having agreed to the course pointed out, alters his course on a fancy; then alters it a second time, though the hapless Monson, with the whole Plate-fleet in sight, is hanging out lights, firing guns, and shrieking vainly for the General, who is gone on a new course, in which he might have caught the fleet after all, in spite of his two mistakes, but that he chooses to go a roundabout way instead of a short one; and away goes the whole fleet, save one Carack, which runs itself on shore and burns, and the game is played out and lost.

All want Essex to go home, as the season is getting late: but the wilful and weak man will linger still, and while he is hovering to the south, Philip's armament has sailed from the Groyne, on the undefended shores of England, and only God's hand saves us from the effects of Essex's folly. A third time the Armadas of Spain are overwhelmed by the avenging tempests, and Essex returns to disgrace, having proved himself at once intemperate and incapable. Even in coming home there is confusion, and Essex is all but lost on the Bishop and Clerks, by Scilly, in spite of the warnings of Raleigh's sailing-master, 'Old Broadbent,' who is so exasperated at the general stupidity that he wants Raleigh to leave Essex and his squadron to get out of their own scrape as they can.

Essex goes off to sulk at Wanstead; but Vere excuses him, and in a few days he comes back, and will needs fight good Lord Howard for being made Earl of Nottingham for his services against the Armada and at Cadiz. Baulked of this, he begins laying the blame of the failure at the Azores on Raleigh. Let the spoilt naughty boy take care; even that 'admirable temper' for which Raleigh is famed may be worn out at last.

These years are Raleigh's noon—stormy enough at best, yet brilliant.

There is a pomp about him, outward and inward, which is terrible to others, dangerous to himself. One has gorgeous glimpses of that grand Durham House

of his, with its carvings and its antique marbles, armorial escutcheons, ‘beds with green silk hangings and legs like dolphins, overlaid with gold’: and the man himself, tall, beautiful, and graceful, perfect alike in body and in mind, walking to and fro, his beautiful wife upon his arm, his noble boy beside his knee, in his ‘white satin doublet, embroidered with pearls, and a great chain of pearls about his neck,’ lording it among the lords with an ‘awfulness and ascendancy above other mortals,’ for which men say that ‘his naeve is, that he is damnable proud’; and no wonder. The reduced squire’s younger son has gone forth to conquer the world; and he fancies, poor fool, that he has conquered it, just as it really has conquered him; and he will stand now on his blood and his pedigree (no bad one either), and all the more stiffly because puppies like Lord Oxford, who instead of making their fortunes have squandered them, call him ‘jack and upstart,’ and make impertinent faces while the Queen is playing the virginals, about ‘how when jacks go up, heads go down.’ Proud? No wonder if the man be proud! ‘Is not this great Babylon, which I have built?’ And yet all the while he has the most affecting consciousness that all this is not God’s will, but the will of the flesh; that the house of fame is not the house of God; that its floor is not the rock of ages, but the sea of glass mingled with fire, which may crack beneath him any moment, and let the nether flame burst up. He knows that he is living in a splendid lie; that he is not what God meant him to be. He longs to flee away and be at peace. It is to this period, not to his death-hour, that ‘The Lie’ belongs; {4} saddest of poems, with its melodious contempt and life-weariness. All is a lie—court, church, statesmen, courtiers, wit and science, town and country, all are shams; the days are evil; the canker is at the root of all things; the old heroes are dying one by one; the Elizabethan age is rotting down, as all human things do, and nothing is left but to bewail with Spenser ‘The Ruins of Time’; the glory and virtue which have been—

the greater glory and virtue which might be even now, if men would but arise and repent, and work righteousness, as their fathers did before them. But no. Even to such a world as this he will cling, and flaunt it about as captain of the guard in the Queen’s progresses and masques and pageants, with sword-belt studded with diamonds and rubies, or at tournaments, in armour of solid silver, and a gallant train with orange-tawny feathers, provoking Essex to bring in a far larger train in the same colours, and swallow up Raleigh’s pomp in his own, so achieving that famous ‘feather triumph’ by which he gains little but bad blood and a good jest. For Essex is no better tilter than he is general; and having ‘run very ill’ in his orange-tawny, comes next day in green, and runs still worse, and yet is seen to be the same cavalier; whereon a spectator shrewdly observes that

he changed his colours 'that it may be reported that there was one in green who ran worse than he in orange-tawny.' But enough of these toys, while God's handwriting is upon the wall above all heads.

Raleigh knows that the handwriting is there. The spirit which drove him forth to Virginia and Guiana is fallen asleep: but he longs for Sherborne and quiet country life, and escapes thither during Essex's imprisonment, taking Cecil's son with him, and writes as only he can write about the shepherd's peaceful joys, contrasted with 'courts'

and 'masques' and 'proud towers' -

'Here are no false entrapping baits Too hasty for too hasty fates,

Unless it be

The fond credulity

Of silly fish, that worlding who still look Upon the bait, but never on the hook;

Nor envy, unless among

The birds, for prize of their sweet song.

'Go! let the diving negro seek

For pearls hid in some forlorn creek, We all pearls scorn,

Save what the dewy morn

Congeals upon some little spire of grass, Which careless shepherds beat down as they pass And gold ne'er here appears

Save what the yellow Ceres bears.'

Tragic enough are the after scenes of Raleigh's life: but most tragic of all are these scenes of vain-glory, in which he sees the better part, and yet chooses the worse, and pours out his self-discontent in song which proves the fount of delicacy and beauty which lies pure and bright beneath the gaudy artificial crust. What might not this man have been! And he knows that too. The stately rooms of Durham House pall on him, and he delights to hide up in his little study among his books and his chemical experiments, and smoke his silver pipe, and look out on the clear Thames and the green Surrey hills, and dream about Guiana and the Tropics; or to sit in the society of antiquaries with Selden and Cotton, Camden and Stow; or in his own Mermaid Club, with Ben Jonson, Fletcher, Beaumont, and at last with Shakspeare's self to hear and utter 'Words that have been

So nimble, and so full of subtle flame, As if that every one from whom they came Had meant to put his whole wit in a jest.'

Anything to forget the handwriting on the wall, which will not be forgotten. But he will do all the good which he can meanwhile, nevertheless. He will serve God and Mammon. So complete a man will surely be able to do both. Unfortunately the thing is impossible, as he discovers too late: but he certainly goes as near success in the attempt as ever man did. Everywhere we find him doing justly and loving mercy. Wherever this man steps he leaves his footprint ineffaceably in deeds of benevolence. For one year only, it seems, he is governor of Jersey; yet to this day, it is said, the islanders honour his name, only second to that of Duke Rollo, as their great benefactor, the founder of their Newfoundland trade. In the west country he is 'as a king,' 'with ears and mouth always open to hear and deliver their grievances, feet and hands ready to go and work their redress.' The tin-merchants have become usurers 'of fifty in the hundred.' Raleigh works till he has put down their 'abominable and cut-throat dealing.' There is a burdensome west-country tax on curing fish; Raleigh works till it is revoked. In Parliament he is busy with liberal measures, always before his generation. He puts down a foolish act for compulsory sowing of hemp in a speech on the freedom of labour worthy of the nineteenth century. He argues against raising the subsidy from the three-pound men—'Call you this, Mr. Francis Bacon, par jugum, when a poor man pays as much as a rich?' He is equally rational and

spirited against the exportation of ordnance to the enemy; and when the question of abolishing monopolies is mooted he has his wise word. He too is a monopolist of tin, as Lord Warden of the Stannaries. But he has so wrought as to bring good out of evil; for 'before the granting of his patent, let the price of tin be never so high, the poor workman never had but two shillings a week'; yet now, so has he extended and organised the tin-works, 'that any man who will can find work, be tin at what price soever, and have four shillings a week truly paid ... Yet if all others may be repealed, I will give my consent as freely to the cancelling of this as any member of this house.' Most of the monopolies were repealed: but we do not find that Raleigh's was among them. Why should it be if its issue was more tin, full work, and double wages? In all things this man approves himself faithful in his generation. His sins are not against man, but against God; such as the world thinks no sins, and hates them, not from morality, but from envy.

In the meanwhile, the evil which, so Spenser had prophesied, only waited Raleigh's death breaks out in his absence, and Ireland is all aflame with Tyrone's rebellion. Raleigh is sent for. He will not accept the post of Lord Deputy and go to put it down. Perhaps he does not expect fair play as long as Essex is at home. Perhaps he knows too much of the 'common weal, or rather common woe,' and thinks that what is crooked cannot be made straight. Perhaps he is afraid to lose by absence his ground at court. Would that he had gone, for Ireland's sake and his own. However, it must not be. Ormond is recalled, and Knollys shall be sent: but Essex will have none but Sir George Carew; whom, Naunton says, he hates, and wishes to oust from court. He and Elizabeth argue it out. He turns his back on her, and she gives him—or does not give him, for one has found so many of these racy anecdotes vanish on inspection into simple wind, that one believes none of them—a box on the ear; which if she did, she did the most wise, just, and practical thing which she could do with such a puppy. He claps his hand—or does not—to his sword, 'He would not have taken it from Henry VIII.,' and is turned out forthwith. In vain Egerton, the Lord Keeper, tries to bring him to reason. He storms insanely. Every one on earth is wrong but he: every one is conspiring against him; he talks of 'Solomon's fool'

too. Had he read the Proverbs a little more closely, he might have left the said fool alone, as being a too painfully exact likeness of himself. It ends by his being worsted, and Raleigh rising higher than ever.

I cannot see why Raleigh should be represented as henceforth becoming Essex's 'avowed enemy,' save on the ground that all good men are and ought to be the enemies of bad men, when they see them about to do harm, and to ruin the country. Essex is one of the many persons upon whom this age has lavished a quantity of sentimentality, which suits oddly enough with its professions of impartiality. But there is an impartiality which ends in utter injustice; which by saying carelessly to every quarrel, 'Both are right, and both are wrong,'

leaves only the impression that all men are wrong, and ends by being unjust to every one. So has Elizabeth and Essex's quarrel been treated. There was some evil in Essex; therefore Elizabeth was a fool for liking him. There was some good in Essex; therefore Elizabeth was cruel in punishing him. This is the sort of slipshod dilemma by which Elizabeth is proved to be wrong, even while Essex is confessed to be wrong too; while the patent facts of the case are, that Elizabeth bore with him as long as she could, and a great deal longer than any one else could. Why Raleigh should be accused of helping to send Essex into Ireland, I do not know. Camden confesses (at the same time that he gives a hint of the kind) that Essex would let no one go but himself. And if this was his humour, one can hardly wonder at Cecil and Raleigh, as well as Elizabeth, bidding the man begone and try his hand at government, and be filled with the fruit of his own devices. He goes; does nothing; or rather worse than nothing; for in addition to the notorious ill-management of the whole matter, we may fairly say that he killed Elizabeth. She never held up her head again after Tyrone's rebellion. Elizabeth still clings to him, changing her mind about him every hour, and at last writes him such a letter as he deserves. He has had power, money, men, such as no one ever had before. Why has he done nothing but bring England to shame? He comes home frantically—the story of his bursting into the dressing-room rests on no good authority—with a party of friends at his heels, leaving Ireland to take care of itself. Whatever entertainment he met with from the fond old woman, he met with the coldness which he deserved from Raleigh and Cecil.

Who can wonder? What had he done to deserve aught else? But he all but conquers; and Raleigh takes to his bed in consequence, sick of the whole matter; as one would have been inclined to do oneself. He is examined and arraigned; writes a maudlin letter to Elizabeth.

Elizabeth has been called a fool for listening to such pathological 'love letters': and

then hardhearted for not listening to them.

Poor Lady! do what she would, she found it hard enough to please all parties while alive; must she be condemned over and above in aeternum to be wrong whatsoever she did? Why is she not to have the benefit of the plain straightforward interpretation which would be allowed to any other human being; namely, that she approved of such fine talk as long as it was proved to be sincere by fine deeds: but that when these were wanting, the fine talk became hollow, fulsome, a fresh cause of anger and disgust? Yet still she weeps over Essex when he falls sick, as any mother would; and would visit him if she could with honour. But a 'malignant influence counteracts every disposition to relent.' No doubt, a man's own folly, passion, and insolence has generally a very malignant influence on his fortunes; and he may consider himself a very happy man if all that befalls to him thereby is what befell Essex, namely, deprivation of his offices and imprisonment in his own house. He is forgiven after all; but the spoilt child refuses his bread and butter without sugar. What is the pardon to him without a renewal of his licence of sweet wines?

Because he is not to have that, the Queen's 'conditions are as crooked as her carcase.' Flesh and blood can stand no more, and ought to stand no more. After all that Elizabeth has been to him, that speech is the speech of a brutal and ungrateful nature. And such he shows himself to be in the hour of trial. What if the patent for sweet wines is refused him? Such gifts were meant as the reward of merit; and what merit has he to show? He never thinks of that.

Blind with fury, he begins to intrigue with James, and slanders to him, under colour of helping his succession, all whom he fancies opposed to him. What is worse, he intrigues with Tyrone about bringing over an army of Irish Papists to help him against the Queen, and this at the very time that his sole claim to popularity rests on his being the leader of the Puritans. A man must have been very far gone, either in baseness or in hatred, who represents Raleigh to James as dangerous to the commonweal on account of his great power in the west of England and Jersey, 'places fit for the Spaniard to land in.' Cobham, as Warden of the Cinque Ports, is included in his slander; and both he and Raleigh will hear of it again.

Some make much of a letter, supposed to be written about this time by Raleigh

to Cecil, bidding Cecil keep down Essex, even crush him, now that he is once down. I do not happen to think the letter to be Raleigh's. His initials are subscribed to it; but not his name and the style is not like his. But as for seeing 'unforgiveness and revenge in it,' whose soever it may be, I hold and say there is not a word which can bear such a construction. It is a dark letter: but about a dark matter and a dark man. It is a worldly and expedient letter, appealing to low motives in Cecil, though for a right end; such a letter, in short, as statesmen are wont to write nowadays. If Raleigh wrote it, God punished him for doing so speedily enough. He does not usually punish statesmen nowadays for such letters; perhaps because He does not love them as well as Raleigh. But as for the letter itself. Essex is called a 'tyrant,' because he had shown himself one. The Queen is to 'hold Bothwell,' because 'while she hath him, he will even be the canker of her estate and safety,' and the writer has 'seen the last of her good days and of ours after his liberty.' On which accounts, Cecil is not to be deterred from doing what is right and necessary 'by any fear of after-revenges' and 'conjectures from causes remote,' as many a stronger instance—given-

-will prove, but 'look to the present,' and so 'do wisely.' There is no real cause for Cecil's fear. If the man who has now lost a power which he ought never to have had be now kept down, then neither he nor his son will ever be able to harm the man who has kept him at his just level. What 'revenge, selfishness, and craft' there can be in all this it is difficult to see; as difficult as to see why Essex is to be talked of as 'unfortunate,' and the blame of his frightful end thrown on every one but himself: the fact being that Essex's end was brought on by his having chosen one Sunday morning for breaking out into open rebellion, for the purpose of seizing the city of London and the Queen's person, and compelling her to make him lord and master of the British Isles; in which attempt he and his fought with the civil and military authorities, till artillery had to be brought up and many lives were lost. Such little escapades may be pardonable enough in 'noble and unfortunate' earls: but readers will perhaps agree that if they chose to try a similar experiment, they could not complain if they found themselves shortly after in company with Mr.

Mitchell at Spike Island or Mr. Oxford in Bedlam. However, those were days in which such Sabbath amusements on the part of one of the most important and powerful personages of the realm could not be passed over so lightly, especially when accompanied by severe loss of life; and as there existed in England certain statutes concerning rebellion and high treason, which must needs have been framed for some purpose or other, the authorities of England may be excused for



fancying that they bore some reference to such acts as that which the noble and unfortunate earl had just committed, as wantonly, selfishly, and needlessly, it seems to me, as ever did man on earth.

I may seem to jest too much upon so solemn a matter as the life of a human being; but if I am not to touch the popular talk about Essex in this tone, I can only touch it in a far sterner one; and if ridicule is forbidden, express disgust instead.

I have entered into this matter of Essex somewhat at length, because on it is founded one of the mean slanders from which Raleigh never completely recovered. The very mob who, after Raleigh's death, made him a Protestant martyr—as, indeed, he was—looked upon Essex in the same light, hated Raleigh as the cause of his death, and accused him of glutting his eyes with Essex's misery, puffing tobacco out of a window, and what not—all mere inventions, so Raleigh declared upon the scaffold. He was there in his office as captain of the guard, and could do no less than be there. Essex, it is said, asked for Raleigh just before he died: but Raleigh had withdrawn, the mob having murmured. What had Essex to say to him? Was it, asks Oldys, shrewdly enough, to ask him pardon for the wicked slanders which he had been pouring into James's credulous and cowardly ears? We will hope so; and leave poor Essex to God and the mercy of God, asserting once more that no man ever brought ruin and death more thoroughly on himself by his own act, needing no imaginary help downwards from Raleigh, Cecil, or other human being.

And now begins the fourth act of this strange tragedy. Queen Elizabeth dies; and dies of grief. It has been the fashion to attribute to her, I know not why, remorse for Essex's death; and the foolish and false tale about Lady Nottingham and the ring has been accepted as history. The fact seems to be that she never really held up her head after Burleigh's death. She could not speak of him without tears; forbade his name to be mentioned in the Council. No wonder; never had mistress a better servant. For nearly half a century have these two noble souls loved each other, trusted each other, worked with each other; and God's blessing has been

on their deeds; and now the faithful God-fearing man is gone to his reward; and she is growing old, and knows that the ancient fire is dying out in her; and who will be to her what he was? Buckhurst is a good man, and one of her old pupils; and she makes him Lord Treasurer in Burleigh's place: but beyond that all is dark. 'I am a miserable forlorn woman; there is none about me that I can trust.' She sees through Cecil; through Henry Howard. Essex has proved himself worthless, and pays the penalty of his sins. Men are growing worse than their fathers. Spanish gold is bringing in luxury and sin. The last ten years of her reign are years of decadence, profligacy, falsehood; and she cannot but see it. Tyrone's rebellion is the last drop which fills the cup. After fifty years of war, after a drain of money all but fabulous expended on keeping Ireland quiet, the volcano bursts forth again just as it seemed extinguished, more fiercely than ever, and the whole work has to be done over again, when there is neither time nor a man to do it. And ahead, what hope is there for England? Who will be her successor? She knows in her heart that it will be James: but she cannot bring herself to name him. To bequeath the fruit of all her labours to a tyrant, a liar, and a coward: for she knows the man but too well. It is too hideous to be faced. This is the end then? 'Oh that I were a milke maide, with a paile upon mine arm!' But it cannot be. It never could have been; and she must endure to the end.

'Therefore I hated life; yea, I hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun; because I should leave it to the man that shall be after me. And who knows whether he shall be a wise man or a fool?

yet shall he have rule over all my labour wherein I have showed myself wise, in wisdom, and knowledge, and equity ... Vanity of vanities, and vexation of spirit!' And so, with a whole book of Ecclesiastes written on that mighty heart, the old lioness coils herself up in her lair, refuses food, and dies. I know few passages in the world's history more tragic than that death.

Why did she not trust Raleigh? First, because Raleigh, as we have seen, was not the sort of man whom she needed. He was not the steadfast single-eyed statesman; but the many-sided genius. Besides, he was the ringleader of the war-party. And she, like Burleigh before his death, was tired of the war; saw that it was demoralising England; was anxious for peace. Raleigh would not see that. It

was to him a divine mission which must be fulfilled at all risks. As long as the Spaniards were opposing the Indians, conquering America, there must be no peace. Both were right from their own point of view. God ordered the matter from a third point of view.

Besides, we know that Essex, and after him Cecil and Henry Howard, had been slandering Raleigh basely to James. Can we doubt that the same poison had been poured into Elizabeth's ears? She might distrust Cecil too much to act upon what he said of Raleigh; and yet distrust Raleigh too much to put the kingdom into his hands.

However, she is gone now, and a new king has arisen, who knoweth not Joseph.

James comes down to take possession. Insolence, luxury, and lawlessness mark his first steps on his going amid the adulations of a fallen people; he hangs a poor wretch without trial; wastes his time in hunting by the way;—a bad and base man, whose only redeeming point—if in his case it be one—is his fondness for little children.

But that will not make a king. The wiser elders take counsel together. Raleigh and good Judge Fortescue are for requiring conditions from the newcomer; and constitutional liberty makes its last stand among the men of Devon, the old county of warriors, discoverers, and statesmen, of which Queen Bess had said that the men of Devon were her right hand. But in vain; James has his way; Cecil and Henry Howard are willing enough to give it him.

So down comes Rehoboam, taking counsel with the young men, and makes answer to England, 'My father chastised you with whips; but I will chastise you with scorpions.' He takes a base pleasure, shocking to the French ambassador, in sneering at the memory of Queen Elizabeth; a perverse delight in honouring every rascal whom she had punished.

Tyrone must come to England to be received into favour, maddening the soul of honest Sir John Harrington. Essex is christened 'my martyr,'

apparently for having plotted treason against Elizabeth with Tyrone.

Raleigh is received with a pun—‘By my soul, I have heard rawly of thee, mon’; and when the great nobles and gentlemen come to court with their retinues, James tries to hide his dread of them in an insult; pooh-poohs their splendour, and says, ‘he doubts not that he should have been able to win England for himself, had they kept him out.’ Raleigh answers boldly, ‘Would God that had been put to the trial.’ ‘Why?’ ‘Because then you would have known your friends from your foes.’ ‘A reason,’ says old Aubrey, ‘never forgotten or forgiven.’ Aubrey is no great authority; but the speech smacks so of Raleigh’s offhand daring that one cannot but believe it; as one does also the other story of his having advised the lords to keep out James and erect a republic. Not that he could have been silly enough to propose such a thing seriously at that moment; but that he most likely, in his bold way, may have said, ‘Well, if we are to have this man in without conditions, better a republic at once.’ Which, if he did say, he said what the next forty years proved to be strictly true. However, he will go on his own way as best he can. If James will give him a loan, he and the rest of the old heroes will join, fit out a fleet against Spain, and crush her, now that she is tottering and impoverished, once and for ever. But James has no stomach for fighting; cannot abide the sight of a drawn sword; would not provoke Spain for the world—why, they might send Jesuits and assassinate him; and as for the money, he wants that for very different purposes. So the answer which he makes to Raleigh’s proposal of war against Spain is to send him to the Tower, and sentence him to be hanged, drawn, and quartered, on a charge of plotting with Spain.

Having read, I believe, nearly all that has been written on the subject of this dark ‘Cobham plot,’ I find but one thing come brightly out of the infinite confusion and mystery, which will never be cleared up till the day of judgment, and that is Raleigh’s innocence. He, and all England, and the very men who condemned him, knew that he was innocent. Every biographer is forced to confess this, more or less, in spite of all efforts to be what is called ‘impartial.’ So I shall waste no words upon the matter, only observing that whereas Raleigh is said to have slandered Cecil to James, in the same way that Cecil had slandered him, one passage of this Cobham plot disproves utterly such a story, which, after all, rests (as far as I know) only on hearsay, being ‘spoken of in a manuscript written by one Buck, secretary to Chancellor Egerton.’

For in writing to his own wife, in the expectation of immediate death, Raleigh speaks of Cecil in a very different tone, as one in whom he trusted most, and who has left him in the hour of need. I ask the reader to peruse that letter, and say whether any man would write thus, with death and judgment before his face, of one whom he knew that he had betrayed; or, indeed, of one who he knew had betrayed him. I see no reason to doubt that Raleigh kept good faith with Cecil, and that he was ignorant till after his trial that Cecil was in the plot against him.

I do not care to enter into the tracasseries of this Cobham plot.

Every one knows them; no one can unravel them. The moral and spiritual significance of the fact is more interesting than all questions as to Cobham's lies, Brooke's lies, Aremberg's lies, Coke's lies, James's lies:- Let the dead bury their dead. It is the broad aspect of the thing which is so wonderful; to see how 'The eagle, towering in his pride of place, Was by a mousing owl hawked at and killed.'

This is the man who six months ago, perhaps, thought that he and Cecil were to rule England together, while all else were the puppets whose wires they pulled. 'The Lord hath taken him up and dashed him down;' and by such means, too, and on such a charge! Betraying his country to Spain! Absurd—incredible—he would laugh it to scorn: but it is bitter earnest. There is no escape. True or false, he sees that his enemies will have his head. It is maddening: a horrible nightmare. He cannot bear it; he cannot face—so he writes to that beloved wife—'the scorn, the taunts, the loss of honour, the cruel words of lawyers.' He stabs himself. Read that letter of his, written after the mad blow had been struck; it is sublime from intensity of agony. The way in which the chastisement was taken proves how utterly it was needed, ere that proud, success-swollen, world-entangled heart could be brought right with God.

And it is brought right. The wound is not mortal. He comes slowly to a better mind, and takes his doom like a man. That first farewell to his wife was written out of hell. The second rather out of heaven. Read it, too, and compare; and then see how the Lord has been working upon this great soul: infinite sadness, infinite

tenderness and patience, and trust in God for himself and his poor wife: '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, dear wife, that your son is the son of a true man, and one who, in his own respect, despiseth death and all his ugly and misshapen forms ... The everlasting, powerful, infinite, and omnipotent God, who is goodness itself, the true life and light, keep thee and thine, have mercy upon me, and teach me to forgive my persecutors and accusers, and send us to meet in His glorious kingdom.'

Is it come to this then? Is he fit to die at last? Then he is fit to live; and live he shall. The tyrants have not the heart to carry out their own crime, and Raleigh shall be respited.

But not pardoned. No more return for him into that sinful world, where he flaunted on the edge of the precipice, and dropped heedless over it. God will hide him in the secret place of His presence, and keep him in His tabernacle from the strife of tongues; and a new life shall begin for him; a wiser, perhaps a happier, than he has known since he was a little lad in the farmhouse in pleasant Devon far away. On the 15th of December he enters the Tower. Little dreams he that for more than twelve years those doleful walls would be his home. Lady Raleigh obtains leave to share his prison with him, and, after having passed ten years without a child, brings him a boy to comfort the weary heart. The child of sorrow is christened Carew.

Little think those around him what strange things that child will see before his hairs be gray. She has her maid, and he his three servants; some five or six friends are allowed 'to repair to him at convenient times.' He has a chamber-door always open into the lieutenant's garden, where he 'has converted a little hen-house into a still-room, and spends his time all the day in distillation.' The next spring a grant is made of his goods and chattels, forfeited by attainder, to trustees named by himself, for the benefit of his family. So far, so well; or, at least, not as ill as it might be: but there are those who cannot leave the caged lion in peace.

Sanderson, who had married his niece, instead of paying up the arrears which he owes on the wine and other offices, brings in a claim of 2000 pounds. But the rogue meets his match, and finds himself, at the end of a lawsuit, in prison for debt. Greater rogues, however, will have better fortune, and break through the law-cobwebs which have stopped a poor little fly like Sanderson. For Carr, afterwards Lord Somerset, casts his eyes on the Sherborne land.

It has been included in the conveyance, and should be safe; but there are others who, by instigation surely of the devil himself, have had eyes to see a flaw in the deed. Sir John Popham is appealed to. Who could doubt the result? He answers that there is no doubt that the words were omitted by the inattention of the engrosser—Carew Raleigh says that but one single word was wanting, which word was found notwithstanding in the paper-book, *i.e.* the draft—but that the word not being there, the deed is worthless, and the devil may have his way. To Carr, who has nothing of his own, it seems reasonable enough to help himself to what belongs to others, and James gives him the land. Raleigh writes to him, gently, gracefully, loftily. Here is an extract: ‘And for yourself, sir, seeing your fair day is now in the dawn, and mine drawn to the evening, your own virtues and the king’s grace assuring you of many favours and much honour, I beseech you not to begin your first building upon the ruins of the innocent; and that their sorrows, with mine, may not attend your first plantation.’ He speaks strongly of the fairness, sympathy, and pity by which the Scots in general had laid him under obligation: argues from it his own evident innocence; and ends with a quiet warning to the young favourite not to ‘undergo the curse of them that enter into the fields of the fatherless.’ In vain. Lady Raleigh, with her children, entreats James on her knees: in vain again. ‘I mun ha’

the land,’ is the answer; ‘I mun ha’ it for Carr.’ And he has it; patching up the matter after a while by a gift of 8000 pounds to her and her elder son, in requital for an estate of 5000 pounds a year.

So there sits Raleigh, growing poorer day by day, and clinging more and more to that fair wife, and her noble boy, and the babe whose laughter makes music within that dreary cage. And all day long, as we have seen, he sits over his still, compounding and discovering, and sometimes showing himself on the wall to the people, who gather to gaze at him, till Wade forbids it, fearing popular feeling. In fact, the world outside has a sort of mysterious awe of him, as if he

were a chained magician, who, if he were let loose, might do with them all what he would. Certain great nobles are of the same mind.

Woe to them if that silver tongue should once again be unlocked!

The Queen, with a woman's faith in greatness, sends to him for 'cordials.' Here is one of them, famous in Charles the Second's days as 'Sir Walter's Cordial':-

B. Zedoary and Saffron, each 0.5 lb.

Distilled water 3 pints.

Macerate, etc., and reduce to 1.5 pint.

Compound powder of crabs' claws 16 oz.

Cinnamon and Nutmegs 2 oz.

Cloves 1 oz.

Cardamom seeds 0.5 oz.

Double refined sugar 2 lb.

Make a confection.

Which, so the world believes, will cure all ills which flesh is heir to. It does not seem that Raleigh so boasted himself; but the people, after the fashion of the time, seem to have called all his medicines 'cordials,' and probably took for granted that it was by this particular one that the enchanter cured Queen Anne of a desperate sickness, 'whereof the physicians were at the farthest end of their studies' (no great way to go in those days) 'to find the cause, and at a nonplus for the cure.'



Raleigh—this is Sir Anthony Welden’s account, which may go for what it is worth—asks for his reward, only justice. Will the Queen ask that certain lords may be sent to examine Cobham, ‘whether he had at any time accused Sir Walter of any treason under his hand?’ Six are sent. Cobham answers, ‘Never; nor could I: that villain Wade often solicited me, and not so prevailing, got me by a trick to write my name on a piece of white paper. So that if a charge come under my hand it was forged by that villain Wade, by writing something above my hand, without my consent or knowledge.’ They return. An equivocation was ready. ‘Sir, my Lord Cobham has made good all that ever he wrote or said’; having, by his own account, written nothing but his name. This is Sir Anthony Welden’s story. One hopes, for the six lords’ sake, it may not be true; but there is no reason, in the morality of James’s court, why it should not have been.

So Raleigh must remain where he is, and work on. And he does work.

As his captivity becomes more and more hopeless, so comes out more and more the stateliness, self-help, and energy of the man. Till now he has played with his pen: now he will use it in earnest; and use it as few prisoners have done. Many a good book has been written in a dungeon—‘Don Quixote,’ the ‘Pilgrim’s Progress’: beautiful each in its way, and destined to immortality: Raleigh begins the ‘History of the World,’ the most God-fearing and God-seeing history which I know of among English writings; though blotted by flattery of James in the preface: wrong: but pardonable in a man trying in the Tower to get out of that doleful prison. But all his writings are thirty years too late; they express the creed of a buried generation, of the men who defied Spain in the name of a God of righteousness,—not of men who cringe before her in the name of a God of power and cunning.

The captive eagle has written with a quill from his own wing—a quill which has been wont ere now to soar to heaven. Every line smacks of the memories of Nombre and of Zutphen, of Tilbury Fort and of Calais Roads; and many a gray-headed veteran, as he read them, must have turned away his face to hide the noble tears, as Ulysses from Demodocus when he sang the song of Troy. So there sits Raleigh, like the prophet of old, in his lonely tower above the Thames, watching the darkness gather upon the land year by year, ‘like the morning spread over the mountains,’ the darkness which comes before the dawn of the Day of The Lord; which he shall never see on earth, though it be very near at

hand; and asks of each newcomer, 'Watchman, what of the night?'

But there is one bright point at least in the darkness; one on whom Raleigh's eyes, and those of all England, are fixed in boundless hope; one who, by the sympathy which attracts all noble natures to each other, clings to the hero utterly; Henry, the Crown Prince. 'No king but my father would keep such a bird in a cage.' The noble lad tries to open the door for the captive eagle; but in vain. At least he will make what use he can of his wisdom. He asks him for advice about the new ship he is building, and has a simple practical letter in return, and over and above probably the two valuable pamphlets, 'Of the Invention of Ships,' and 'Observations on the Navy and Sea Service'; which the Prince will never see. In 1611 he asks Raleigh's advice about the foolish double marriage with the Prince and Princess of Savoy, and receives for answer two plain-spoken discourses as full of historical learning as of practical sound sense.

These are benefits which must be repaid. The father will repay them hereafter in his own way. In the meanwhile the son does so in his way, by soliciting the Sherborne estate as for himself, intending to restore it to Raleigh. He succeeds. Carr is bought off for 25,000

pounds, where Lady Raleigh has been bought off with 8000 pounds; but neither Raleigh nor his widow will ever be the better for that bargain, and Carr will get Sherborne back again, and probably, in the King's silly dotage, keep the 25,000 pounds also.

In November 1612 Prince Henry falls sick.

When he is at the last gasp, the poor Queen sends to Raleigh for some of the same cordial which had cured her. Medicine is sent, with a tender letter, as it well might be; for Raleigh knew how much hung, not only for himself, but for England, on the cracking threads of that fair young life. It is questioned at first whether it shall be administered. 'The cordial,' Raleigh says, 'will cure him or

any other of a fever, except in case of poison.'

The cordial is administered; but it comes too late. The prince dies, and with him the hopes of all good men.

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At last, after twelve years of prison, Raleigh is free. He is sixty-six years old now, gray-headed and worn down by confinement, study, and want of exercise: but he will not remember that.

'Still in his ashes live their wonted fire.'

Now for Guiana, at last! which he has never forgotten; to which he has been sending, with his slender means, ship after ship to keep the Indians in hope.

He is freed in March. At once he is busy in his project. In August he has obtained the King's commission, by the help of Sir Ralph Winwood, Secretary of State, who seems to have believed in Raleigh.

At least Raleigh believed in him. In March next year he has sailed, and with him thirteen ships, and more than a hundred knights and gentlemen, and among them, strange to say, Sir Warham St. Leger.

This is certainly not the quondam Marshal of Munster under whom Raleigh served at Smerwick six-and-thirty years ago. He would be nearly eighty years old; and as Lord Doneraile's pedigree gives three Sir Warhams, we cannot identify the man. But it is a strong argument in Raleigh's favour that a St. Leger,

of a Devon family which had served with him in Ireland, and intimately connected with him his whole life, should keep his faith in Raleigh after all his reverses.

Nevertheless, the mere fact of an unpardoned criminal, said to be non ens in law, being able in a few months to gather round him such a party, is proof patent of what slender grounds there are for calling Raleigh 'suspected' and 'unpopular.'

But he does not sail without a struggle or two. James is too proud to allow his heir to match with any but a mighty king, is infatuated about the Spanish marriage; and Gondomar is with him, playing with his hopes and with his fears also.

The people are furious, and have to be silenced again and again: there is even fear of rioting. The charming and smooth-tongued Gondomar can hate, and can revenge, too. Five 'prentices who have insulted him for striking a little child, are imprisoned and fined several hundred pounds each. And as for hating Raleigh, Gondomar had been no Spaniard (to let alone the private reasons which some have supposed) had he not hated Spain's ancient scourge and unswerving enemy. He comes to James, complaining that Raleigh is about to break the peace with Spain. Nothing is to be refused him which can further the one darling fancy of James; and Raleigh has to give in writing the number of his ships, men, and ordnance, and, moreover, the name of the country and the very river whither he is going. This paper was given, Carew Raleigh asserts positively, under James's solemn promise not to reveal it; and Raleigh himself seems to have believed that it was to be kept private; for he writes afterwards to Secretary Winwood in a tone of astonishment and indignation, that the information contained in his paper had been sent on to the King of Spain before he sailed from the Thames. Winwood could have told him as much already; for Buckingham had written to Winwood, on March 28, to ask him why he had not been to the Spanish Ambassador 'to acquaint him with the order taken by his Majesty about Sir W. R.'s voyage.'

But however unwilling the Secretary (as one of the furtherers of the voyage) may have been to meddle in the matter, Gondomar had had news enough from

another source; perhaps from James's own mouth. For the first letter to the West Indies about Raleigh was dated from Madrid, March 19; and most remarkable it is that in James's 'Declaration,' or rather apology for his own conduct, no mention whatsoever is made of his having given information to Gondomar.

Gondomar offered, says James, to let Raleigh go with one or two ships only. He might work a mine, and the King of Spain would give him a safe convoy home with all his gold. How kind. And how likely would Raleigh and his fellow-adventurers have been to accept such an offer; how likely, too, to find men who would sail with them on such an errand, to be 'flayed alive,' as many who travelled to the Indies of late years had been, or to have their throats cut, tied back to back, after trading unarmed and peaceably for a month, as thirty-six of Raleigh's men had been but two or three years before in that very Orinoco. So James is forced to let the large fleet go; and to let it go well armed also; for the plain reason, that otherwise it dare not go at all; and in the meanwhile letters are sent from Spain, in which the Spaniards call the fleet 'English enemies,' and ships and troops are moved up as fast as possible from the Spanish main.

But, say some, James was justified in telling Gondomar, and the Spaniards in defending themselves. On the latter point there is no doubt.

'They may get who have the will,

And they may keep who can.'

But it does seem hard on Raleigh, after having laboured in this Guiana business for years, and after having spent his money in vain attempts to deliver these Guianians from their oppressors. It is hard, and he feels it so. He sees that he is not trusted; that, as James himself confesses, his pardon is refused simply to keep a hold on him; that, if he fails, he is ruined.

As he well asks afterwards, 'If the King did not think that Guiana was his, why let me go thither at all? He knows that it was his by the law of nations, for he made Mr. Harcourt a grant of part of it.

If it be, as Gondomar says, the King of Spain's, then I had no more right to work a mine in it than to burn a town.' An argument which seems to me unanswerable. But, says James, and others with him, he was forbid to meddle with any country occupate or possessed by Spaniards. Southey, too, blames him severely for not having told James that the country was already settled by Spaniards. I can excuse Southey, but not James, for overlooking the broad fact that all England knew it, as I have shown, since 1594; that if they did not, Gondomar would have taken care to tell them; and that he could not go to Guiana without meddling with Spaniards. His former voyages and publications made no secret of it. On the contrary, one chief argument for the plan had been all through the delivery of the Indians from these very Spaniards, who, though they could not conquer them, illuded them in every way: and in his agreement with the Lords about the Guiana voyage in 1611, he makes especial mention of the very place which will soon fill such a part in our story, 'San Thome, where the Spaniards inhabit,' and tells the Lords whom to ask as to the number of men who will be wanted 'to secure Keymish's passage to the mine' against these very Spaniards. What can be more clear, save to those who will not see?

The plain fact is that Raleigh went, with his eyes open, to take possession of a country to which he believed that he and King James had a right, and that James and his favourites, when they, as he pleads, might have stopped him by a word, let him go, knowing as well as the Spaniards what he intended; for what purpose, but to have an excuse for the tragedy which ended all, it is difficult to conceive.

'It is evident,' wisely says Sir Robert Schomburgk, 'that they winked at consequences which they must have foreseen.'

And here Mr. Napier, on the authority of Count Desmarets, brings a grave charge against Raleigh. Raleigh in his 'Apology' protests that he only saw Desmarets once on board of his vessel. Desmarets says in his despatches that he was on board of her several times—whether he saw Raleigh more than once does not

appear—and that Raleigh complained to him of having been unjustly imprisoned, stripped of his estate, and so forth; and that he was on that account resolved to abandon his country, and, if the expedition succeeded, offer himself and the fruit of his labour to the King of France.

If this be true, Raleigh was very wrong. But Sir Robert Schomburgk points out that this passage, which Mr. Napier says occurs in the last despatch, was written a month after Raleigh had sailed; and that the previous despatch, written only four days after Raleigh sailed, says nothing about the matter. So that it could not have been a very important or fixed resolution on Raleigh's part, if it was only to be recollected a month after. I do not say—as Sir Robert Schomburgk is very much inclined to do—that it was altogether a bubble of French fancy. It is possible that Raleigh, in his just rage at finding that James was betraying him and sending him out with a halter round his neck, to all but certain ruin, did say wild words—That it was better for him to serve the Frenchman than such a master—that perhaps he might go over to the Frenchman after all—or some folly of the kind, in that same rash tone which, as we have seen, has got him into trouble so often already: and so I leave the matter, saying, Beware of making any man an offender for a word, much less one who is being hunted to death in his old age, and knows it.

However this may be, the fleet sails; but with no bright auguries.

The mass of the sailors are 'a scum of men'; they are mutinous and troublesome; and what is worse, have got among them (as, perhaps, they were intended to have) the notion that Raleigh's being still non ens in law absolves them from obeying him when they do not choose, and permits them to say of him behind his back what they list. They have long delays at Plymouth. Sir Warham's ship cannot get out of the Thames. Pennington, at the Isle of Wight, 'cannot redeem his bread from the bakers,' and has to ride back to London to get money from Lady Raleigh. The poor lady has it not, and gives a note of hand to Mr. Wood of Portsmouth. Alas for her! She has sunk her 8000

pounds, and, beside that, sold her Wickham estate for 2500 pounds; and all is on board the fleet. 'A hundred pieces' are all the ready money the hapless pair had

left on earth, and they have parted them together. Raleigh has fifty-five and she forty-five till God send it back—if, indeed, He ever send it. The star is sinking low in the west. Trouble on trouble. Sir John Fane has neither men nor money; Captain Witney has not provisions enough, and Raleigh has to sell his plate in Plymouth to help him. Courage! one last struggle to redeem his good name.

Then storms off Sicily—a pinnace is sunk; faithful Captain King drives back into Bristol; the rest have to lie by a while in some Irish port for a fair wind. Then Bailey deserts with the ‘Southampton’ at the Canaries; then ‘unnatural weather,’ so that a fourteen days’ voyage takes forty days. Then ‘the distemper’ breaks out under the line. The simple diary of that sad voyage still remains, full of curious and valuable nautical hints; but recording the loss of friend on friend; four or five officers, and, ‘to our great grief, our principal refiner, Mr. Fowler.’ ‘Crab, my old servant.’ Next a lamentable twenty-four hours, in which they lose Pigott, the lieutenant-general, ‘mine honest frinde, Mr. John Talbot, one that had lived with me a leven yeeres in the Tower, an excellent general skoller, and a faithful and true man as ever lived,’ with two ‘very fair conditioned gentleman,’ and ‘mine own cook Francis.’ Then more officers and men, and my ‘cusen Payton.’ Then the water is near spent, and they are forced to come to half allowance, till they save and drink greedily whole canfuls of the bitter rain water. At last Raleigh’s own turn comes; running on deck in a squall, he gets wet through, and has twenty days of burning fever; ‘never man suffered a more furious heat,’ during which he eats nothing but now and then a stewed prune.

At last they make the land at the mouth of the Urapoho, far south of their intended goal. They ask for Leonard the Indian, ‘who lived with me in England three or four years, the same man that took Mr.

Harcourt’s brother and fifty men when they were in extreme distress, and had no means to live there but by the help of this Indian, whom they made believe that they were my men’; but the faithful Indian is gone up the country, and they stand away for Cayenne, ‘where the cacique (Harry) was also my servant, and had lived with me in the Tower two years.’



Courage once more, brave old heart! Here at least thou art among friends, who know thee for what thou art, and look out longingly for thee as their deliverer. Courage; for thou art in fairyland once more; the land of boundless hope and possibility. Though England and England's heart be changed, yet God's earth endures, and the harvest is still here, waiting to be reaped by those who dare. Twenty stormy years may have changed thee, but they have not changed the fairyland of thy prison dreams. Still the mighty Ceiba trees with their wealth of parasites and creepers tower above the palm-fringed islets; still the dark mangrove thickets guard the mouths of unknown streams, whose granite sands are rich with gold. Friendly Indians come, and Harry with them, bringing maize, peccari pork, and armadillos, plantains and pine-apples, and all eat and gather strength; and Raleigh writes home to his wife, 'to say that I may yet be King of the Indians here were a vanity. But my name hath lived among them'—as well it might.

For many a year those simple hearts shall look for him in vain, and more than two centuries and a half afterwards, dim traditions of the great white chief who bade them stand out to the last against the Spaniards, and he would come and dwell among them, shall linger among the Carib tribes; even, say some, the tattered relics of an English flag, which he left among them that they might distinguish his countrymen.

Happy for him had he stayed there indeed, and been their king. How easy for him to have grown old in peace at Cayenne. But no; he must on for honour's sake, and bring home if it were but a basketful of that ore to show the king, that he may save his credit. He has promised Arundel that he will return. And return he will. So onward he goes to the 'Triangle Islands.' There he sends off five small vessels for the Orinoco, with four hundred men. The faithful Keymis has to command and guide the expedition. Sir Warham is lying ill of the fever, all but dead; so George Raleigh is sent in his place as sergeant-major, and with him five land companies, one of which is commanded by young Walter, Raleigh's son; another by a Captain Parker, of whom we shall have a word to say presently.

Keymis's orders are explicit. He is to go up; find the mine, and open it; and if the Spaniards attack him, repel force by force: but he is to avoid, if possible, an

encounter with them: not for fear of breaking the peace, but because he has ‘a scum of men, a few gentlemen excepted, and I would not for all the world receive a blow from the Spaniards to the dishonour of our nation.’ There we have no concealment of hostile instructions, any more than in Raleigh’s admirable instructions to his fleet, which, after laying down excellent laws for morality, religion, and discipline, go on with clause after clause as to what is to be done if they meet ‘the enemy.’ What enemy? Why, all Spanish ships which sail the seas; and who, if they happen to be sufficiently numerous, will assuredly attack, sink, burn, and destroy Raleigh’s whole squadron, for daring to sail for that continent which Spain claims as its own.

Raleigh runs up the coast to Trinidad once more, in through the Serpent’s Mouth, and round Punto Gallo to the lake of pitch, where all recruit themselves with fish and armadillos, ‘pheasant’

(Penelope), ‘palmitos’ (Moriche palm fruit?), and guavas, and await the return of the expedition from the last day of December to the middle of February. They see something of the Spaniards meanwhile.

Sir John Ferns is sent up to Port of Spain to try if they will trade for tobacco. The Spaniards parley; in the midst of the parley pour a volley of musketry into them at forty paces, yet hurt never a man; and send them off calling them thieves and traitors. Fray Simon’s Spanish account of the matter is that Raleigh intended to disembark his men, that they might march inland on San Joseph. He may be excused for the guess; seeing that Raleigh had done the very same thing some seventeen years before. If Raleigh was treacherous then, his treason punished itself now. However, I must believe that Raleigh is not likely to have told a lie for his own private amusement in his own private diary.

On the 29th the Spaniards attack three men and a boy who are ashore boiling the fossil pitch; kill one man, and carry off the boy.

Raleigh, instead of going up to Port of Spain and demanding satisfaction, as he would have been justified in doing after this second attack, remains quietly where he is, expecting daily to be attacked by Spanish armadas, and resolved to ‘burn by their sides.’

Happily, or unhappily, he escapes them. Probably he thinks they waited for him at Margarita, expecting him to range the Spanish main.

At last the weary days of sickness and anxiety succeeded to days of terror. On the 1st of February a strange report comes by an Indian.

An inland savage has brought confused and contradictory news down the river that San Thome is sacked, the governor and two Spanish captains slain (names given) and two English captains, nameless. After this entry follow a few confused ones, set down as happening in January, concerning attempts to extract the truth from the Indians, and the negligence of the mariners, who are diligent in nothing but pillaging and stealing. And so ends abruptly this sad document.

The truth comes at last—but when, does not appear—in a letter from Keymis, dated January 8. San Thome has been stormed, sacked, and burnt. Four refiners' houses were found in it; the best in the town; so that the Spaniards have been mining there; but no coin or bullion except a little plate. One English captain is killed, and that captain is Walter Raleigh, his firstborn. He died leading them on, when some, 'more careful of valour and safety, began to recoil shamefully.' His last words were, 'Lord have mercy upon me and prosper our enterprise.' A Spanish captain, Erinetta, struck him down with the butt of a musket after he had received a bullet. John Plessington, his sergeant, avenged him by running Erinetta through with his halbert.

Keymis has not yet been to the mine; he could not, 'by reason of the murmurings, discords, and vexations'; but he will go at once, make trial of the mine, and come down to Trinidad by the Macareo mouth.

He sends a parcel of scattered papers, a roll of tobacco, a tortoise, some oranges and lemons. 'Praying God to give you health and strength of body, and a mind armed against all extremities, I rest ever to be commanded, your lordship's, Keymish.'

‘Oh Absalom, my son, my son, would God I had died for thee!’ But weeping is in vain. The noble lad sleeps there under the palm-trees, beside the mighty tropic stream, while the fair Basset, ‘his bride in the sight of God,’ recks not of him as she wanders in the woods of Umberleigh, wife to the son of Raleigh’s deadliest foe. Raleigh, Raleigh, surely God’s blessing is not on this voyage of thine.

Surely He hath set thy misdeeds before Him, and thy secret sins in the light of His countenance.

Another blank of misery: but his honour is still safe. Keymis will return with that gold ore, that pledge of his good faith for which he has ventured all. Surely God will let that come after all, now that he has paid as its price his firstborn’s blood?

At last Keymis returns with thinned numbers. All are weary, spirit-broken, discontented, mutinous. Where is the gold ore?

There is none. Keymis has never been to the mine after all. His companions curse him as a traitor who has helped Raleigh to deceive them into ruin; the mine is imaginary—a lie. The crews are ready to break into open mutiny; after a while they will do so.

Yes, God is setting this man’s secret sins in the light of His countenance. If he has been ambitious, his ambition has punished itself now. If he has cared more for his own honour than for his wife and children, that sin too has punished itself. If he has (which I affirm not) tampered with truth for the sake of what seemed to him noble and just ends, that too has punished itself; for his men do not trust him. If he has (which I affirm not) done any wrong in that matter of Cobham, that too has punished itself: for his men, counting him as non ens in law, will not respect or obey him. If he has spoken, after his old fashion, rash and exaggerated words, and goes on speaking them, even though it be through the pressure of despair, that too shall punish itself; and for every idle word that he shall say, God will bring him into judgment. And why, but because he is noble?

Why, but because he is nearer to God by a whole heaven than others whom God lets fatten on their own sins, having no understanding, because they are in honour, and having children at their hearts' desire, and leaving the rest of their substance to their babes? Not so does God deal with His elect when they will try to worship at once self and Him; He requires truth in the inward parts, and will purge them till they are true, and single-eyed, and full of light.

Keymis returns with the wreck of his party. The scene between him and Raleigh may be guessed. Keymis has excuse on excuse. He could not get obeyed after young Raleigh's death: he expected to find that Sir Walter was either dead of his sickness or of grief for his son, and had no wish 'to enrich a company of rascals who made no account of him.' He dare not go up to the mine because (and here Raleigh thinks his excuse fair) the fugitive Spaniards lay in the craggy woods through which he would have to pass, and that he had not men enough even to hold the town securely. If he reached the mine and left a company there, he had no provisions for them; and he dared not send backward and forward to the town while the Spaniards were in the woods. The warnings sent by Gondomar had undone all, and James's treachery had done its work. So Keymis, 'thinking it a greater error, so he said, to discover the mine to the Spaniards than to excuse himself to the Company, said that he could not find it.' From all which one thing at least is evident, that Keymis believed in the existence of the mine.

Raleigh 'rejects these fancies'; tells him before divers gentlemen that 'a blind man might find it by the marks which Keymis himself had set down under his hand': that 'his case of losing so many men in the woods' was a mere pretence: after Walter was slain, he knew that Keymis had no care of any man's surviving. 'You have undone me, wounded my credit with the King past recovery. As you have followed your own advice, and not mine, you must satisfy his Majesty. It shall be glad if you can do it: but I cannot.' There is no use dwelling on such vain regrets and reproaches. Raleigh perhaps is bitter, unjust. As he himself writes twice, to his wife and Sir Ralph Winwood, his 'brains are broken.' He writes to them both, and re-opens the letters to add long postscripts, at his wits' end.

Keymis goes off; spends a few miserable days; and then enters Raleigh's cabin.

He has written his apology to Lord Arundel, and begs Raleigh to allow of it. 'No. You have undone me by your obstinacy. I will not favour or colour your former folly.' 'Is that your resolution, sir?' 'It is.' 'I know not then, sir, what course to take.' And so he goes out, and into his own cabin overhead. A minute after a pistol-shot is heard. Raleigh sends up a boy to know the reason. Keymis answers from within that he has fired it off because it had been long charged; and all is quiet.

Half an hour after the boy goes into the cabin. Keymis is lying on his bed, the pistol by him. The boy moves him. The pistol-shot has broken a rib, and gone no further; but as the corpse is turned over, a long knife is buried in that desperate heart. Another of the old heroes is gone to his wild account.

Gradually drops of explanation ooze out. The 'Sergeant-major, Raleigh's nephew, and others, confess that Keymis told them that he could have brought them in two hours to the mine: but as the young heir was slain, and his father was unpardoned and not like to live, he had no reason to open the mine, either for the Spaniard or the King.' Those latter words are significant. What cared the old Elizabethan seaman for the weal of such a king? And, indeed, what good to such a king would all the mines in Guiana be? They answered that the King, nevertheless, had 'granted Raleigh his heart's desire under the great seal.' He replied that 'the grant to Raleigh was to a man non ens in law, and therefore of no force.' Here, too, James's policy has worked well. How could men dare or persevere under such a cloud?

How, indeed, could they have found heart to sail at all? The only answer is that they knew Raleigh well enough to have utter faith in him, and that Keymis himself knew of the mine.

Puppies at home in England gave out that he had killed himself from remorse at having deceived so many gentlemen with an imaginary phantom. Every one, of course, according to his measure of charity, has power and liberty to assume any

motive which he will. Mine is simply the one which shows upon the face of the documents; that the old follower, devoted alike to the dead son and to the doomed father, feeling that he had, he scarce knew how, failed in the hour of need, frittered away the last chance of a mighty enterprise which had been his fixed idea for years, and ruined the man whom he adored, avenged upon himself the fault of having disobeyed orders, given peremptorily, and to be peremptorily executed.

Here, perhaps, my tale should end; for all beyond is but the waking of the corpse. The last death-struggle of the Elizabethan heroism is over, and all its remains vanish slowly in an undignified, sickening way. All epics end so. After the war of Troy, Achilles must die by coward Paris's arrow, in some mysterious, confused, pitiful fashion; and stately Hecuba must rail herself into a very dog, and bark for ever shamefully around lonely Cynossema. Young David ends as a dotard—Solomon as worse. Glorious Alexander must die, half of fever, half of drunkenness, as the fool dieth. Charles the Fifth, having thrown all away but his follies, ends in a convent, a superstitious imbecile; Napoleon squabbles to the last with Sir Hudson Lowe about champagne. It must be so; and the glory must be God's alone. For in great men, and great times, there is nothing good or vital but what is of God, and not of man's self; and when He taketh away that divine breath they die, and return again to their dust. But the earth does not lose; for when He sendeth forth His Spirit they live, and renew the face of the earth. A new generation arises, with clearer sight, with fuller experience, sometimes with nobler aims; and

'The old order changeth, giveth place to the new, And God fulfils himself in many ways.

The Elizabethan epic did not end a day too soon. There was no more life left in it; and God had something better in store for England.

Raleigh's ideal was a noble one: but God's was nobler far. Raleigh would have made her a gold kingdom, like Spain, and destroyed her very vitals by that gold, as Spain was destroyed. And all the while the great and good God was looking

steadfastly upon that little struggling Virginian village, Raleigh's firstborn, forgotten in his new mighty dreams, and saying, 'Here will I dwell, for I have a delight therein.' There, and not in Guiana; upon the simple tillers of the soil, not among wild reckless gold-hunters, would His blessing rest. The very coming darkness would bring brighter light. The evil age itself would be the parent of new good, and drive across the seas steadfast Pilgrim Fathers and generous Royalist Cavaliers, to be the parents of a mightier nation than has ever yet possessed the earth.

Verily, God's ways are wonderful, and His counsels in the great deep.

So ends the Elizabethan epic. Must we follow the corpse to the grave? It is necessary.

And now, 'you gentlemen of England, who sit at home at ease,' what would you have done in like case?—Your last die thrown; your last stake lost; your honour, as you fancy, stained for ever; your eldest son dead in battle—What would you have done? What Walter Raleigh did was this. He kept his promise. He had promised Lord Arundel to return to England; and return he did.

But it is said his real intention, as he himself confessed, was to turn pirate and take the Mexico fleet.

That wild thoughts of such a deed may have crossed his mind, may have been a terrible temptation to him, may even have broken out in hasty words, one does not deny. He himself says that he spoke of such a thing 'to keep his men together.' All depends on how the words were spoken. The form of the sentence, the tone of voice, is everything.

Who could blame him, if seeing some of the captains whom he had most trusted deserting him, his men heaping him with every slander, and, as he solemnly swore on the scaffold, calling witnesses thereto by name, forcing him to take an



oath that he would not return to England before they would have him, and locking him into his own cabin—who could blame him, I ask, for saying in that daring offhand way of his, which has so often before got him into trouble, ‘Come, my lads, do not despair. If the worst comes to the worst, there is the Plate-fleet to fall back upon’? When I remember, too, that the taking of the said Plate-fleet was in Raleigh’s eyes an altogether just thing; and that he knew perfectly that if he succeeded therein he would be backed by the public opinion of all England, and probably buy his pardon of James, who, if he loved Spain well, loved money better; my surprise rather is, that he did not go and do it. As for any meeting of captains in his cabin and serious proposal of such a plan, I believe it to be simply one of the innumerable lies which James inserted in his ‘Declaration,’ gathered from the tales of men who, fearing (and reasonably) lest their heads should follow Raleigh’s, tried to curry favour by slandering him. This ‘Declaration’ has been so often exposed that I may safely pass it by; and pass by almost as safely the argument which some have drawn from a chance expression of his in his pathetic letter to Lady Raleigh, in which he ‘hopes that God would send him somewhat before his return.’ To prove an intention of piracy in the despairing words of a ruined man writing to comfort a ruined wife for the loss of her firstborn is surely to deal out hard measure. Heaven have mercy upon us, if all the hasty words which woe has wrung from our hearts are to be so judged either by man or God!

Sir Julius Caesar, again, one of the commission appointed to examine him, informs us that, on being confronted with Captains St. Leger and Pennington, he confessed that he proposed the taking of the Mexico fleet if the mine failed. To which I can only answer, that all depends on how the thing was said, and that this is the last fact which we should find in Sir Julius’s notes, which are, it is confessed, so confused, obscure, and full of gaps, as to be often hardly intelligible. The same remark applies to Wilson’s story, which I agree with Mr. Tytler in thinking worthless. Wilson, it must be understood, is employed after Raleigh’s return as a spy upon him, which office he executes, all confess (and Wilson himself as much as any), as falsely, treacherously, and hypocritically as did ever sinful man; and, inter alia, he has this, ‘This day he told me what discourse he and the Lord Chancellor had about taking the Plate-fleet, which he confessed he would have taken had he lighted on it.’

To which my Lord Chancellor said, ‘Why, you would have been a pirate.’ ‘Oh,’

quoth he, 'did you ever know of any that were pirates for millions? They only that wish for small things are pirates.'

Now, setting aside the improbability that Raleigh should go out of his way to impeach himself to the man whom he must have known was set there to find matter for his death, all, we say, depends on how it was said. If the Lord Chancellor ever said to Raleigh, 'To take the Mexico fleet would be piracy,' it would have been just like Raleigh to give such an answer. The speech is a perfectly true one: Raleigh knew the world, no man better; and saw through its hollowness, and the cant and hypocrisy of his generation; and he sardonically states an undeniable fact. He is not expressing his own morality, but that of the world; just as he is doing in that passage of his 'Apology,'

about which I must complain of Mr. Napier. 'It was a maxim of his,'

says Mr. Napier, 'that good success admits of no examination.' This is not fair. The sentence in the original goes on, 'so the contrary allows of no excuse, however reasonable and just whatsoever.' His argument all through the beginning of the 'Apology,' supported by instance on instance from history, is—I cannot get a just hearing, because I have failed in opening this mine. So it is always. Glory covers the multitude of sins. But a man who has failed is a fair mark for every slanderer, puppy, ignoramus, discontented mutineer; as I am now. What else, in the name of common sense, could have been his argument? Does Mr. Napier really think that Raleigh, even if, in the face of all the noble and pious words which he had written, he held so immoral a doctrine, would have been shameless and senseless enough to assert his own rascality in an apology addressed to the most 'religious' of kings in the most canting of generations?

But still more astonished am I at the use which has been made of Captain Parker's letter. The letter is written by a man in a state of frantic rage and disappointment. There never was any mine, he believes now. Keymis's 'delays we found mere delusions; for he was false to all men and hateful to himself, loathing to live since he could do no more villany. I will speak no more of this hateful fellow to God and man.' And it is on the testimony of a man in this temper that we are asked to believe that 'the admiral and vice-admiral,' Raleigh and St. Leger, are going to the Western Islands 'to look for homeward-bound men': if, indeed, the looking for homeward-bound men means really looking for

the Spanish fleet, and not merely for recruits for their crews. I never recollect—and I have read pretty fully the sea-records of those days—such a synonym used either for the Mexican or Indian fleet. But let this be as it may, the letter proves too much. For, first, it proves that whosoever is not going to turn ‘pirate,’ our calm and charitable friend Captain Parker is; ‘for my part, by the permission of God, I will either MAKE

A VOYAGE or bury myself in the sea.’ Now, what making a voyage meant there is no doubt; and the sum total of the letter is, that a man intending to turn rover himself accuses, under the influence of violent passion, his comrades of doing the like. We may believe him about himself: about others, we shall wait for testimony a little less interested.

But the letter proves too much again. For Parker says that ‘Witney and Woolaston are gone off a-head to look for homeward-bound men,’

thus agreeing with Raleigh’s message to his wife, that ‘Witney, for whom I sold all my plate at Plymouth, and to whom I gave more credit and countenance than to all the captains of my fleet, ran from me at the Grenadas, and Woolaston with him.’

And now, reader, how does this of Witney, and Woolaston, and Parker’s intentions to ‘pirate’ separately, if it be true, agree with King James’s story of Raleigh’s calling a council of war and proposing an attack on the Plate-fleet? One or the other must needs be a lie; probably both. Witney’s ship was of only 160 tons; Woolaston’s probably smaller. Five such ships would be required, as any reader of Hakluyt must know, to take a single Carack; and it would be no use running the risk of hanging for any less prize. The Spanish main was warned and armed, and the Western Isles also. Is it possible that these two men would have been insane enough in such circumstances to go without Raleigh, if they could have gone with him? And is it possible that he, if he had any set purpose of attacking the Plate-fleet, would not have kept them, in order to attempt that with him which neither they nor he could do without each other. Moreover, no ‘piratical’ act ever took place; if any had, we should have heard enough about it; and why is Parker to be believed against Raleigh alone, when there is little doubt

that he slandered all the rest of the captains? Lastly, it was to this very Parker, with Mr. Tresham and another gentleman, that Raleigh appealed by name on the scaffold, as witnesses that it was his crew who tried to keep him from going home, and not he them.

My own belief is, and it is surely simple and rational enough, that Raleigh's 'brains,' as he said, 'were broken'; that he had no distinct plan: but that, loth to leave the New World without a second attempt on Guiana, he went up to Newfoundland to re-victual, 'and with good hope,' as he wrote to Winwood himself, 'of keeping the sea till August with some four reasonable good ships,' probably, as Oldys remarks, to try a trading voyage; but found his gentlemen too dispirited and incredulous, his men too mutinous to do anything; and seeing his ships go home one by one, at last followed them himself, because he had promised Arundel and Pembroke so to do; having, after all, as he declared on the scaffold, extreme difficulty in persuading his men to land at all in England. The other lies about him, as of his having intended to desert his soldiers in Guiana, his having taken no tools to work the mine, and so forth, one only notices to say that the 'Declaration' takes care to make the most of them, without deigning, after its fashion, to adduce any proof but anonymous hearsays. If it be true that Bacon drew up that famous document, it reflects no credit either on his honesty or his 'inductive science.'

So Raleigh returns, anchors in Plymouth. He finds that Captain North has brought home the news of his mishaps, and that there is a proclamation against him, which, by the bye, lies, for it talks of limitations and cautions given to Raleigh which do not appear in his commission; and, moreover, that a warrant is out for his apprehension. He sends his men on shore, and starts for London to surrender himself, in company with faithful Captain King, who alone clings to him to the last, and from whom we have details of the next few days. Near Ashburton he is met by Sir Lewis Stukely, his near kinsman, Vice-Admiral of Devon, who has orders to arrest him.

Raleigh tells him that he has saved him the trouble; and the two return to Plymouth, where Stukely, strangely enough, leaves him at liberty and rides about the country. We should be slow in imputing baseness: but one cannot help

suspecting from Stukely's subsequent conduct that he had from the first private orders to give Raleigh a chance of trying to escape, in order to have a handle against him, such as his own deeds had not yet given.

The ruse, if it existed then, as it did afterwards, succeeds.

Raleigh hears bad news. Gondomar has—or has not—told his story to the king by crying, 'Piratas! piratas! piratas!' and then rushing out without explanation. James is in terror lest what had happened should break off the darling Spanish match.

Raleigh foresees ruin, perhaps death. Life is sweet, and Guiana is yet where it was. He may win a basketful of the ore still, and prove himself no liar. He will escape to France. Faithful King finds him a Rochelle ship; he takes boat to her, goes half way, and returns.

Honour is sweeter than life, and James may yet be just. The next day he bribes the master to wait for him one more day, starts for the ship once more, and again returns to Plymouth—so King will make oath—of his own free will. The temptation must have been terrible and the sin none. What kept him from yielding but innocence and honour? He will clear himself; and if not, abide the worst. Stukely and James found out these facts, and made good use of them afterwards. For now comes 'a severe letter from my Lords' to bring Raleigh up as speedily as his health will permit; and with it comes one Mannourie, a French quack, of whom honest King takes little note at the time, but who will make himself remembered.

And now begins a series of scenes most pitiable; Raleigh's brains are indeed broken. He is old, worn-out with the effects of his fever, lamed, ruined, broken-hearted, and, for the first time in his life, weak and silly. He takes into his head the paltriest notion that he can gain time to pacify the King by feigning himself sick. He puts implicit faith in the rogue Mannourie, whom he has never seen before.

He sends forward Lady Raleigh to London—perhaps ashamed—as who would not have been?—to play the fool in that sweet presence; and with her good Captain King, who is to engage one Cotterell, an old servant of Raleigh's, to find a ship wherein to escape, if the worst comes to the worst. Cotterell sends King to an old boatswain of his, who owns a ketch. She is to lie off Tilbury; and so King waits Raleigh's arrival. What passed in the next four or five days will never be truly known, for our only account comes from two self-convicted villains, Stukely and Mannourie. On these details I shall not enter. First, because one cannot trust a word of them; secondly, because no one will wish to hear them who feels, as I do, how pitiable and painful is the sight of a great heart and mind utterly broken. Neither shall I spend time on Stukely's villanous treatment of Raleigh, for which he had a commission from James in writing; his pretending to help him to escape, his going down the Thames in a boat with him, his trying in vain to make honest King as great a rogue as himself. Like most rascalities, Stukely's conduct, even as he himself states it, is very obscure. All that we can see is, that Cotterell told Stukely everything: that Stukely bade Cotterell carry on the deceit; that Stukely had orders from headquarters to incite Raleigh to say or do something which might form a fresh ground of accusation; that, being a clumsy rogue, he failed, and fell back on abetting Raleigh's escape, as a last resource. Be it as it may, he throws off the mask as soon as Raleigh has done enough to prove an intent to escape; arrests him, and conducts him to the Tower.

There two shameful months are spent in trying to find out some excuse for Raleigh's murder. Wilson is set over him as a spy; his letters to his wife are intercepted. Every art is used to extort a confession of a great plot with France, and every art fails utterly—

simply, it seems to me, because there was no plot. Raleigh writes an apology, letters of entreaty, self-justification, what not; all, in my opinion, just and true enough; but like his speech on the scaffold, weak, confused—the product of a 'broken brain.' However, his head must come off; and as a last resource, it must be taken off upon the sentence of fifteen years ago, and he who was condemned for plotting with Spain must die for plotting against her. It is a pitiable business: but as Osborne says, in a passage (p.108 of his *Memoirs of James*) for which one freely forgives him all his sins and lies, and they are many—'As the foolish idolaters were wont to sacrifice the choicest of their children to the devil, so our king gave up his incomparable jewel to the will of this monster of ambition (the

Spaniard), under the pretence of a superannuated transgression, contrary to the opinion of the more honest sort of gownsmen, who maintained that his Majesty's pardon lay inclusively in the commission he gave him on his setting out to sea; it being incongruous that he, who remained under the notion of one dead in the law, should as a general dispose of the lives of others, not being himself master of his own.'

But no matter. He must die. The Queen intercedes for him, as do all honest men: but in vain. He has twenty-four hours' notice to prepare for death; eats a good breakfast; takes a cup of sack and a pipe; makes a rambling speech, in which one notes only the intense belief that he is an honest man, and the intense desire to make others believe so, in the very smallest matters; and then dies smilingly, as one weary of life. One makes no comment. Raleigh's life really ended on that day that poor Keymis returned from San Thome.'

And then?

As we said, Truth is stranger than fiction. No dramatist dare invent a 'poetic justice' more perfect than fell upon the traitor. It is not always so, no doubt. God reserves many a greater sinner for that most awful of all punishments—impunity. But there are crises in a nation's life in which God makes terrible examples, to put before the most stupid and sensual the choice of Hercules, the upward road of life, the downward one which leads to the pit. Since the time of Pharaoh and the Red Sea host, history is full of such palpable, unmistakable revelations of the Divine Nemesis; and in England, too, at that moment, the crisis was there; and the judgment of God was revealed accordingly. Sir Lewis Stukely remained, it seems, at court; high in favour with James: but he found, nevertheless, that people looked darkly on him. Like many self-convicted rogues, he must needs thrust his head into his own shame; and one day he goes to good old Lord Charles Howard's house; for being Vice-Admiral of Devon, he has affairs with the old Armada hero.

The old lion explodes in an unexpected roar. ‘Darest thou come into my presence, thou base fellow, who art reputed the common scorn and contempt of all men? Were it not in mine own house I would cudgel thee with my staff for presuming to speak to me!’ Stukely, his tail between his legs, goes off and complains to James. ‘What should I do with him? Hang him? On my sawle, mon, if I hung all that spoke ill of thee, all the trees in the island were too few.’ Such is the gratitude of kings, thinks Stukely; and retires to write foolish pamphlets in self-justification, which, unfortunately for his memory, still remain to make bad worse.

Within twelve months he, the rich and proud Vice-Admiral of Devon, with a shield of sixteen quarterings and the blood-royal in his veins, was detected debasing the King’s coin within the precincts of the royal palace, together with his old accomplice Mannourie, who, being taken, confessed that his charges against Raleigh were false.

He fled, a ruined man, back to his native county and his noble old seat of Affton; but Ate is on the heels of such -

‘Slowly she tracks him and sure, as a lyme-hound, sudden she grips him,  
Crushing him, blind in his pride, for a sign and a terror to mortals.’

A terrible plebiscitum had been passed in the West country against the betrayer of its last Worthy. The gentlemen closed their doors against him; the poor refused him—so goes the legend—fire and water. Driven by the Furies, he fled from Affton, and wandered westward down the vale of Taw, away to Appledore, and there took boat, and out into the boundless Atlantic, over the bar, now crowded with shipping, for which Raleigh’s genius had discovered a new trade and a new world.

Sixteen miles to the westward, like a blue cloud on the horizon, rises the ultima



Thule of Devon, the little isle of Lundy. There one outlying peak of granite, carrying up a shelf of slate upon its southern flank, has defied the waves, and formed an island some three miles long, desolate, flat-headed, fretted by every frost and storm, walled all round with four hundred feet of granite cliff, sacred only, then at least, to puffins and pirates. Over the single landing-place frowns from the cliff the keep of an old ruin, 'Moresco Castle,' as they call it still, where some bold rover, Sir John de Moresco, in the times of the old Edwards, worked his works of darkness: a gray, weird, uncanny pile of moorstone, through which all the winds of heaven howl day and night.

In a chamber of that ruin died Sir Lewis Stukely, Lord of Affton, cursing God and man.

These things are true. Said I not well that reality is stranger than romance?

But no Nemesis followed James.

The answer will depend much upon what readers consider to be a Nemesis. If to have found England one of the greatest countries in Europe, and to have left it one of the most inconsiderable and despicable; if to be fooled by flatterers to the top of his bent, until he fancied himself all but a god, while he was not even a man, and could neither speak the truth, keep himself sober, nor look on a drawn sword without shrinking; if, lastly, to have left behind him a son who, in spite of many chivalrous instincts unknown to his father, had been so indoctrinated in that father's vices as to find it impossible to speak the truth even when it served his purpose; if all these things be no Nemesis, then none fell on James Stuart.

But of that son, at least, the innocent blood was required. He, too, had his share in the sin. In Carew Raleigh's simple and manful petition to the Commons of England for the restoration of his inheritance we find a significant fact stated

without one word of comment, bitter or otherwise. At Prince Henry's death the Sherborne lands had been given again to Carr, Lord Somerset. To him, too, 'the whirligig of time brought round its revenges,' and he lost them when arraigned and condemned for poisoning Sir Thomas Overbury. Then Sir John Digby, afterwards Earl of Bristol, begged Sherborne of the King, and had it. Pembroke (Shakspeare's Pembroke) brought young Carew to court, hoping to move the tyrant's heart. James saw him and shuddered; perhaps conscience stricken, perhaps of mere cowardice.

'He looked like the ghost of his father,' as he well might, to that guilty soul. Good Pembroke advised his young kinsman to travel, which he did till James's death in the next year. Then coming over—

this is his own story—he asked of Parliament to be restored in blood, that he might inherit aught that might fall to him in England.

His petition was read twice in the Lords. Whereon 'King Charles sent Sir James Fullarton, then of the bedchamber, to Mr. Raleigh to command him to come to him; and being brought in, the King, after using him with great civility, notwithstanding told him plainly that when he was prince he had promised the Earl of Bristol to secure his title to Sherborne against the heirs of Sir Walter Raleigh; whereon the earl had given him, then prince, ten thousand pounds; that now he was bound to make good his promise, being king; that, therefore, unless he would quit his right and title to Sherborne, he neither could nor would pass his bill of restoration.'

Young Raleigh, like a good Englishman, 'urged,' he says, 'the justness of his cause; that he desired only the liberty of the subject, and to be left to the law, which was never denied any freeman.' The King remained obstinate. His noble brother's love for the mighty dead weighed nothing with him, much less justice. Poor young Raleigh was forced to submit. The act for his restoration was passed, reserving Sherborne for Lord Bristol, and Charles patched up the affair by allowing to Lady Raleigh and her son after her a life pension of four hundred a year.

Young Carew tells his story simply, and without a note of bitterness; though he

professes his intent to range himself and his two sons for the future ‘under the banner of the Commons of England,’ he may be a royalist for any word beside. Even where he mentions the awful curse of his mother, he only alludes to its fulfilment by—‘that which hath happened since to that royal family is too sad and disastrous for me to repeat, and yet too visible not to be discerned.’ We can have no doubt that he tells the exact truth. Indeed the whole story fits Charles’s character to the smallest details. The want of any real sense of justice, combined with the false notion of honour; the implacable obstinacy; the contempt for that law by which alone he held his crown; the combination of unkingliness in commanding a private interview and shamelessness in confessing his own meanness—

all these are true notes of the man whose deliberate suicide stands written, a warning to all bad rulers till the end of time. But he must have been a rogue early in life, and a needy rogue too. That ten thousand pounds of Lord Bristol’s money should make many a sentimentalist reconsider—if, indeed, sentimentalsists can be made to reconsider, or even to consider, anything—their notion of him as the incarnation of pious chivalry.

At least the ten thousand pounds cost Charles dear.

The widow’s curse followed him home. Naseby fight and the Whitehall scaffold were surely God’s judgment of such deeds, whatever man’s may be.

Footnotes:

{1} North British Review, No. XLV.—1. ‘Life of Sir Walter Raleigh.’ By P. Fraser Tytler, F.R.S. London, 1853.—2. ‘Raleigh’s Discovery of Guiana.’ Edited by Sir Robert Schomburgk (Hakluyt Society), 1848.—3. ‘Lord Bacon and Sir Walter Raleigh.’ By M.

Napier. Cambridge, 1853.—4. ‘Raleigh’s Works, with Lives by Oldys and

Birch.' Oxford, 1829—5. 'Bishop Goodman's History of his own Times.'  
London, 1839.

{2} I especially entreat readers' attention to two articles in vindication of the  
morals of Queen Elizabeth, in 'Fraser's Magazine'

of 1854; to one in the 'Westminster' of 1854, on Mary Stuart; and one in the  
same of 1852, on England's Forgotten Worthies, by a pen now happily well  
known in English literature, Mr. Anthony Froude's.

{3} Since this was written, a similar Amazonian bodyguard has been discovered,  
I hear, in Pegu.

{4} It is to be found in a MS. of 1596.

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