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DISCOURSE  
ON THE  
LIFE AND CHARACTER  
OF  
SIR WALTER RALEGH:

DELIVERED BY  
J. MORRISON HARRIS,  
BEFORE THE  
MARYLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY,

MAY 19, 1846,

BEING THE THIRD ANNUAL ADDRESS TO THAT ASSOCIATION.



BALTIMORE:  
PRINTED FOR THE SOCIETY BY JOHN D. TOY,  
Corner of Market and St. Paul Streets.

MDCCCXLVI.





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## SIR WALTER RALEGH.

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WE have opened the volume of History, this evening, at a page crowded with the record of great deeds, and glowing with the story of illustrious men.

The period immediately preceding, was one of the most momentous in the annals of the race, for the events which distinguished it, were of a weight and character, not merely to impress, powerfully, the age in which they occurred, but to extend their influence through all subsequent time,—tinging the opinions, moulding the institutions, and affecting the destinies of man.

It was a period of varied and startling action, mental, moral and physical. The invention of Printing had given impetus to Letters. The revival of Letters, opportunity to investigation, and impulse to thought. With increasing knowledge, came new and just perceptions of mental freedom; and the withes of superstition, in which the spirit of man had been bound for ages, were rent asunder in the first struggles of the awakening giant. From his gloomy

cell, the monk of Eisleben came forth with his latin Bible, and his indomitable heart; and, amid the war of creeds, the conflict of principles, and the convulsions of society, the Sampson of the Reformation held his appointed way. In the stern conflict which ensued, men of commanding genius, everywhere sprang up. On the one side fought Erasmus, Melancthon, Zuinglius, Calvin; on the other, Lainez, Xavier, Loyola. The collision of such minds could not fail to produce the most important results. The untiring effort and unshaken faith of the first, strengthened and carried on the Reformation; the splendid genius, and super-human zeal of the last, conceived and built up the order of the Jesuits.

The age was, further, illustrated by the success of Columbus. The mariner of Genoa, had given a new world to the sovereignty of Spain. A great problem had been solved, and the Geography as well the Religion of the world, was in a condition of agitation and reform. The immense field, thus suddenly opened to the daring and adventurous, soon became the theatre of some of the most interesting and momentous incidents in History. With unscrupulous hand, Pizarro had gathered the abundant wealth of Peru, and the sceptre of the fallen Incas passed into the iron grasp of the soldier of fortune. Through the lovely valley and the thronged City of Mexico, the fiery Cortéz had passed in his path of blood; and the expiring fires of the Teocallis threw their red glare, alike upon the *means* and the *end* of conquest:—the heaped spoils of the Indian Emperor, and the fearful scenes of the “night of woe.”

Events of such magnitude could not fail to produce the most serious effects upon the character and conduct of the succeeding age, and we, accordingly, find their influence distinctly marked in the history of the time. It would lead us into too long a digression to trace out the results attributable to each; and it is sufficient for our purpose to state, generally, that they greatly enlarged the domain, and liberty of thought—directed the philosophic to new and wonderful themes—fired the imagination and gave scope to the daring of the adventurous;—changed entirely the tone of society—purged the church of errors—checked the throne in its license—gave place and reality to the People—devolved upon man, new responsibilities and rights, and invested his nature with sublimer dignity. The period to which our attention is particularly directed this evening, exhibits in all its occurrences the influence of the events to which we have referred, and premising that its general character cannot be rightly understood unless they are borne in mind, we shall pass at once to the consideration of our subject.

Sir WALTER RALEGH was fortunate in the moment of his birth. He came into public life in the dawn of the most brilliant era of English History; during the reign of a Queen, who, great herself, appreciated and cherished greatness in others; upon the eve of events in which his genius fitted him to play a conspicuous part; surrounded by contemporaries of various graces and most remarkable intellect; representatives of all the varieties of human greatness; statesmen, who, born without the trappings, were also free from the prejudices of noble birth; men

of strong minds, clear heads, and bold hearts; who dismayed by no difficulty, appalled by no danger, wrought out, with firm purpose and skilful hand, well digested schemes for the advancement and safety of the realm. There were Soldiers, too, who went into the battles of the time, endued with much of the spirit, if not clad in the panoply of knights. Sussex, generous, impulsive and honest; Essex, the brilliant and successful courtier—the finished gentleman—the accomplished scholar—the illustrious commander—whose reckless and impetuous valor, made war romantic, and whose career was like the course of a shooting star, sudden in its rise—dazzling in its zenith—gloomy in its fall. Sir Philip Sydney, the Crichton of the age; a rare union of the elegant, the sterling and the true; a fine writer and accomplished soldier; while yet in his thirtieth year, famous throughout Europe; commemorated by Grotius for his great designs and inestimable worth; esteemed by Elizabeth “the jewel of her times,” and, by the elegant Camden, pronounced “the darling of the learned world”. Over the copious pages of Littleton, the great commentator bent in learned contemplation. With earnest heart, and powerful pen, Hooker labored in the field of ethical lore; and the father of the new Philosophy revolved in studious seclusion, the startling principles of the *Novum Organum*.—Nor was this period illustrated alone by chivalry and dignified by science. Literature became the mirror of human action; and whilst Spenser sang the beauties of the ideal world, Jonson, Fletcher and Beaumont; Webster, Marlowe, Decker and Shakspear, produced those dramatic



master-pieces which hold despotic sway over the taste and judgment of the world.

The three-score years of Sir Walter Raleigh's life, were so crowded with action, and he was so intimately connected with every event of moment which marked the annals of his time, that it is a task of no small difficulty, within the limits of an occasion like the present, to avoid being either prolix or incomplete in presenting a view of his character. In our narrative, therefore, we shall confine ourselves to the more prominent and important events in which he was an actor; and, in our deductions of his motives and conduct, present arguments as condensed as possible. It may be well to premise, that in reference to certain points, widely variant opinions are entertained, and while some exalt him into a demi-god, others give him a far lower position in the scale of moral greatness. The authorities are in many respects scant and contradictory, and Sir Walter, himself, furnishes so much of the evidence, that, unless his veracity and honor are seriously questioned, it is scarcely possible to substantiate the charges which are preferred against him. To whatever conclusion we may arrive, however, in reference to these mooted points, it will be conceded that Raleigh was an extraordinary man, endowed with rare faculties, capable of any achievement, and standing forth in the completeness of his genius and variety of his labors, in the conspicuous foreground of History. To a society, therefore, such as I have the distinguished honor to address, the subject is both pertinent and interesting; and the more so from the fact, that the comprehensive mind of Raleigh planned

the colonization of the fertile realm of which our state formed part, while the ships of his adventurous fleet were the first that swept in pride over the waters of our own broad bay.

Sir Walter Raleigh appears, for the first time, an actor in the affairs of his age, as a volunteer in the gallant band of gentlemen who fought upon the side of the Huguenots, under the banner of Henry Champignon. The five years of his service in France, brought him into contact with some of the most renowned leaders of the time, and made him a participant in the most important events which marked that fierce and protracted struggle. Under Lodowick of Nassau, Coligny, and Condé, he appears to have fought in the memorable battles of Jarnac and Moncontour, and he escaped the comprehensive massacre of St. Bartholomew by taking refuge in the house of the Ambassador, Walsingham. Although he had not passed his seventeenth year, he behaved with great bravery, and his allusions in his *History of the World*, to the conduct of these distinguished leaders, in some of the battles referred to, clearly evince, that young as he was, he already exercised that habit of close observation and reflection, which is one of his characteristics. His return from France after the death of Charles IX. was succeeded by a short period of inaction passed in Chambers in the Temple. From his own account, Raleigh did not, at that time, read law, nor does it seem that he entertained the idea of pursuing the profession at any subsequent period. His ardent spirit, however, soon led him into more active life, and we find him increasing his military knowledge and rapidly earn-



ing the reputation of an accomplished soldier in the Low Countries which were then struggling against the encroachments of Spain. Amid the engrossing duties of the camp, and the alluring dissipations of military life, he was a regular and laborious student; and the germ of that vast fund of learning which has contributed to immortalize his name, is to be traced to the five hours which he devoted every day, under circumstances so unfavorable, to the cultivation of his mind. This assiduous application on the part of a young man, in such a position, evinces an elevated ambition, great self-command, and a persevering energy, which are interesting as the first development of those mental powers which subsequently led to greatness. After having passed nearly ten years in the career of arms, and having acquired a reputation as rare as it was honorable, he joined the enterprise of Sir Humphrey Gilbert, who had obtained letters patent from Elizabeth, authorizing him to undertake north-western Discoveries, and to possess such lands as were unsettled by christian princes or their subjects.

The expedition encountered, at the outset, a severe storm, or, as some authors insist, a superior Spanish force; and, after the loss of a ship, was driven back to port. Before preparation could be completed for a renewal of the attempt, the outbreak of war in Ireland, again called Raleigh into the field, and he served with Lord Grey in the successful resistance which was made against the Spanish forces sent over to strengthen the Munster Rebellion. In this service he confirmed the military reputation acquired in France and the Low Countries, and came to be

ranked among the most accomplished soldiers of his times. In the destruction of the Spanish fort at Somerwick he has been charged with inhumanity; but the authorities clearly shew that his participation in the action was in obedience to orders, and that the blame must rest upon the Lord Deputy himself. The campaign was pregnant with great results to Raleigh. During its continuance he ingratiated himself in the favor of Leicester and had a serious difficulty with Lord Grey. On his return to England he was brought under the immediate notice of the Queen, by an act of gallantry which is related by several of the writers of the period as a fact, and which illustrates at once the quickness of Sir Walter's wit, and his correct appreciation of one of the weaknesses of Elizabeth's character. The difficulty with the Lord Deputy, was investigated by the Council, and Raleigh defended himself with such marked ability, that the occasion, in connection with the favor of the powerful earl, gave him admission to Court, and he soon gained the ear, and enlisted the good feeling of the Queen.

About this time,—1583,—a second expedition was set on foot by Sir Humphrey Gilbert, whose patent had nearly expired. Raleigh contributed a ship; and, in the capacity of vice-admiral, set sail in company with his brother-in-law. Soon after leaving Plymouth, however, a contagious sickness broke out among his crew, and he was forced to abandon the voyage and put back. The rest of the fleet reached and took possession of the coast in the vicinity of St. Johns, Newfoundland. In the succeeding year Raleigh obtained a patent from the

Queen similar to that held by Gilbert, and immediately thereafter equipped two barks, the command of which was entrusted to Captains Philip Amadis and Arthur Barlow. The expedition sailed upon the 27th April, 1584, and made the land in the neighbourhood of Cape Fear, early in the month of July. Barlow's account of the beauty and fertility of the country, seems to have delighted the Queen, as much as it gratified Raleigh; and she evinced her pleasure and vanity at the same time, by bestowing upon it the name of Virginia. The following year he despatched a fleet of seven sail, and the first Anglo-American colony was planted upon the shores of North Carolina, under the Governorship of Mr. Ralph Lane. The supplies which had been sent out for the relief of the settlers not having reached them as early as was expected, they became alarmed, and Sir Francis Drake happening to touch at Roanoke on his return from St. Domingo, they availed themselves of the opportunity and returned to England.\* Meanwhile Raleigh despatched two more expeditions to Virginia, and Grenville, who had command of one of them, left fifteen men at Roanoke. Subsequently he sent out a colony of one hundred and fifty men under the charge of Mr. John White, and, with him, twelve assistants, who were incorporated under the name and style of the Governor and Assistants of the "Citie of Raleigh."—They found the site of Lane's colony overgrown with weeds, and learned that a

\* Lediard, vol. 1st, p. 225, says that Raleigh went over in this ship himself, but neither Smith nor Hakluyt support the assertion. Indeed it seems clear that he never was in Virginia, unless his touching at Newfoundland on his return from the last Guiana Expedition can be construed into a visit to that Province.

portion of the colonists who had remained had been slaughtered by the natives, and that the rest were dispersed through the country. The settlers fearing a shortness of supplies, petitioned the Governor to return to England and take measures for their support. On his arrival, he found Raleigh actively engaged in assisting in preparations for the repulse of the threatened Spanish Invasion, but even under the pressure of his great engagements he fitted out a pinnace and fleet for the relief of the colonists, which he entrusted to Grenville. Grenville was commanded by the Queen not to leave England at such a juncture, and another expedition was prepared. The Captains who commanded it preferred, however, to cruise for prizes, and this disobedience of orders resulted in their capture by a superior French force from Rochelle. The pressing nature of public affairs prevented Raleigh from doing anything further for the relief of the colonists, and the subsequent descent upon Spain in which he was appointed to a command made it necessary to assign his Virginia patent to the "London Company," by which agreement he provided in the fullest manner for the relief of the settlers.

We have thus minutely traced the connection of Raleigh with the discovery and settlement of Virginia, because it is one of the important features of his history, and enables us more correctly to estimate the degree of praise to which he is entitled, and to free him from the charge of having deserted those, who in reliance upon his promises, had settled in a strange land.

When he embarked in this great scheme, Raleigh was *about thirty years* old. It is stated by Oldys, that



while yet a very young man, his favorite studies and topics of conversation, were the discoveries of Columbus, and the conquests of Cortéz, Pizarro, and other distinguished Spaniards who illustrated the reigns of the Emperor Charles and Philip II. These great enterprises greatly interested and strengthened an imagination naturally ardent. They directed the mind of Raleigh into channels calling for its largest grasp, and offered to his eager ambition, a dazzling and magnificent result. The attention of the whole christian world had been directed to the progress of discovery. Expedition succeeded expedition in the search for that new route, which was to lead to the golden realms of Cathay, and pour the spoils of the orient into the lap of expectant Europe. The adventurous navigator spread his sails to the winds that bore him westward, with a bold and hopeful heart, and the strange perils of a long voyage, made more fearful by the smallness of his ships, and the inadequacy of his supplies, were cheerfully borne; for at its close he might press the soil of a virgin world, and be the first to gather the harvest of its incalculable wealth. Sir Walter Raleigh was one of the most remarkable of this band of ocean Pioneers. A man of expanded views, and cultivated mind; versed in those sciences which while they suggested such designs, rendered him an apt agent in their successful prosecution; and uniting an enterprising spirit with an undaunted heart, all the energies of an ardent and hopeful nature, were enlisted in an undertaking worthy of the man, and characteristic of the age. His views in engaging in the cause of Discovery were to some extent nobler than those which

influenced many of the adventurers of the time, with the most of whom, even the greatest, Discovery was but the search after gold,—and Colonization, the means of securing it. Commerce unfolded her white wings too slowly for the quick spirit of adventure, and her rewards were not brilliant enough for ambition, or speedy enough for gain. While however we believe that many of the results to which Raleigh looked were of distant and gradual development, such as the growth of a colony, the conversion of aboriginal tribes, and the extension of trade, we cannot but admit that perhaps the most powerful magnet which drew him on in this enterprise, was the reasonable hope that the far land of whose existence and position he had satisfied himself, would yield in its *mineral wealth* a more speedy and brilliant reward for his laborious and costly undertaking.\* This expectation was fairly inferable from the accounts of Landonière, Pedro Morales, Burgoignon and Lane, and was strengthened by the specimens of ore which had been obtained by Frobisher and Gilbert; and we are justified in the opinion which we express, as to the motives of Raleigh, both from his immature age, and the qualities of mind which his previous life was calculated peculiarly to develop. Colonization was as grand an idea in 1589 as in 1584, and although the dangers which threatened England at the time of his assignment, imposed of necessity a temporary check upon the prosecution of his schemes; yet we incline to the opinion that a feeling of disappointment, and a shaken faith in the mineral wealth of Virginia, influenced him in the

\* Raleigh expended over £40,000 in his Virginia expeditions.



transfer of his patent, and prevented his recurring to the same field of enterprise, when, at the close of his military duties, he was again in a position to do so.

During these five years, evidences of the esteem of the people and the favor of the Queen had been showered upon Raleigh. He had been chosen to a seat in Parliament from the shire of Devon. The honor of Knighthood had been conferred upon him by the frugal hand of Elizabeth, who had also given him a lucrative patent for the vending of wines throughout the kingdom, and a grant of twelve thousand acres of the sequestered estates of the Earl of Desmond. He had been created Seneschal of the Duchies of Cornwall and Exeter, Lord Warden of the Stannaries, and Captain of the Queen's Guard. Thus, at an age when the majority of men have scarcely more than passed the threshold of active life, and have given scant evidence of their abilities, we find Raleigh in the full favor of an astute and discriminating monarch, loaded with honors, and confessedly ranked among the ablest and most distinguished men, of a brilliant Court, and a great kingdom. More to his credit, than the preferments themselves, is the fact *that he deserved them*. In his case, the rewards were fairly earned; and their bestowal is attributable to a just perception of character and qualities marking *the Queen*, rather than to a fond partiality influencing *the woman*.

The closing years of this period had also been filled up with occupation of the most engrossing and important nature. In connection with his brother Sir Adrian Gilbert, and as one of the "colleagues of the Fellowship for the discovery of the north-west

Passage," he had engaged with warm interest and liberal contribution in that great enterprise, which, under the able conduct of Captain John Davis, was carried on to so favorable a result. As a member of the Council of war, in connection with some of the ablest men in the Kingdom, he was charged with the responsible duty of devising plans of defence against the Spanish Invasion; and from the statement of their deliberations it would appear that he was a serviceable and leading member of that important Council.\* The crisis was the most fearful that had ever occurred in English history. Sextus V. had launched against Elizabeth the thunders of the Vatican, and held up the sovereignty of England as the reward of the Conqueror;—and Philip II. the most warlike Prince in Europe, flushed with victory and enriched by conquest, had concentrated the resources of his vast dominions in an expedition of unparalleled magnitude. The integrity of the monarchy, the lives and liberty of the people, institutions hallowed by age, great principles, and inestimable rights, civil and religious freedom, the safety of person and the sanctity of home, were all involved in the issue and hung on its result. The whole land was aroused; everywhere was consternation. The general alarm was manifested in the universality of the preparation. All the resources of the kingdom, moral and physical, were called into action. Beacons were set up on every highland; fortifications protected every harbour; armed bands mustered in every shire, and hundred and hamlet. The distinctions of rank were forgotten. The prejudices of religion slumbered.

\* Oldys, 39.

The Peer and the Peasant; the Catholic\* and the Protestant; stood side by side. Two gallant fleets chafed at their moorings; and eighty thousand men, earnest, courageous and patriotic, calmly awaited "the Invincible Armada."

Eminent among these was Raleigh; with a Sovereign relying on his judgment, and a people confident in his valor; with every attribute called into play by the greatness of the emergency;—now enforcing upon the council some great scheme for the general defence; now begging for cannon from Woolwich; now despatching ordnance to London, or powder to Portland, or training bands of militia in Devon: amid the whirl of excitement, and the rush of action, he was in an element in which noble minds shew best;—for, action is not only the life of eloquence, but the eloquence of life.

To the Camp at Tilbury, came the Queen of England:—the lion-hearted Queen. The weight of years, and the pressure of the "golden round," had bent her stately person, but had not bowed her fearless spirit. Aged, and infirm, she came with greaves, and helm, and hauberk, veiling her womanhood in the stern panoply of war; and, as the glittering lines moved in review before her, she addressed them in a speech, which is so full of generous confidence and lofty courage, that we cannot refrain from quoting it. "My loving People," said she, "we have been persuaded by some that are

\* The Catholic population behaved nobly in this crisis. The Peers served in the army and navy, in subordinate capacities. They fitted out vessels at their own expense and gave the command to Protestants, encouraging their dependants to lay aside all distinctions of politics, and religion, and unite in the general defence.—*Kent*, p. 275.

careful of our safety, to take heed how we commit ourself to armed multitudes, for fear of treachery: but I assure you, I do not desire to live to distrust my faithful and loving people. Let tyrants fear; I have always so behaved myself, that, under God, I have placed my chiefest strength and safeguard in the loyal hearts and good will of my subjects, and therefore I am come among you, as you see at this time, not for my recreation and disport, but being resolved, in the midst and heat of battle, to live or die amongst you all; to lay down for my God and for my kingdoms and for my people, my honor, and blood, even in the dust. I know I have but the body of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a King, and of a King of England too: and think foul scorn that Parma, or Spain, or any Prince in Europe, should dare invade the borders of my realm.”\*

It is not essential to my purpose to detail the story of the overthrow of this gigantic expedition. It is sufficient to say that Howard and Drake, Hawkins, Frobisher and Seymour, performed prodigies of valor with their gallant fleets. In connection with the efforts of man, came the manifest intervention of God; and the destruction of the Armada is attributable to a series of providential occurrences, such as the sudden death of the Marquis of Santa Cruz—the succession in command of the inefficient Duke of Medina Sidonia—the departure from the orders of Philip—the tempestuous weather, and the timely intelligence of Fleming the Pirate.

\* Tytler, p. 78.



In 1589 Raleigh accompanied Don Sebastian to Portugal, and was engaged against the Spaniards in the actions at Coruña, Burgos, Lisbon and Vigo. During this expedition a cause of quarrel occurred between him and Essex, which excited the anger of the Queen, and he passed over into Ireland. His interview and friendship with Spenser is a pleasant episode in his life, and if time allowed, we would willingly dwell upon it. It was beneficial to the Poet, whom it introduced favorably to Elizabeth and other distinguished patrons. His restored influence was exerted upon two occasions, to which we shall allude in detail, because they tend, although in a slight degree, to fill up that gap of evidence, as to his disposition and conduct in private life, which unfortunately exists in all his biographies. The first was the case of Mr. John Udall, a minister of the gospel, a good scholar, and a zealous puritan, who, in consequence of a certain publication reflecting strongly upon the habits and conduct of the prelacy had been brought to the bar in fetters, on an indictment for libel against the Queen. The prosecution resulted in sentence of death. Raleigh had been applied to and made the most strenuous application in his behalf. The Church however, was more powerful than the courtier, and the offending non-conformist died in prison. In the case of Captain Spring, he was more successful. This petitioner was an old and worthy soldier to whom quite a large arrearage of pay was due; the letter of Raleigh to the Lord Treasurer's Secretary in his behalf, displays the most hearty interest, and the petitioner gained his object. A third and striking instance

occurred in the generous and elaborate defence of the memory of Sir Richard Grenville, his old friend and servitor, from certain aspersions upon his fame, connected with the fight off the Azores in 1591. These are valuable illustrations of Raleigh's kindness of heart and liberality of sentiment, and strengthen the opinion, that had his friends been as careful to record those seemingly unimportant acts, which did him honor, as his enemies were assiduous in perpetuating those which tended to his discredit, we should have found him as distinguished for generous and disinterested action in private life, as he was illustrious for talent and service in his public career.

In 1592, he planned and carried out, with the most brilliant success, an expedition against Panama and the Plate fleet; and at the close of the year, we find him in Parliament, where his course in reference to many important measures, gave abundant evidence of the soundness of his judgment as well as the fervor of his patriotism.

About this time, as Oldys quaintly expresses it, "Sir Walter Raleigh had not lived so long at court, and so much about the dazzling beauties in it, without having the wings of his glory, at last, somewhat singed in the flames thereof;" and the matter of his amour with Elizabeth Throckmorton, becoming known to the Queen, she sent him to the Tower. The severity of his punishment for an offence of frequent occurrence at court, and usually overlooked altogether, indicates either the growing power of his rival Essex, or the strong personal affection of Elizabeth herself. His imprisonment, however, was of short duration, and we allude to the means by



which he effected his enlargement, not because we consider them derogatory to the character of Raleigh, but as affording an amusing illustration of his proficiency in the highflown language of the court, and of the fact that Elizabeth was no Homoeopathist in her fondness for flattery. It is narrated by Birch, that while Raleigh was one day sitting at his window in the Tower, the Queen passed on a visit to Sir George Carew the master of the ordonance. Raleigh knew the weakness, as well as the greatness, of his royal mistress. He resolved to disguise himself and get into a boat to see her majesty, vowing that if he were prevented, it would break his heart. Sir George Carew, however, was too flinty to be moved even by this touching outbreak of affection, and a regular fight ensued between the prisoner and his keeper. The occurrence was of course reported to the Queen, and together with the letter addressed by Raleigh to Burleigh, aided very materially in effecting his release. This letter is not the least curious part of the transaction, and we quote a portion of it. It avows that he suffers the torments of Tantalus in being debarred the favor of the Queen—and proceeds: “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 cheeks like a nymph—sometimes sitting in the shade like a goddess—sometimes singing like an angel—sometimes playing like an Orpheus!” Addressed to the most beautiful of the sex, this language might well seem a *little* exaggerated, as few, even of the Divinities whom we are prone to adore, combine so many rare characters and qualities; but when we

learn that the object of this superlative eulogy had passed her *sixtieth year*—was wrinkled, fretful, and ugly, we must admire the gallantry, as highly as we estimate the ingenuity, of the sighing prisoner; and admit that if any of the courtiers of the time could combine in a single sentence, a larger number of choice and classic appeals to the vanity of woman, he must have stood high indeed in the estimation of the Virgin Queen!

Released from the Tower, but still banished from Court, Raleigh passed a short season of retirement at Sherborne, devoting his leisure to useful occupations and study. The course of his reading may be inferred from the nature of the great enterprise in which he next appears an actor. We have already stated that he was thoroughly familiar with the achievements of the Spaniards in the New World, and have alluded to their influence upon his ardent temperament. The wealth which had flowed into the coffers of Spain and Portugal, from Mexico and Peru, had inclined the general mind to receive with the utmost favor, the accounts which, from time to time, had been given of the more surprising wealth and magnificence of the marvellous Empire of Guiana. Of the sincerity of Raleigh's belief in the existence and riches of El Dorado, we shall have occasion hereafter to offer conclusive evidence, and we pass, now, to the motives which urged him to attempt its exploration and settlement. High in the esteem of his sovereign—filling many honorable and responsible offices—distinguished as a soldier—ranking high as a scholar, and poet—a statesman of admitted merit, and, in every respect, eminent among

the greatest personages of the time—he had nearly run the career, and achieved the rewards of service at home; and although, only in his forty-second year, some great and untried field was essential to the further development of his energies. Guiana offered that field. The enterprise peculiarly suited him. It was grand in conception, it would be arduous in execution; others had failed, he would succeed; all was new—a virgin soil—an untrodden Empire—a strange people! His ambition was roused—he would link his name with the golden land—he would carry out his schemes of colonization—he would gratify to the utmost his love of magnificence—he would restore himself to the favor of his Queen, and set, in her regal crown, a richer jewel than Columbus had given unto Spain!

It may be interesting to preface our rapid summary of the efforts of Raleigh, with a brief reference to the geographical position of Guiana and the stories which were current at that period in regard to its wonderful riches. From an excellent work, styled “*El Dorado*,” laboriously prepared by Van Heuvel, we learn, that “Guiana is that portion of South America, extending along the Atlantic coast, from the Oronoko to the Amazon, and is embraced between these Rivers, which are united by the junction of the Cassiqueara with the Amazon.” According to Juan Martinez whose narrative Van Heuvel quotes, the name, “*El Dorado*,” which was applied to the City of Manoa, was derived from a certain custom of the inhabitants “who, when their Emperor caroused with them, all those who pledged him have their bodies covered with a kind of white balsam,

and, certain servants of his, blow gold dust through hollow canes upon them until they are all shining from head to foot, and thus adorned, they do sit drinking by twenties and hundreds, and continue so sometimes six or seven days together. And from witnessing this, and from the abundance of gold which he saw in the City, the images of gold in the Temples, the plates, armors and shields of gold, which they used in the wars, he called it 'El Dorado.'” Lopez, in his general History of the Indies, in his description of the Court and magnificence of Guynacapa, ancestor of the Emperor of Guiana, uses the following language:—“All the vessels of his house, table and kitchen were of gold, and silver, and, the meanest, of silver and copper. He had in his wardrobe hollow figures of gold, which seemed giants, and the figures in proportion and bigness of all the beasts, birds, trees and herbs, that the earth bringeth forth, and of all the fishes that the sea or waters of his kingdom breedeth. He had also ropes, budgets, chests and troughs of gold and silver. Finally there was nothing in his dominions, whereof, he had not the counterfeit in gold.”

In 1594 Raleigh despatched Captain Whiddon, an old and experienced officer, to explore the coast of Guiana, and ascertain the chances of success. The account which he gave upon his return, of the beauty and richness of the land, determined Raleigh in the prosecution of the enterprise, and, the succeeding year, he prepared an expedition and sailed, himself. His memorial of the voyage and its results, published soon after his return, was coldly received, and he was still denied access to Court. Not deterred how-



ever, by this harsh reception, which sprang less from incredulity than malice, he prepared a third expedition, which, upon the eve of departure, he was obliged to entrust to Captain Whiddon.

The emergency which now detained him in England, presents a striking proof that he was a clear and far-sighted statesman, as well as a bold military leader. When, in 1588, it was announced, that the indefatigable Philip of Spain was making great preparation for a second invasion, Raleigh had proposed that he should be anticipated in his attack, and that a force should be despatched to burn his fleets in his own harbours. This counsel was deemed ill advised, and was rejected; but the lapse of eight years shewed it to have been well conceived; and, in connection with Essex and Howard of Effingham, Raleigh was now appointed one of the commanders of the Cadiz expedition, to carry it into effect. The enterprise was crowned with the most brilliant success. Seven English ships engaged and destroyed the Spanish fleet, numbering fifty-five vessels, backed by the Fort of Puntal and the batteries on shore.\* All the leaders behaved with great bravery, but Raleigh was most conspicuous for his valour; and the success of the attack is largely attributable to him, as he planned it and seems to have been virtually the commander in chief. When the city was taken, Raleigh, although severely injured by a splinter wound received in the naval fight, desiring to encourage the army by his presence, caused himself to be borne on shore upon the shoulders of his men. He afterwards urged upon Essex the adoption of measures for the cap-

\* Oldys, p. 96.

ture of the Plate fleet, which, had his advice been taken, would, in all probability, have resulted in the seizure of those floating El Dorados. Immediately on reaching England he despatched a fourth expedition to Guiana, under Captain Berrie. Raleigh was now restored to favor, and resumed his place in a court, at that time, greatly distracted by the factions and animosities of Essex and Sir Robert Cecil, the Secretary of State.

The occurrences of the "Island voyage," in which Raleigh soon after served under Essex, added strength to the enmity which had grown up between them; nor did Essex scruple to poison the mind of James of Scotland, (with whom he was then intriguing, as the probable successor of Elizabeth,) against Sir Walter among others who were inimical to him at the English Court.\* The indignation which such conduct is calculated to induce in our minds, must, however, give place to sympathy for the position of the doomed favorite himself. With many noble qualities and brilliant characteristics, Essex united a heat of disposition, an impetuosity of manner, an impatience of restraint, and, overweening estimate of his influence with Elizabeth, which led him on, with fatal rapidity, to his melancholy end. The long established and endeared favorite of the *woman*, he utterly forgot that he was no less the subject of the *Queen*. This was an oversight Elizabeth would not readily pardon; but still there is strong reason to believe that Essex might have reinstated himself in her favor, had not his impatient disposition led him to the commission of acts, which, managed as their representation to the

\* Oldys, p. 135. 1 Cayley, p. 305.

Queen doubtless was, by the subtle and unscrupulous Cecil, rendered his fate inevitable. His arrest, trial and conviction followed in rapid succession, and the career of the soldier and courtier closed with the scaffold.\*

In connection with this event it becomes necessary to refer to a rumour which was current at the time, and to which some writers have attached importance. The death of this unfortunate nobleman was attributed to the active agency of Raleigh, and it was even urged that he was present at the execution, that he might glut his hatred with the sight of the Earl's sufferings. It is undoubtedly true that a very hostile feeling had for a long time existed between them, and we propose very briefly to sum up the evidence in the matter and give the conclusion which seems fairly deducible therefrom. As we have already stated, Raleigh had been at the outset of his career introduced at court, and otherwise favored by Leicester. The advance of the protégé, however, was entirely too rapid for the patronizing Earl, and soon outran his intent. He therefore brought forward his nephew, Essex, to divert from Raleigh the favor of the Queen, and clip the wings of the aspiring courtier. We may readily suppose that the nephew thus introduced upon the stage, knew the purpose, and to some extent shared the feelings of his uncle. It is certain that he very soon manifested an inimical disposition, which was strengthened by various occurrences. In the expedition of 1589, in favor of Don Sebastian, Raleigh had the misfortune to offend

\* He was brought under the notice of the Queen in his seventeenth year, and was executed in his thirty-fourth.—*Tytler*, p. 101.

Sir Roger Williams, who was an intimate friend of Essex; which so angered the Earl, that he brought Raleigh into temporary disfavor with the Queen, and drove him into Ireland.\* In the expedition against Cadiz, in which they served together, the nomination of Raleigh by the Queen, as a commander and one of the council of five who were to control the hot spirit, and provide against the rashness of Essex, the admiral in chief; and the subsequent events of the attack and capture of Cadiz, the matter of the Plate fleet, and above all the preëminent ability displayed by Raleigh, and the great honor which he gained; strengthened this feeling in the bosom of the Earl.

Subsequently again in the "Island Voyage," the accidental separation of Raleigh, and his gallant capture of Fayall, the many gross errors committed by the Earl, the undoubted fact that all the success which attended the expedition was owing to Raleigh, the harsh reception of Essex by the Queen, who bitterly reproached him for his ill conduct, laying the whole blame upon him and highly extolling his associate in command; all these converted concealed dislike into open and avowed enmity, and Essex availed himself of every opportunity to indulge and display his now bitter hostility. The "Feather Triumph,"† as Camden styles it, is a striking illustration of this assertion, and the efforts which he made to prejudice the mind of James, and finally the slanderous charge, after his apprehension, that Raleigh had planned an ambuscade to murder him as he passed to the coun-

\* Cayley, vol. 1, p. 109.

† See Camden. Oldys, p. 132. And Clarendon, *Reliquiæ Wottonianæ*, edition of 1685, p. 190.



cil chamber;\* all shew conclusively that it was time Raleigh should ward off the blows of one so able and willing to do him injury.

The authorities on the other hand shew that Raleigh, while he unjustly incurred the anger of Essex in every one of the instances to which we have alluded, made every effort to conciliate and tranquilize the Earl; in one case going almost too far for his honor, as on the return from the Cadiz Expedition, when he treated him, as Camden says, "with the cunningest respect, and the deepest humility"—and in another case risking his life to serve him; as in the effort to warn Essex of the dangers which surrounded him after his return from Ireland, he solicited a meeting with Gorges, and was four times shot at by Sir Christopher Blount, the friend and servitor of the Earl.† His presence at the execution of Essex was undoubtedly official; as Captain of the Queen's Guard, the soldier was simply at his post; and, in addition to the entire incompatibility of the motive, charged in the rumour alluded to, with his whole character, we have his own declaration, which is certainly entitled to be considered. His celebrated letter to the Lord Secretary Cecil, which has been by some writers esteemed strong proof of the connection of Raleigh with the condemnation and death of Essex, does not seem to us to justify such a construction. He argues the necessity of keeping Essex down, of diminishing his power, and perhaps even of depriving him of his liberty; and urges this upon Cecil, because, to use the language of the letter, "the

\* Oldys, p. 136. † 1 Cayley, 337. Oldys, 136.

less you (Cecil) make him, (Essex) the less he will be able to harm you and yours; *and if her majesty's favor fail him, he will again decline to be a common person;*" and concludes, "Let the Queen hold Bothwell (Essex) while she hath him. He will ever be the canker of her estate and safety. I have seen the last of her good days and all ours, after his liberty."\*

We are to estimate the conduct of Raleigh in this transaction, both with reference to the imminent danger which the continuance of Essex in power would entail upon him, and the somewhat loose morals and practices of the times in which he lived. The letter from which we have quoted, was written with the view of relieving himself from this danger, and while some of its expressions would appear to justify the opinion that he counselled the death of the Earl, other passages shew with equal clearness, that the object in view could be attained by the displacement of Essex from his offices, and the forfeiture of the Queen's favor, for, once reduced to "a common person," he was no longer to be feared. This construction is strengthened by what Raleigh himself says in his last declaration, made under circumstances of the most solemn character. Referring to this charge, he declares, "It is true I was of an opposite faction, but I take God to witness *that I had no hand in his death;* but always believed that it would be better for me had his life been preserved; for, after his fall, I got the hatred of those who wished me well before, *and those who set me against him,* set themselves afterward

\* This celebrated letter is given by Tytler in his Biography of Raleigh, p. 190. In connection with it, reference should be had to an extract from Jardine, quoted in a note to the same page.

against me, and were my worst enemies; and my soul hath many times been grieved that I was not nearer to him when he died, as I understood afterward that he asked for me, desiring to be reconciled.”\*

We have now traced Sir Walter Raleigh to the culminating point of his greatness. From the position of a private gentleman and a volunteer soldier, we have noted his rapid progress from honor to honor, until he fills a conspicuous page in the annals of the period he adorned. Placed in positions which severely try the virtue of men, and surrounded by enemies, who hunted for opportunities to defame him, we have found him worthy and honorable, truthful and just; with no charge substantiated against him, of sufficient weight to lessen admiration or forfeit esteem. This particular juncture is one of the most serious and interesting of his life. A tried and faithful servant, already rewarded in no mean degree by his Queen, whose feelings toward him mingled the impulses of sex with the policy of position; with a powerful enemy, by a melancholy fate, removed from his path, and but one prominent rival left beside the throne; it would be a curious speculation to trace out the probable character and termination of the career thus opening upon one, whose ambition was unsated by preferments, and whose energies action had matured. In following the severe muse of history, we must exchange the pleasant paths, in which imagination thus exercised would lead us, and pursue those devious and gloomy ways, through which subtlety and hate, conducted him to disgrace and death.

\* See Harleyan MSS. Oldys, p. 230.

The first event which seriously affected the destiny of Raleigh, was one of the utmost moment, not only unto him, but to all England. In the seclusion of her palace at Greenwich, that "warm winter box, for the shelter of her old age," Elizabeth was dying. The hand that had swayed the sceptre with such masculine energy, was growing feeble. The mighty spirit that for four and forty years had comprehended the interests and directed the concerns of a great People, was passing away from earth; and in anguish of mind and torture of body, amid the tears of her waiting ladies, the unconcealed joy of her intriguing Courtiers, and the honest regret of her true subjects, the enfeebled body of the aged Queen bent beneath the sceptre of the king of terrors. In striking accordance with her character, as far as it has been necessary to our subject to portray it, was her last interview with the Councillors, who troubled her closing moments with the question of succession. Cecil, hitherto timid in her presence, and subservient to her lightest whims; Cecil, whose piling muse could not sufficiently paint the honor which the Queen had done him, when she tied his jewelled miniature to her shoe and kicked it about the room;\* Cecil, the "potent pigmy," now, that the hand of Death was visibly upon his mistress, and yearning by one other act of treachery to the dying, to set himself more firmly in the graces of her successor, was bold and peremptory. Her compliance with the wishes of the Council was urged upon her at a moment when it was cruelty, and in a manner which made it insult. "Her throat," says the narrator, "troubling her much, they desired her

\* Miss Strickland's *Queens of England*, p. 219.



to hold up her finger when they named whom she liked, whereupon they named the 'King of France;' (this was to try her intellect,) she never stirred: the 'King of Scotland;' she made no sign: then they named 'the Lord Beauchamp'—this was the heir of Seymour, whose rights were derived from his mother, Lady Catharine Grey, one of the most unfortunate of Elizabeth's victims." This last drop was too much, her glazing eye flashed with the old Tudor fire; her shrunken form started up from the couch, and in fierce and haughty tones she broke forth: "I told you that my seat had been the seat of Kings. *I will have no rascal succeed me.* Trouble me no more. He who comes after me must be a King. I will have none but our cousin of Scotland!"\*

Alas for Raleigh! the parting soul of the queenly sufferer was *unprophetic*, and a "rascal" did succeed her, albeit in the person of "our cousin of Scotland!"

The contrast between the two sovereigns is exceedingly marked and striking. History, while she presents to our observation, very few such *women* as Elizabeth, unfortunately abounds in such *men* as James. She was distinguished by many of the best characteristics of *his* sex. He, was a strange blending of the worst weaknesses of *hers*. Her intellect, strengthened by exercise, and enriched by education, rapidly expanded and matured; embracing, with equal facility, the difficult problems of philosophy, the hidden beauties of literature, and the serious questions of state. His mind, ever subservient to his ruling weakness, was stored with scraps, and phrases, and superficialities; and the small stock of the solemn

\* Cotton MS. Tytler, p. 221. Strickland.

pedant, was paraded with all the trickery of the royal buffoon. Her comprehension was enlarged; his contracted; her perception of character was acute and correct;—the little he possessed, was blunted by prejudice and warped by partiality. With her, the favorite never ceased to be the subject; with him, the pet of the moment, was the master of the King. Her ministers were chosen from the wisest, her commanders from the bravest, and her judges from the most learned of the realm; and the claims of the applicant for office were gauged by his ability to discharge its duties. Of the band that surrounded his throne, the most distinguished were old servants of hers, while the most infamous, were creatures of his own making. Her courageous spirit rode in armour through the lines at Tilbury; his craven soul drove him trembling behind his attendants, at the gleaming of a dagger. To the deliberations of the council chamber, she brought extensive information, and sensible speech. He wearied his ministers with crude notions of king craft, and fragments of delectable latin. As a Queen, she was frugal almost to parsimony, of the public money, while she indulged a woman's fondness for splendour and display. He, poor in pocket, as in spirit, borrowed spoons for his marriage feast; received ambassadors in the stockings of the Earl of Marr,\* and counted over, inventory in hand, the jewels of his "beloved wife," before she had been two days dead!† The position of Raleigh, under the new monarch, was alike dangerous and unpleasant.‡

\* Miss Strickland's *Queens of England*, p. 260.

† *Ibid.* 369.

‡ "James feared and hated him."—*Beaumont, Dépêche*, of Dec. 18.

The representations of Essex and Cecil had long before prejudiced the mind of James against him;\* and the feeling thus engendered, gained bitterness and strength from many circumstances. Raleigh had been to some degree connected with the death of the unfortunate Mary;—a prominent personage in the Court of Elizabeth, he had not only disdained to intrigue before the Queen's death, for the favor of "our cousin of Scotland:" but in a large meeting held in London soon after that event, he had urged that James be obliged to subscribe to articles, and, rumour added, that he even advocated bolder and more startling measures.† With all the vehemence of his nature he had opposed the peace with Spain, and offered the King, who shrunk in horror from such a project, to raise two thousand men, and, at his own cost, invade the territory of his ancient foe. It was perfectly natural that the timid James should recoil from such a man, whose fiery disposition and large designs, were so repugnant to his own contracted views and pusillanimous soul.‡ The two

\* Carte, vol. 3, p. 709. Tytler, p. 225.

† 1 Cayley, p. 357. Oldys, p. 150.

‡ The following striking illustration of the cowardly nature of James, is taken from a MS. volume, which formerly belonged to John Randolph of Roanoke, and which has never been published. It is entitled, "The Ancient Records of the Colony of Virginia, under the Treasurer and Company." For the extract I am indebted to the kindness of Gustavus A. Myers, Esq., a distinguished member of the Richmond Bar.

EXTRACT

From "The Ancient Records of the Colony of Virginia, under the Treasurer and Company."

"At a Quarter Court, held for Virginia, at Mr. Farrar's, in St. Sithe's Lane, the 17th of May, 1620, one Mr. Kerkham, agent, sent from the King, presented himself to the Board, and signified to the Court, that his Majesty, understanding of the election of their Treasurer, which they intended this day to make choice of, out of an especial care and respect he hath to that plantation, hath required him to nominate unto them four, out of which his pleasure is, the

men were in every respect antagonistic. The very characteristics which endeared Raleigh to Elizabeth, made him odious to her successor; and, while the service of the one, afforded him constant opportunities

Company should make choice of one to be their Treasurer: That was, Sir Thomas Smith, Sir Thomas Roe, Mr. Alderman Johnson, and Mr. Maurice Abbott, *and no other.*

“Sir Edwin Sandys, their then Treasurer, proceeded to make an elaborate report of the transactions of the Company during the preceding year, and delivering up his office together with the seals, he desired the Court to proceed in the election of their Treasurer, according to the message lately received from his Majesty, and thereupon withdrew himself out of Court.

“Upon which this Great and General Court found themselves, upon a deliberate consideration of the matter, *at an exceeding pinch*; for if they should not do as the King had commanded, they might incur suspicion of defect in point of duty, from which they protested they were and would be free; on the other side, if they should proceed according to the limits of that message, they *suffered a great breach into their privilege of free election, granted to them by his Majesty's Letters Patent, which they held fit rather to lay down with all submission and duty at his Majesty's feet, than to be deprived of their privilege.* The election was therefore adjourned to the ‘next Great and General Court, some six weeks hence,’ and till they understood the King's further pleasure; and in the interim they entreated the Right Honorable the Lord of Southampton, Viscount Doncaster, the Lord Cavendish, the Lord Sheffield, Sir John Davis, and others, all members of the Company, to meet and determine of an humble answer to his Majesty's message and to deliver to him a true information, as well of the former as of this latter year's, of the business for Virginia, beseeching also, that his Majesty would be pleased not to take from them the privilege of their Letters Patent, but that it might be in their own choice to have free election.

“At a Great and General Quarter Court, held in the afternoon, at Mr. Farrar's house, the 28th of June, 1620, the Earl of Southampton acquainted the Court, that himself with the rest of the Lords and Gentlemen, requested thereunto by the last Quarter Court, had presented their humble desires to his Majesty for the free election of their Treasurer; whereunto his Majesty had most graciously condescended, signifying unto them, that it would be pleasing unto him if they made choice of such an one as might, at all times and occasions, have free access unto his Royal person, *and further declaring that it was the mistaking of the messenger, having not received the message immediately from his own Royal mouth, to exclude them from the liberty of choosing any but the four nominated, whom his majesty's intent was indeed to recommend, but not so as to bar the Company from the choice of any other.*

“Whereupon the whole Court tendered to his Majesty all humble thanks, and ordered that by writing it should be signified to his Majesty.

“The Earl of Southampton was thereupon immediately, with much joy and applause, nominated Treasurer, and elected unanimously, by erection of hands, the ballot box being ‘surceased’ in honor to him.”



of greatness, the disposition and policy of the other, closed all the avenues by which he could achieve it. In addition to the dislike of the King, for these reasons, Cecil, the undoubted enemy of Raleigh, stood next the throne, and his influence was exerted against him. His enmity was greatly increased by certain disclosures which Raleigh made to the King, after Cecil had effected his displacement from the captaincy of the Guard, in which he charged upon the Secretary the whole *onus* of the Essex matter, and revealed his active agency in the execution of the King's mother.\*

With this statement of Raleigh's position at Court, we come to the consideration of his connection with "the Spanish, or Lord Cobham's Treason." The principal parties to this plot were George Brooke and Lord Cobham. Their object was to seat the Lady Arabella Stewart on the throne, of which they purposed dispossessing James.† Spain was to furnish the "sinews of war," and send a large invading force to assist the conspirators in carrying out their designs. Coincident with this scheme, in point of time, was the "Plot of the Priests," the object of which was, to seize the king's person, and force him to remodel his Ministry in accordance with their wishes, and grant a full toleration of religion. Besides the Priests, Watson and Clarke; Brooke, the brother of Cobham; Sir Griffin Markham, Copeley and Lord Grey, were, also, engaged in this treason. A

\* Beaumont, *Depêche*, May 2nd and Aug. 13th. Wellwood's notes on Wilson, *Comp. Hist. of Eng.*, vol. 11, pp. 663, 664. 1 Cayley, 355. Heylen's *Examen Historicum*, p. 170. Oldys, 740.

† Beaumont, *Depêche*, May 12th, June 13th, July 30th, 1603, quoted in the *Edinburg Review*, April, 1840.

disclosure, made by Copeley to his wife, and communicated to Cecil,\* led him to suspect, says Oldys, that Cobham was concerned in it as well as his brother Brooke; and as Cobham was at that time in frequent communication with Raleigh, who was settling his Lordship's estate, the Minister suspected Raleigh, and had him examined before the Privy Council, touching the "surprising treason," as the plot of the Priests was called, and, particularly, as to Cobham's connection with it. The statements of Raleigh acquitted Cobham, and he closed his examination, by remarking to the Council, that "whatsoever correspondence there was between Cobham and Aremberg, Laurencie could better give an account of it," and therefore advised that an application should be made to him.† This Matthew de Laurencie was a merchant of Antwerp, an attendant on the Count D'Aremberg, at that time, representing at London, the Governor of the Netherlands and the King of Spain; and he was the channel of all Cobham's treasonable communications. When Raleigh left the Council Chamber, he sent a message to Cobham, stating that "he was examined and had cleared him of all;" and Lawrence Keymis, a servant of Raleigh's, who bore the message, seems to have added without authority, "to be of good cheer, for that one witness would not condemn him."‡ Cobham was soon afterward examined in person, and resolutely asserted that neither himself nor Raleigh, were connected with any treasonable practices; yet the Council resorted to

\* Hallam's Constitutional History, vol. 1, p. 483. Beaumont, *Depêche*, December 6th.

† Sherley's Raleigh, p. 110. Oldys, p. 153.

‡ Sherley, p. 140.

a trick, by which Cobham was induced to think that Raleigh had impeached and betrayed him; and in the heat of passion, he declared, "that he had intended to confer with the Arch Duke, and to go from him into Spain, to borrow of the King six hundred thousand crowns, which were to be distributed among the discontented in England, under the advice of Raleigh, who, he affirmed, had instigated him to these courses. This confession he would not even subscribe, but in fact *retracted it entirely, before he had got to the foot of the stairs.*\*

Upon this flimsy, passionate, and *retracted* charge; the enemies of Raleigh procured his arraignment for treason. The indictment charged him "with conspiring to deprive the king of his government—to raise up sedition in the realm—to alter religion—to bring in the Roman superstition, and to procure foreign enemies to invade the kingdom, and that for his services in this treason, he was to receive eight thousand crowns from Spain.†" The trial of this great man on this indictment, is one of the foulest blots upon the page of English history. Conducted in a manner which cannot fail to excite the warmest indignation, in all who peruse its record; the gross injustice which marked it, has been universally admitted; and, the event itself is so familiar to all, that I would perhaps weary you, by giving its details. Suffice it to say that the whole case against Raleigh rested upon the evidence of the Lord Cobham, a craven accuser,

\* See "Arraignment of Raleigh," p. 97. Sir Toby Matthew's Coll. of Letters, Ed. 1660, p. 251. Beaumont. Carte. Overbury.

† Extract from indictment. Oldys, p. 232. For full report of the Trial refer to State Trials. East's Pleas of the Crown. Sir Thos. Overbury's arraignment, and Jardine.

and forsworn witness; who, affirming the truth of his charges "upon his soul's salvation," falsified them so often, by counter statements, that Raleigh might well exclaim in scorn: "Now I wonder how many souls this man hath. He damns one in this letter, and another in that!"\* His last declaration in evidence in the case, is a letter addressed by him to Raleigh, which is worth quoting. It runs thus—"Seeing myself so near my end,—for the discharge of my conscience and freeing myself from your blood, which else will cry vengeance against me,—I protest upon my salvation, I never practised with Spain by your procurement. God so comfort me in this my affliction, as you are a true subject, for any thing that I know. I will say with Daniel, "*purus sum a sanguine hujus,*" so *God have mercy on my soul, as I know no treason by you.*"†

This letter, which was evidently wrung from Cobham by the pangs of a conscience which enforced the demand of Raleigh that he should justify him, is certainly entitled to as much weight as his counter declarations, made through constraint, trickery, or passion; especially, when Raleigh, who, throughout the trial, had begged to be confronted with his accuser, said: "that he would acknowledge the whole indictment, if Cobham, once brought before his face, would repeat any one of the matters he had confessed." This legal right, however, was harshly denied, although Cobham was the whole time in an adjoining room.‡ It formed no part of the plans of

\* Oldys, p. 249.

† Vide, Oldys, p. 259.

‡ Vide, Appendix to Oldys. Sir Toby Matthew's Letters, p. 233.



those who were laboring to destroy Raleigh, that the dastardly nobleman, whom they knew to be falsifying, should be subjected to the rack of his cross examination:—his various statements were contradictory enough as it was, and sufficiently weakened their case, without confronting him with one whom he was so deeply injuring, and who would have forced from him the truth. The eloquent and ingenious argument of Raleigh, upon his right to be confronted with his accuser, was not refused in consequence of the repealing statutes of Edward III. and VI. as urged by Coke; but, the true reason is embodied in a remark made by the king himself, who, when he heard that the request had been denied by the judges, said: that, “*could Cobham have spoken anything against Raleigh, they would have brought him from Constantinople, to accuse him!*”<sup>\*</sup> The conduct of Coke, the king’s attorney, was disgraceful to the position he occupied—to the sovereign he represented—to the profession to which he belonged—the age in which he lived—and the manhood he shamed. He was, throughout the trial, ungenerous and unjust; overbearing and cruel; brutal and insolent. The demeanour of Raleigh, on the contrary, was, in the highest degree, dignified and manly; his bearing, was that of an innocent man—his defence, that of an able lawyer. The ingenuity displayed by him in the conduct of his difficult cause, is very remarkable; and the cogency of his arguments, the quickness of his perception, the dexterity of his management, and the eloquence of his appeal,† would have satisfied

\* Observations on Sanderson’s History, 4 vol. p. 8. 2d Cayley, p. 28.

† Hardwick’s State Papers, vol. 1, p. 379.

an unprejudiced tribunal, of his perfect innocence in view of the evidence adduced. But, unfortunately for him, the fiat had gone forth; and those whom he addressed were but the ministers selected to register the decree. Venality soiled the ermine of the judge, and power controlled the decision of the jury. The former pronounced his doom with as much alacrity as he had formerly shewn in taking purses on the highway, or bribes upon the bench;\* and the latter in their eagerness to perform their part well, *overdid* it; so that the malignant Coke, when he heard that they had found him guilty of *treason*, exclaimed to the messenger; “surely thou art mistaken, *I myself only accused him of misprison of treason!*”†

The only inquiry which is necessary for us to institute in regard to this plot, is the extent of Raleigh’s connection with it, and the question of his *moral guilt*. These two matters rest upon the evidence of Cobham, and the declaration of Beaumont, the representative, at that time, of the Court of France. Cobham charged, that Raleigh had instigated the treason, knew of its progress, and was to share in its results. Beaumont, stated his belief in Raleigh’s connection with the plot; a conclusion to which he seems to have arrived, mainly upon the strength of certain conversations which he had with King James, and from documents which that *disinterested* personage had submitted to his inspection.‡ Now as to the

\* For several years he addicted himself but little to the study of the law, but to profligate company; and was wont to take a purse with them. This Judge had a noble house, park and manor, for a bribe to save the life of one condemned for child murder.” Vide, Aubrey’s Lives, vol. 2, pp. 492, 493.

† Cayley, vol. 2, p. 29.

‡ Beaumont, *Dépêche*, 6th Dec., 1603—Quoted in *Edinburg Rev.*, Ap., 1840.

testimony of Cobham, it is wholly worthless. His vascillation, prevarication, and falsehood have been already alluded to, and we will briefly mention some other reasons for rejecting his declarations altogether.

He was notoriously infirm of character, and easily swayed by others. Upon his trial he behaved in so cowardly a manner—now making assertions, and in the same breath denying them; now trembling in his place with fear, and anon supplicating the Judges with tears; and displaying, throughout, so mean and abject a spirit,—that the writers of the period speak of his trial as “such a fasting-day’s piece of work as discredited the place to which he was called,” and they treat him with evident contempt.\* His conduct upon the scaffold, to which, together with Markham and Grey, he was conducted, as a part of the solemn farce which the “royal humorist,” who had beforehand determined to spare their lives, intended them to play, was of a very different character. He ascended with good assurance and contempt of death, bore himself very bravely, and so out-prayed the Minister and the company, that the byestanders, alluding to his different behaviour on the two occasions, said, “he had a good mouth *in a cry*, but was nothing single.”† He concluded his performance, by reasserting all the charges he had made against Raleigh, and having thus done the very thing for which, perhaps, he had been placed on the scaffold, his pardon was announced, and he was led away. His courage on this occasion is readily understood, when we learn that he had beforehand been advised

\* Hardwick’s State Papers, vol. 1, p. 377. Cayley, vol. 11, p. 13.

† Ibid. p. 23.

that his life was perfectly safe. Any importance, however, which might attach to his statements, is disposed of by the declaration, by Mrs. Thomson, of the fact, that several years afterward, at the intercession of Raleigh, he was called out of the Tower and re-examined in the presence of the Queen, when he made a last, solemn, and full recantation and retraction of everything he had uttered against his illustrious victim.\*

As to the testimony of Beaumont, it is certainly entitled to weight; but it is nevertheless fair to estimate it with reference to the circumstances under which his opinion was formed. If he had no better authority for believing the charges against Raleigh, than the declarations of James and such documents as he submitted to him, then it is fair to conclude two things: first, that the evidence which influenced his mind was either the same as that brought out at the trial, the character of which we have already considered; and, secondly, that any proof of Raleigh's guilt, which may have been in the possession of the King, *and not used in Court*, must have been, if possible, still more flimsy and unsatisfactory;—for James, as his subsequent conduct will undoubtedly prove, was mean and mendacious enough to adopt any course, calculated to destroy the man whom he hated so bitterly. Besides, the Minister of France lived at Court, moved constantly and familiarly in the circle of royalty, and was very likely to adopt such opinions as were current and popular in that society. On the whole, we cannot believe that Raleigh was connected with the treason, beyond the error which

† Mrs. Thomson's Life of Sir W. R. p. 180.—Am. Ed.



he committed in listening to the first disclosure of Cobham in relation to the proposed pension. This matter, he insists, "was only mentioned to him once; and, for three weeks after, he heard no more of it"—that he did not think that Cobham had any commission to offer it—and that he deemed the conversation of so little account, that he did not even remember it until it was used against him on the trial. In his letter to James, he says: "For my part, I protest before the ever living God, that I never *intended* treason, *consented to* treason, or *performed* treason. Lost am I for *only hearing* a vain man; for *hearing only*—never believing or approving."

A very able writer in the Edinburgh Review for April, 1840, after reviewing the circumstances of this case, and laying much stress upon the testimony of Beaumont, concludes, that "it would be more rational to believe that Raleigh was *wholly guilty* (that is, a *direct participator* in the designs of Cobham and Brooke,) than that he was wholly innocent (that is, wholly uninformed of the nature and objects of his intercourse with Aremberg.)"

Now we find it impossible to adopt this conclusion, for several very strong reasons. In the first place, Raleigh had been, all his life, a most strenuous and indefatigable enemy of Spain; he had repeatedly perilled his life against her; he had cut up her commerce, burned her fleets, sacked her towns, written against her policy, humbled her pride, and expended over £40,000 (nearly his whole estate) in enterprises against her King and people. On the accession of James, he addressed him a powerful work, in which he exposed the designs and weakness of Spain;

counselling his Majesty to continue offensive measures against her, and volunteering an army, at his own cost, for his assistance. Although he may have been a discontented man, it does seem to us that the idea of applying *to Spain*, to send an army to invade England—of receiving *from Spain* a beggarly pension, and of uniting with a Nation, in contests *against which* he had won all his laurels,—is a very improbable, if not a preposterous idea. Secondly. Raleigh was a person of keen foresight, great comprehension, singular tact, and thorough knowledge of the men and the times. He was an individual who prided himself “on swaying all men’s courses;”—he was a leader even among leaders;—and,—knowing, as he did, the magnitude of such a design as Cobham’s—involving a civil war—a foreign alliance—danger to the King, and revolution to the monarchy; knowing as he did, the character, the feelings and power of Cecil, as well as the weakness, cowardice and imbecility of the Lord Cobham;—is it not monstrous to suppose that he would have risked honor, fame, life itself, in a dangerous enterprise with such a coadjutor,—for it must be remembered that he is charged with no interviews with any one but Cobham. Would he have rested during weeks, and allowed such a poor tool as Cobham to work for him?—and, moreover, if he was fully cognizant of all the proceedings, and knew (as he must have known, if “a direct participator,”) the number and character of Cobham’s communications with D’Aremberg, through Laurencie,—would he,—a guilty man,—in the most gratuitous manner, at a time when the fact was unknown to all but Cobham and himself, and

when his examination before the Council was concluded,—*have suggested to the Council “that they had better send for this very Laurencie, as he could tell them of all Cobham’s conferences with D’Aremberg, though, for his part, he knew of nothing improper between them!”*

But, in addition to this, Secretary Cecil, in a letter to Sir Ralph Winwood, written while Raleigh was languishing at Winchester, in ignorance of his fate, and in daily expectation of death, says; “that the king pretended to forbear Sir Walter Raleigh, for the present, *until the Lord Cobham’s death had given some light* how far he would make good his accusation.” Now, if it was necessary that James should have this additional proof of the truth of Cobham’s charges, before he dared execute Raleigh, then, it seems certain, *first*, that there was *not* in his possession any other evidence than that adduced upon the trial, sufficient either to justify him in beheading Raleigh, or to excuse Beaumont in asserting his guilt; *secondly*, if the king only waited for the confirmatory death speech of Cobham, *why did he not execute the sentence upon Raleigh when that proof was furnished?* “Cobham mounted the scaffold with great assurance, and contempt of death,” and, after outpraying the minister and the company, he reasserted the truth of all his accusations against Raleigh.” Here was the “light” the king wanted! Why not proceed to execution? Did mercy restrain him? Did fear of the weakness of the proof, and instinctive horror of injustice, induce him to delay the axe of the headsmen? Not so,—for, even if in the exercise of a large charity, we can suppose him sincere in his belief of

the evidence of this perjured man, why did he not release Raleigh, when, three years after that same, Cobham, in the presence of his queen, solemnly retracted even the accusations he had made on the scaffold!

The truth of the matter, if it ever be disinterred from the dusty archives of the reign of James, will probably be found in the private correspondence of the King and the scraps and memoranda of his Secretary Cecil, rather than in the despatches of D'Aremberg, or the speculations of Beaumont.

From the presence of the unjust judge, the illustrious prisoner passed into the tower, and, in that stern fortress, with whose every turret and gateway, are linked associations of outrage and tales of blood, the man of action was, for twelve long years, condemned to monotony and gloom. Did not this sudden reverse, this cruel blow, crush him to the earth? Did not the fiery spirit of the soldier, longing for the excitements, the dangers, and the glories of war, break, in the dull routine of the prison-house? Did not the strong mind of the statesman, yearning for the duties and struggles of the hall of legislation, or, the board of council, give way, as year stole after year, eventless and unmarked? Did not the restless fancy of the adventurer, bear him over the western ocean to the flowery isle of Wocoton, and the blue waters of Chessiopek, reveal the splendors of Manoa, and echo the rush of the turbid Amazon, until he sank, despairing, from dreams of the unreal, into the iron arms of the actual? Did not the polished blade rust in the neglected scabbard? the torch go out



in the long darkness? No! brighter and stronger grew the spirit, purer and higher flamed the light; and, instead of vain complaints and idle repining, the intellectual and moral man braced himself for a great task, explored the realms of philosophy, gathered the treasures of history, unravelled the mysteries of science, plucked the flowers of poesy; and, greater, perhaps, in his downfall than his prosperity,—in the dungeon, than in the camp,—tasked all his energies in a work, wonderful for industry and learning, admirable in its style, veracious in its details, and lofty in its sentiment. And thus Sir Walter

“E’en with his prison-hours, enriched the world.”

There is one circumstance connected with the long imprisonment of Raleigh, which I cannot refrain from noticing, and that is, the lofty and unshaken devotion of his wife. The biographers of Sir Walter tell us that the Lady Raleigh was exceeding beautiful. Brought up in a brilliant court, surrounded by all the refinements of intellect and the amenities of life, she was, doubtless, elegant and accomplished; but of her character we know nothing until this dark cloud gathered over the fortunes of her husband. In the day of his prosperity, when each succeeding year, invested him with new honors, and clothed him with greater dignity; when admiring friends and obsequious retainers, crowded the princely halls of Sherborne and Durham House, she unquestionably clung to him with affection, and looked up to him in pride. But, when the malice of his enemies and the injustice of his king, stripped him of office and humbled his state, when the victorious soldier be-

came the attainted traitor, and he, who had hitherto lived in the smiles of royalty, languished in the gloom of a prison, then it was that the nobility of her nature and the depth of her love were fully revealed, and the woman who had softened the splendors of his greatness with mild and reflected radiance, became the sun and centre of his hope and solace, sustained his sinking spirit with words of consolation and hope, and sanctified the house of bondage with the ever present divinity of Love! She petitioned the minister, supplicated the favorite, and knelt before the King; and, although neglected, repulsed, and scorned, she strained all the energies of her nature, and exhausted all the resources of her Love, to effect his liberation.

At length, after more than twelve years confinement, the death of Cecil, inspired Raleigh with renewed hope, and a bribe of fifteen hundred pounds to Sir William St. John and Sir Edward Villiers, secured their influence with the King, and threw open the gates of the Tower.\* The Guiana project had continued to occupy his mind throughout his long imprisonment, and as soon as he was released, he prepared to prosecute it with unabated vigor. By submitting to great sacrifices, he succeeded in raising the funds necessary to equip a fleet, and upon the 28th March, 1617, he set sail on his last Guiana expedition. Before going into the details of this unfortunate voyage, it is proper to examine very briefly, one of the slanders of the period, which charged that Raleigh himself did not believe in the existence of the mines of Guiana. From this impu-

\* Obs. on Sanderson's Hist. of King James, vol. 4, p. 10. Oldys, p. 192.

tation we think he can be fully relieved. The adventures and successes of Columbus, Pizarro and Cortez, had prepared the European mind to believe many of the marvels which were narrated in connection with Guiana; and the previous, and contemporaneous Spanish histories, teemed with accounts of the riches of the country, and of hundreds of cavaliers of rank and consideration, who had adventured life and fortune, in vain efforts to reach the City of Manoa.\* The astute Cecil, the intelligent High Admiral, Howard, and the cautious men of trade, who assisted Raleigh in his enterprises, by furnishing both money and ships; seemed to have been impressed by these reports, and thought them worthy of credence.

About this time also, certain documents were laid before the Privy Council, which Captain Popham, had taken from a Spanish vessel. They were letters directed to the Governor of San Lucar, and the King of Spain, giving full accounts of the abundance of gold in Guiana, and urging extensive operations in that country.† The reports of Captains Keymis and Whiddon; the evidence of his own senses, in the mines which he himself saw in Guiana, and the yield of the ore which he brought home, and had assayed in London; sufficiently satisfied the mind of Raleigh, and certainly warranted him in coming to

\* See Hakluyt, vol. 3, p. 687, 692. Also Appendix to 2d Cayley, p. 358, in which a summary of these efforts is given, with the names of the most conspicuous of the adventurers.

† Hakluyt, vol. 3, p. 662. Birch, vol. 1, p. 236. App. to 2 Cayley, p. 307, where these letters are given in full.

the conclusions which influenced his subsequent movements.

With these grounds for belief, his after conduct, clearly establishes his sincerity. From the moment the great scheme first possessed his mind, he had despatched successive expeditions to conciliate the natives, explore the country, and collect information. Even in the Tower, his favorite project engaged his attention, and hardly was he released, before we find him devoting all his energies to its prosecution.

In these preparations, he expended the eight thousand pounds which the King had allowed him for Sherbourne, *and sold his service of plate*; while his wife parted with a house at Mitcham, held in her own right, to swell his resources.\* In addition to all this, there is a piece of testimony on record in the Harleian MSS., which concludes the question of his sincerity. This is the draft of an agreement between Raleigh and the Government, drawn up by him, while yet a prisoner in the Tower. The principal feature of this instrument is a condition, that, "if

\* The conduct of King James in this matter was exceedingly unjust and contemptible. The estate of Sherbourne had been settled by Raleigh on his eldest son, and notwithstanding the attainder, the King allowed his prisoner to enjoy a life interest in it. The King's favorite, Car, better known as the Earl of Somerset, determined to get possession of Sherbourne, and Raleigh's deed of conveyance to his son having been submitted to the examination of Chief Justice Popham, who detected an omission of one or two words, which he owned was caused by the inattention of the clerk who engrossed the deed; advantage was taken of the inaccuracy, and Car obtained Sherbourne of the King. The loss to Raleigh and his family was a severe one, and he addressed a very touching letter to Car, setting forth the hardship and injustice of the act, and the lady Raleigh, accompanied by her children, supplicated the King on her knees, but the only answer of James was: "*I mun have the land; I mun have it for Car.*" He subsequently allowed Raleigh £8000—in full for the estate, *which was worth £5000 per annum*. See App. to Cayley, p. 386. Birch's Collections. Cayley, vol. 2, pp. 41—52.



Keymis, after being guarded to the place, [the site of the mines] shall fail to bring to England half a ton, or as much more as he can take up, of that slate gold ore, whereof I have given a sample; *then all the charge of the journey shall be laid upon me, by me to be satisfied: but should half a ton be brought home, I am to have my liberty*, and in the mean time my pardon, under the great seal, is to be lodged in his Majesty's hand, till the end of the journey."<sup>\*</sup> It would have been difficult for Raleigh to have given more conclusive proof of the sincerity of his convictions upon this subject, than is here furnished.

When Raleigh reached the Oronoko, he was too ill to head the expedition to the mines, and was forced to entrust the command to Captain Keymis, to whom he gave very full and cautious instructions. When Keymis landed, he found that a strong Spanish force was posted between him and the mines, and in endeavoring to win his way, a conflict ensued, which resulted in his taking possession of the town of St. Thome. A large body of Spaniards placed themselves in ambuscade on the road, and Keymis, who seems to have been afraid to assume the responsibility of further hostilities, determined to give up the enterprise, and return to the ships. Raleigh, incensed at his failure, bitterly reproached him for his disobedience of orders, and the subordinate, in a fit of mortification, committed suicide. As the time appeared untoward for the further prosecution of his schemes, Raleigh repaired to Newfoundland with his fleet, to refit, purposing, as there is abundant reason to conclude, to make another effort to reach the

\* Brit. Mus. Harl. MSS., 39, p. 340.

mines, and close his voyage with success. While at Newfoundland, a portion of his crew became mutinous, and he sailed for England. Prior to his return, however, Don Diego de Sarmientos, better known as the Count Gondomar, had complained to the King of Raleigh's conduct in Guiana, as a breach of the peace with Spain, and denounced him as a pirate; and James, who was ready to do anything, in his eagerness to promote the Spanish match, issued a Proclamation commanding the arrest of Raleigh, and within a month after he reached England, he was once more committed to the Tower.\*

The "Declaration" published by the King immediately after the execution of Raleigh, and which was written for the double purpose of blackening his memory and justifying the conduct of James; charges that Raleigh had violated his commission, and made war upon the Spaniards in Guiana, *of whose settlements there the King declares himself to have been entirely ignorant when the commission was granted.* It further accuses him of intending a piratical cruise, and pronounces his propositions in reference to the mines, to be mere subterfuges. As we find the most serious of these charges reiterated in the Edinburg Review, to which we have already alluded; and as that article is calculated to affect injuriously, and we think unjustly, the character of Raleigh; we prefer to examine them in that connection, rather than to review the King's "Declaration," which abounds with mis-statements, and is written throughout in an unfair spirit. It is necessary, how-

\* Oldys, pp. 203 to 209. 2 Cayley.

ever, in connection with one or two matters, to refer to this joint production of Bacon and James. The "Declaration" states distinctly, that the King was ignorant of the existence of the Spanish settlements in Guiana, and in fact that he did not know upon what particular portion of the coast, Raleigh intended to land. Now unfortunately for the veracity of the King, it is in evidence, that while Raleigh was still in the Tower; *James was informed by Gondomar, that a relative of his had gone out from Spain, to plant a colony upon the very spot, at which Raleigh intended to operate!* And in addition to this, before the expedition sailed from England, the King had demanded from Raleigh, a letter, called "*a close letter,*" which contained the most explicit details, not only of the route which Raleigh meant to take; but also the location of the mines, the precise point at which he proposed to land, and the whole outline of his projected operations in Guiana! This letter, James pledged "his kingly word," should be kept secret; *and yet before Raleigh set sail, it had been handed by the perjured King to Gondomar, and was on its way to the Court of Spain!*"\*

The writer in the Edinburg Review maintains that the attack upon the town of St. Thome, was an

\* Howell's Letters, p. 369. Thomson, p. 219. 2 Cayley, p. 81. Oldys, 194, 196, 206. It is asserted by some authors, that the *commission* which was published by the King in connection with his "Declaration," differs materially from the original given to Raleigh, and "that *several strong words* are left out." The inference is perfectly fair, that if it suited James to *omit* words, in order to weaken Raleigh's defence; he would have no difficulty in accordance with his views of "kingcraft," in *inserting* others to strengthen the case against him. See Rapin Hist. Eng. Raleigh's Remains, Edition of 1651. Thomson, p. 219. James affirms that the *Privy Seal*, only, was affixed to the commission, but Raleigh speaks of it as being under the *Great Seal!*

unjustifiable act on the part of Raleigh, and while he holds that "it is impossible to justify his insincerity, and preconceived hostilities;" he does not appear to be very fully convinced of Raleigh's guilt in the matter, and urges the peculiar opinions of the day in palliation of his conduct. He further asserts that Raleigh knew, "that if he informed the King that there was a Spanish settlement in the quarter where the mines were situated, he would not have been permitted to approach it, and that he therefore concealed the fact, and deceived the King in this important particular." Now it has been shewn that no deception whatever, was practised in the matter; for in the "close letter" already alluded to, Raleigh had given minutely the details of his enterprise, and the King was fully aware, that the Spaniards had made a settlement upon the very spot where he intended to land, from the communication of Gondomar; even if the letter itself did not apprise him of the fact: and we think that an examination of the authorities will convince any one, that all the "deception" that marked the transaction, is chargeable upon the King, rather than Raleigh. As to the attack upon the town of St. Thome, we think that there is more force in "the peculiar views" of the period, than the Edinburg attaches to them. The doctrine that the peace did not extend beyond the Equator, and that according to the usages of nations at that time, the hostilities in Guiana were no infringement of it; seems to have been regarded as sound, even by Hume, who attempts to excuse the revival of the old sentence against Raleigh, upon the ground that he could not have been condemned for the infrac-



tion of the peace, in consequence of the prevalence and recognized force, of the very views which Raleigh urges in defence of his conduct. Again—the hostilities were commenced by the Spaniards themselves. They were the first infractors of the peace. Raleigh had an undoubted right to land in Guiana. His commission contemplated the working of the mines upon the very spot where the hostilities occurred. His authority to undertake the enterprise was based upon the agreement between the King and himself, which has heretofore been quoted; and from *occupation*, the English had derived as good a title to that portion of Guiana as the Spaniards. The instructions given to Keymis before the expedition left Punta de Gallo, for the Oronoko; shew conclusively, that Raleigh had not, as the Edinburg charges, “a settled design to capture St. Thome,” for they were drawn up with great care, and provide as far as it was possible for Raleigh to do so, against collision with any Spanish force which Keymis might meet; and direct him to pursue a distant and circuitous route to the mines, for the very purpose of avoiding conflict. The disobedience of Keymis, was a matter beyond the control of Raleigh, and for the consequences of which we think it is very unfair to hold him responsible; and in addition to this, the collision itself would probably never have occurred, had not James violated his “kingly word,” and communicated the plans of Raleigh to the government of Spain.

The next charge which the Edinburgh advances against Raleigh, is, that “piracy was in his immediate view.” In order to examine this charge fairly,

it is necessary to refer particularly to the conduct of Raleigh from the moment he left Guiana, until he returned to England. After the failure of the enterprise entrusted to Keymis, the position of affairs was such as to render a renewal of the attempt at that time, unadvisable, if not impossible. The Spaniards were on the alert, guarding the passages to the mines, and prepared for resistance. Their fleet was daily expected upon the coast. The illness under which Raleigh had been laboring from the moment of his arrival, was too violent to allow him to take that active part, which the state of things so imperatively demanded; and to fill the measure of his misfortune, many of his captains, and a large portion of his crew, had become disaffected and turbulent. A council of war was held, and it was determined that the fleet should repair to Newfoundland to refit. When they arrived there, the disaffection reached its height, and broke out into open mutiny. A large number of his men, insisted that Raleigh should take an oath "not to go home but by their allowance," while the other portion were for immediate return. Raleigh put the question to vote, and sided with those who wished to return to England; and his biographer states, that "his voting upon either side was attended with manifest danger of his life."\* Let us now examine the charge of "intended piracy." Both from Guiana, and from St. Christophers, Raleigh had been obliged to send home many of his officers and men, on account of their vileness of character and turbulence of conduct. To some of these he had behaved

\* Oldys, p. 208.

with great generosity, and yet knowing, as he did, that they were a base set, "good for nothing, neither by sea nor land;" he wrote to his wife from St. Christophers, on the 22nd of March: "*I know they will not spare to wound me.* There is never so base a slave in the fleet, that hath taken the pains and care that I have done; that hath slept so little and travailed so much; my friends will not believe them, and for the rest I care not."

The position in which Raleigh was placed at Newfoundland, and the course of conduct which he decided to adopt, have a very important connection with any theory as to his probable ulterior views. That he was sincere in his belief of the existence of the mines, and the great wealth of Guiana, cannot be doubted. That the successful termination of his enterprise was of paramount importance to him, is equally certain. With it his position at Court, his future career, his private interest, and the gratification of one of the most cherished aspirations of his life were indissolubly connected. A man of indomitable energy, of great personal courage, and unwavering firmness of character; it may safely be assumed that the obstacles which turned him from his path, were insurmountable. The failure of Keymis did not necessarily imply the failure of Raleigh. The spirit of his men, and his own illness precluded him from making any effort while upon the coast, to redeem the error of his subordinate. Who can doubt that when he sailed for Newfoundland, it was with the full assurance in his own mind, that he would return with his ships refitted, and his crews inspired with something of his own spirit, to make

another and a successful effort to reach the mines. Men like Columbus and Raleigh, in such emergencies rely justly upon the suasion of moral and intellectual superiority. The crews which sailed from the Oronoko, dispirited and mutinous, might spread their sails to the returning winds, with brave and willing hearts, and under the guidance of such a leader, win at last their splendid goal. But how did the case stand when he reached Newfoundland? His crews were almost equally divided in opinion. The one portion evidently looked to piracy; the other looked to England; none turned toward Guiana. What could he do under such circumstances? Even if he had succeeded in inducing those who wished to exact an oath "that he would only go home on their allowance," to make another effort in Guiana; what success could he have looked for? His whole force was scarcely sufficient; it would have been madness to have returned with but half, and that, the most abandoned and turbulent. It was evident, that any further attempt upon the mines, was, under such circumstances, impossible. That idea abandoned, two alternatives were presented to Raleigh. If he was indeed a brave and honorable man, dealing in good faith with his Sovereign and his own character, the opportunity was presented to return to England. If on the contrary he was full of disaffection and treasonable thoughts, and intended to become a pirate; it was within his option to begin that career at once, under favorable circumstances. Is not the fact that he decided to return to England, "to put his head under the King's girdle;" a powerful argument against the charge of intended piracy? What



course could he possibly have adopted, better calculated to shew the true greatness of his character and the conscious integrity of his intentions?

With this preliminary statement, we proceed to examine the evidence by which the writer in the *Edinburgh Review* seeks to substantiate this serious charge. The first piece of evidence which he adduces is a letter which would seem to be now for the first time published, written by Captain Parker, who was one of the captains in the expedition, under Keymis.\* After alluding to the landing near St. Thomas, and the conduct of Keymis, whom he grossly abuses, the writer proceeds; "We have divided ourselves already; Captains Whitney and Wollaston are consorted to look for homeward-bound men. The admiral and vice-admiral will for Newfoundland to re-victual, and after, to the Western Islands to look for homeward-bound men. *For my part, by the permission of God, I will make a voyage, or bury myself in the sea.*" From this letter, the writer in the *Edinburgh*, concludes, that, "no one who peruses it, can doubt that Raleigh before he left England had resolved to take forcible possession of St. Thomas; and that the failure as to the mines, was followed by a resolution to which he was a party, to seek indemnification in a piratical onset upon the Spanish colonial shipping." From these conclusions we dissent altogether. That portion of the letter which alludes to the assault "upon the town," gives none of the particulars of the conflict; and we have already shewn upon other, and unquestioned au-

\* There is no such name as *Parker* in the list of Raleigh's captains. There was a captain *Barker* however, and we suppose that this is a typographical error.

thority, that the hostilities *originated* with the Spaniards themselves. The statement of Captain Barker, as to the subsequent division of the fleet for piratical purposes, is calculated by its language and tone to excite suspicion, and it is not sustained either by the admitted facts, or by corroborative testimony. If the division which is here spoken of, was indeed made; how does it happen that we immediately afterward find *the whole* of Raleigh's fleet sailing for Newfoundland? a measure so important as a deliberate plan of attack upon the "homeward-bound men," would not have been determined, without full and cautious deliberation; indeed, the division of the force which is so confidently stated to have been made, would seem to have been the result of a council of officers. If this were so, the supplies and wants of the fleet were well known at the moment of the deliberation, and there was no necessity that *all* the ships should repair to Newfoundland. But the great difficulty which we have in the case, consists in the fact; that, *out of thirteen captains, who commanded vessels in the expedition of Raleigh, no single individual, but this Captain Barker, should be cognizant of the important matters stated in his letter!* Can it be conceived, that it should have been determined to attack the Spanish colonial shipping; to sweep the seas, under the flag of an avowed piracy; and to change an enterprize which had been undertaken with lofty motives, and for the national glory, into a marauding cruise; and these twelve captains, who were to be the agents and assistants of the admiral in this design, have known nothing whatever of the matter! Can it be believed, that "Wollaston and Whitney were con-

sorted to look for homeward-bound men," and the vice-admiral appointed to touch first at Newfoundland to re-victual, and "then to the Western Islands to look for homeward-bound men;" and the *fact never have been substantiated by the testimony of these witnesses?* Can it be believed that a matter of such magnitude as this deliberate division of his fleet, for a purpose, in direct violation of existing laws, and entailing the severest penalties; could have been made or acquiesced in, by Raleigh, and but one solitary voice have been raised to expose him? Was not the ear of James quick enough, to catch the murmurs which from discontented crews, and disaffected officers went up against one who knew, "they would not spare to wound him?" Was not the eye of James able to discover a single witness who could testify as to this *conclusive act of guilt* upon the part of the man the king hated, and whom he was so anxious to destroy? Can any mind conceive it possible that this mass of evidence should have been in existence against Raleigh, and nothing have been divulged but the letter of Captain Barker (now for the first time given to the world) and the unexplained statement of the admission made in the presence of St. Leger and Pennington?

With a very brief reference to the evidence brought forward by the Edinburgh to confirm the charge of piracy, we leave the subject. The anecdote which is reported by Wilson, may be characteristic, but we confess that we cannot bring ourselves to attach much importance to anything which comes from so questionable a source. The Reviewer further relies upon passages in certain of Raleigh's letters, as shewing

clearly what were his ulterior designs. The first of these declarations, occurs in a letter from Raleigh to his wife, in which he says, "he trusts that God will send them somewhat before their return." Taken with the context, we are unable to twist this passage into anything piratical, and really suppose it to refer to a renewal of the attempt on the mines, under better auspices. The other extract declares, that he has "four reasonable good ships left, and that, with them he could keep the sea until August." In reference to this statement, we think it necessary simply to say; that it occurs in a letter addressed by Raleigh to *Sir Ralph Winwood, then the Secretary of State*, and is rather an official report of his proceedings, than a private letter; and it is scarcely likely that he would have made a piratical purpose the subject matter of an epistle *evidently meant for the eye of the King*.

The return of Raleigh to England, under circumstances which were certain to involve him in great danger, is a matter which occasioned much surprise among his contemporaries, and has since been a fruitful theme of discussion. The Edinburgh, cannot admit the possibility of its having been a *voluntary* act on the part of Raleigh, and professes to disbelieve the explanation which is adopted by Mr. Jardine. That his return was "voluntary," seems to us quite credible, as there is no evidence whatever of any *coercion* having been employed to bring him home. In fact, we have already shewn that at Newfoundland *he voted for an immediate return*. Besides this, his setting out for London, as soon as he heard of the Proclamation, and in advance of the arrest by Stuckley; the voluntary surrender of his person, and more



than all, his refusing to avail himself of the opportunity of escape to France, which Captain King had provided; shew not only that his return was voluntary, but that some high motive had induced it. But why should he not return to England? True, he had failed in his enterprise. That was attributable more to the conduct of the King and the insubordinate character of his crews, than to any act of his own. His wife and family were in England.—Where else should he go? The Edinburgh intimates, upon the authority of Demarest, that his intention was to have gone over to France and offered his service to that monarch. Raleigh absolutely denies ever having entertained such an idea. *We believe Raleigh.* We cannot think that he who by the toil of a long life had builded up a great reputation, and who was connected with all that was illustrious in the reign of such a monarch as Elizabeth, *could* by an act either of treachery or cowardice, prove recreant to himself, and consent to sully the name he had won. But the statement which is made by Carew in his letter to James Howell, and which Mr. Jardine adopts, throws light upon the matter. It appears, “that when Raleigh sailed from England, the Earls Pembroke and Arundel, made themselves responsible to the King for his return; and his re-appearance is to be attributed to his determination to release them from their obligation.”\* This is a theory entirely consistent with the view we have endeavored to present of the character of Raleigh, and with it we take our leave of the vexed question.

\* See Howell's Familiar Letters.

In his progress from Plymouth to London, Raleigh was in custody, and closely watched by Sir Lewis Stuckley, and a French quack, named Manourie, whom the King attached to his person in the character of spies. While James had fully determined to sacrifice his great subject to the enmity of Spain,\* he was very much perplexed as to the manner in which his favorite object could be accomplished, without an act of bold tyranny, from which his timid nature shrank in alarm. He does not appear to have doubted that Raleigh would repair to London, and submit himself to the royal will; but he sent down these agents to accompany him, in order to secure through their instrumentality, a decent pretext for the course which he had determined to pursue. The spies who surrounded Raleigh, noted every look, word and action, of their illustrious prisoner. They persuaded him to attempt an escape; aided him up to the last moment, and then betrayed him. They stood at his bedside in the Tower. The unguarded exclamations of an injured man; the honest indignation of a betrayed subject; the sorrowful reflections of a maligned spirit; the breathings of hope, the accents of despair, and the words of supplication, were repeated to the ears of the eager King. But it was all vain. Raleigh spoke no

\* This determination on the part of the King, is made fully apparent from a letter addressed soon after the execution of Raleigh, by one of the officers of state, to an Agent in Spain; in which the Agent is directed to urge upon that Court: "in how many ways of late, the King hath *strained* upon the affections of his people, *and especially in this last concerning Sir Walter Raleigh*; and further to let them know, how able a man Sir Walter Raleigh was to have done his Majesty service, *yet to give them content, he hath not spared him*, when by doing so he might have given great satisfaction to his people, and had at command upon all occasions as useful a man as served any Prince in Christendom." Letter to Mr. Cottington. See Rusworth's Coll. 2 Cayley, 178.

treason. He revealed no secret of his heart, no action of his life, which justified the warrant of his death. It became necessary to resort to other means to entrap him. James was full of expedients. He was just the King for such an emergency. He directed that Lady Raleigh should be confined in her house, and encouraged to communicate freely with her imprisoned husband, and the dastardly monarch gloated over *the intercepted letters*, striving to extract treason from the language of love, and make the confiding wife the instrument of her husband's ruin!\* But even this scheme failed, and he was at last forced to throw off the mask, and resort to an act of high handed outrage, which *even Hume*, could not justify. *This was the revival of the old sentence!* A writ of Privy Seal was despatched to the Judges, commanding them to order its execution. They shrank from the flagrant injustice. They declared that neither the writ of Privy Seal, nor even a warrant under the Great Seal, could authorise them, after so long an interval of time, to execute the sentence, without first affording the prisoner an opportunity of pleading in person against it; and they resolved to bring him to the bar by a writ of habeas corpus, to answer why execution should not be awarded against him.† The King approved of this course, and without a pause, Raleigh was borne from a sick bed, with a burning fever raging in his veins, to the bar at Westminster.

“What have you to say why execution should not

\* Tytler, p. 350. † 2 Cayley, 147 to 156. Tytler, 352 to 354. Oldys, 225.

be awarded against you," demanded the clerk of the crown.

"My voice hath grown weak, from my late sickness," said Raleigh; "and an ague that I have on me at this instant; I pray you to give me the relief of a pen and ink."

"You speak audibly enough," quoth the Chief Justice; and in tones trembling from his sickness, Raleigh proceeded with his defence.

"He hoped that the Judgment he received to die so long since, would not now be strained to take away his life; since by his majesty's commission for his late voyage, it was implied to be restored, in giving him power as marshal over the lives of others; and since he undertook that voyage to honor his sovereign, and to enrich his country with gold, of the ore whereof, this hand hath found and taken, in Guiana."

A most excellent defence; for before he went upon that expedition, he was offered a *full pardon* for a further bribe of £700, but Sir Francis Bacon, *the Lord Chancellor of the realm*, said: "Sir! the knee timber of your voyage, is money. Spare your purse in this particular, *for upon my life, you have a sufficient pardon for all that is past, already; the king having under his broad seal, made you Admiral of your fleet, and given you power of martial law over your officers and men!*" Vain reasoning! Sir Francis Bacon was a *Lawyer*; but James I. was a *King!*

From the Judgment Hall to the scaffold, was but a stride. The warrant of death was already signed; *the ink had dried upon it, before the execution was awarded*, and the very next day, without even a



decent interval for the settlement of his affairs, the sad farewells of human love, or the supplication for divine mercy ; the fearful tragedy was hurried on to its bloody catastrophe. Raleigh met his fate with the spirit of a soldier, the calm courage of a man, and the lofty faith of a Christian. After addressing those whom the occasion had assembled, in a speech which breathes a *truthful*, as well as a noble spirit, he prepared himself for death. The morning being cold, the sheriff offered to bring him from the scaffold to the fire, that he might warm himself before he said his prayers, but he answered ; “no, good Mr. Sheriff, let us despatch ; for within this quarter of an hour, my ague will come upon me, *and if I be not dead before that, mine enemies will say, I quake with fear!*” He then knelt, and was for a long time absorbed in prayer, when rising from his knees, he drew himself up to his full height, and raising his clasped hands toward heaven, exclaimed ; “*now I am going to God!*” After embracing the executioner, and giving him his forgiveness, he entreated him not to strike until he gave him a token, and then, “to strike home.” When he laid down, the headsman directed him to turn his face toward the east ; he answered, “no matter how the *head* lie, *so the heart be right.*” For some time he seemed rapt in prayer, and then he gave the sign ; which the headsman not observing, he cried out, “*strike, man ;*” and with these brave words yet trembling on his lips, the head of the noble victim, rolled from the block !”\*

Our sketch of the career of Sir Walter Raleigh is finished. While we confess our high admiration for

\* Tytler, 364. 2 Cayley, 171. Oldys, 230.

his character, we have endeavoured to be perfectly fair in our narration, and just in our estimate of his motives and conduct. In regard to some of the actions of his life, a difference of opinion always has, and perhaps always will, exist. The evidence which satisfies one mind, is frequently insufficient to convince another, and while we consider the results to which we have arrived, fully justified by the authorities which we have cited, and the course of argument pursued; others may very probably adopt a different conclusion. All must admit however, that he was an extraordinary man, uniting in a wonderful degree those rare, and various qualities which make up a great character. We are very far from claiming for him, perfection. His occupations and course of life, were calculated to develope prominently, the frailties which are inseparable from our nature; and it is greatly to his praise, that under the circumstances in which he was placed, the finger of censure, can point to so few of the actions of his long and eventful career, which are deserving of reprehension. Educated in the camp; thrown in the flush of his youth into the lap of a luxurious and corrupt court; leading the life of a soldier, a sailor, an adventurer, and a courtier; it was scarcely possible that he should wholly escape the soiling influence of vice, or rise superior to the weakness of humanity. His nobler characteristics however, far outnumber the unworthy, and fairly viewed, his character is as deserving of admiration, as his career is suggestive of interest.

His capacities were large and versatile—his judgment strong—his perception acute, and his fancy vivid and restless. As a soldier, he was skilful,

chivalric and brave. As a statesman, his views were sound, his policy enlightened, and his course dignified and patriotic. As an orator, he was nervous, vehement and effective. As a historian, he was philosophical and laborious. As a scholar, elegant and accomplished; and as a poet, pleasing and graceful. From his letters to his wife, we are justified in attributing to him those qualities of heart, which adorn the intercourse of private life; for while they are models of style, they breathe a delicacy of feeling, and a depth of affection, which prove him to have been a refined gentleman, and a *true man*.\* In all the traits of his character, and the actions of his life, he compares favorably with the men who dignified the remarkable age in which he lived; and while history has assigned to him an illustrious position in the annals of the past, he will ever enlist the sympathy, and challenge the admiration, of the future.

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\* See 2 Cayley, pp. 33, 49, 66, 78, 117, 173.











