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Title: The Cabinet Portrait Gallery of British Worthies (Vol 4 of 12)

Date of first publication: 1845

Author: C. Cox (d. 1845)

Editor: Charles Knight (1791-1873)

Date first posted: April 1 2013

Date last updated: April 1 2013

Faded Page eBook #20130402

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THE

CABINET PORTRAIT GALLERY

OF

BRITISH WORTHIES

VOLUME IV.

LONDON
CHARLES KNIGHT & CO., LUDGATE STREET.

1845.

LONDON: WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, STAMFORD STREET.

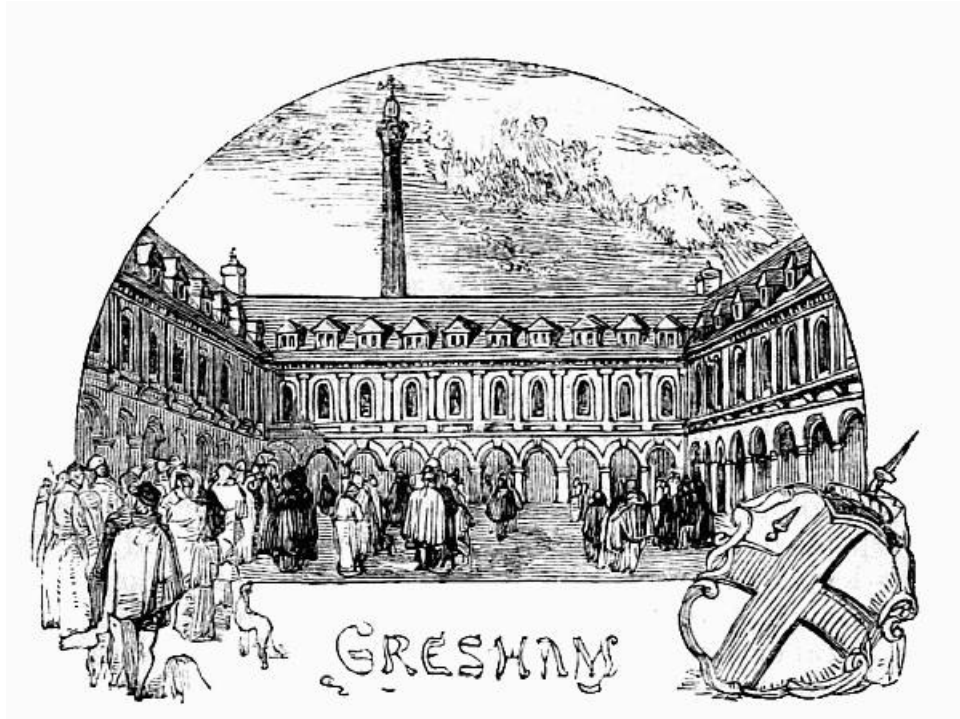
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CABINET PORTRAIT GALLERY

of

BRITISH WORTHIES.



SIR THOMAS GRESHAM.

The founder of the Royal Exchange was born in the year 1519; and he lived during the reigns of Henry VIII., Edward VI., Mary, and Elizabeth. He was descended from a family originally settled in the county of Norfolk, and which had become considerable and wealthy by commerce. James Gresham, his great-grandfather, chiefly resided at Holt, where he had a manor-house and good estate. But he frequently resided in the populous and busy city of Norwich. This James Gresham was succeeded by his son John, and John married a lady who brought him a large fortune, and in due process of time four sons,—William, Thomas, Richard, and John. Richard, the father of Sir Thomas, the founder of the Royal Exchange and Gresham College, was knighted by Henry VIII., as was also his younger brother John. It appears that three of these four brothers, including William, the eldest, who succeeded to the landed estates, were all engaged in trade. William was a mercer and merchant-adventurer of London, and one of the principal freemen of the Mercers' Company. In 1544 he joined his younger brothers Richard and John in making a loan to Henry VIII.; and at this time he was ranked among the most considerable of the English merchants that traded with the Low Countries. His brother Richard, the father of Sir Thomas, was bred a mercer in the city of London, being apprenticed to Mr. John Middleton, an eminent mercer and merchant of the staple at Calais. As early as the year 1507 Richard was admitted to the freedom of the Mercers' Company. He was so very fortunate in trade that he purchased vast estates in several counties of England. He was frequently absent upon business at Calais and in the Low Countries. During his residence on the continent he was a diligent collector and writer of news; and he corresponded directly with the king's ministers, and with no less a personage than Cardinal Wolsey, to whom he was much devoted. Richard Gresham acted in fact as political or money agent for Henry VIII. in the Netherlands, and resided in this capacity at Antwerp during a part of Henry's capricious and ridiculous wars with France. He was the first of our merchants to discover that foreign loans were precarious and costly, and that money might possibly be raised in the city of London for the service of the king or government without applying to the Dutch and Flemings. His devotion to the government got him into some trouble in the city, but there is good reason to believe that it also obtained for him many preferences and advantages. In the year 1531 Richard became sheriff of London, and received the honour of knighthood from Henry VIII. At this time Sir Richard attempted to do what was afterwards done by his son Sir Thomas. The merchants of London, having no convenient place of resort, were accustomed to meet at 'change-hours in Lombard Street, where they were exposed to the open air and all injuries of the weather. Sir Richard wrote a letter to Sir Thomas Audeley, Lord Privy Seal, to acquaint him that there were certain houses in Lombard Street belonging to Sir George Monnocks, which, if allowed to be purchased and pulled down, would afford space for building a handsome Bourse or Exchange, such as existed in the Netherlands and in other countries; and he therefore entreated Audeley to move his Majesty, that a letter might be sent to Sir George requiring him to sell those houses to the mayor and commonalty of the city of London "*for such prices as he did purchase them for.*" Sir Richard calculated that two thousand pounds or something more would pay for the new building, which would be very "*beautiful to the city, and also for the honour of our sovereign lord the king.*" The scheme, however, fell to the ground, the fault, it should seem, lying mostly, if not entirely, with the citizens. In the year 1537, Sir Richard became Lord Mayor of London. It appears that he continued to manage various financial matters for the court, and that he obtained the goodwill of the various ministers who succeeded Cardinal Wolsey, and the favour of Henry VIII., even when that once debonnaire King had grown into a gross, capricious, and sanguinary tyrant. The last fact will explain that Sir Richard had a yielding conscience in matters of religion (and this, indeed, appears to have been the case with his son Sir Thomas as with all the other members of the family). While sheriff he had received into his custody and committed to Newgate the accomplished and unfortunate James Bainham, a Protestant gentleman of the Temple, who was charged with heresy by the Popish priests, and who in the end was burned in Smithfield. Many years after this, when Sir Richard was not trammelled by any official duty, as he had been during his shrievalty, he became one of the commissioners to find out heretics and bring them to condign punishment, Henry having declared that, whether Papists or Protestants, all were heretics who rejected his own unsettled exposition of the faith. Bishop Bonner presided over this commission, and under it cruelties were committed as atrocious as any that were perpetrated in the time of Queen Mary. Sir Richard's brother, Sir John Gresham, was also in this commission. Yet Sir Richard had come early into the market as a purchaser of church and monastic property, and had written letters to Thomas Cromwell, the great agent in the confiscation, to beg him to move the king to give him preference in the market, and let him buy at a price of his own naming, certain church lands in his own native county of Norfolk. He received from the king five successive grants of church lands; and in 1540-1 he was named one of the commission for taking the value of the abbeys, monasteries, &c., in and about London, a most money-making occupation, and which no man performed without looking to himself. Yet if Sir Richard benefited himself by the breaking up of the old institutions, he made some laudable efforts to get something out of the scrambling for the destitute classes, who in former times had depended upon the alms of the Popish clergy, and upon the hospitals and

infirmaries attached to the abbeys and monasteries. He petitioned the King "for the aid and comfort of the poor, sick, blind, aged, and impotent persons, being not able to help themselves, nor having no place certain where they may be refreshed or lodged at;" and he prayed his majesty to order that the "three hospitals or spitals within the city, commonly called St. Mary's Spital, St. Bartholomew's Spital, and St. Thomas's Spital, and the new abbey by Tower Hill," should be set apart and endowed for the use of this poor and sick people. The prayer of this petition was in part granted by Henry, and the grant was confirmed under his son Edward VI. And in the grand confiscation of religious houses in the city Sir Richard obtained for the Mercers' Company the house of St. Thomas of Acre, and the Company erected the Mercers' chapel, in Cheapside, on the site. He died in the month of February, 1548, about a year after Henry VIII., at his mansion at Bethnal Green. His brother John, who was also knighted, was equally successful in the world, being one of the principal merchant adventurers trading with the Levant. He also was sheriff and lord mayor. In 1546 Sir John Gresham bought of his eldest brother, William, the family manor-house at Holt, and converted it into a free grammar-school, and most liberally endowed it with estates in Norfolk, and some lands or houses in London. Like other property bequeathed for the same noble purposes, this endowment has been allowed to be shamefully mismanaged by a City Company, and in part alienated, and instead of being one of the foremost establishments in all England, which it well might have been by this time, the Holt grammar-school educates only some forty or fifty boys, and has only one university exhibition of twenty pounds per annum. The passion for plunder, and extortion, and self-appropriation, did not cease with the remorseless scramble for church property at the dawn of the Reformation; and, unhappily, the good intentions of the Gresham family have been particularly exposed to the mean and selfish passions of those who have lived after them, and who have been unworthily intrusted with the administration of the property they bequeathed for high and ennobling purposes. Sir John joined his brother Sir Richard in imploring Henry VIII. to make over some of the suppressed religious houses in the city for the use of the poor and diseased; and it is said that to him the city was mainly indebted for Bethlehem Hospital as an asylum for lunatics. Sir John, who died in Queen Mary's time, had a very grand and very papistical funeral.

Thomas Gresham, younger son of Sir Richard, it has been said, was born in the year 1519. The place of his birth is somewhat doubtful. Fuller in his *Worthies* says decidedly that he was born in the county of Norfolk. Others again say that he was born in London. One part of Fuller's account is, that he "was bred a mercer and merchant in the city of London." His mother, the first wife of Sir Richard, was Audrey, daughter of William Lynne, esquire, of Southwick, in Northamptonshire. Son, nephew, grandson, and great-grandson to opulent merchants, Thomas was destined to trade from his birth. But Sir Richard, although intending that his son should follow his own profession, resolved to give him the advantages of a liberal education at one of the universities. Thomas was sent to Cambridge, and yet was bound apprentice, as mercer, to his uncle John. Whether he went to the university first, and to his uncle's counting-house or warehouse afterwards, or whether he finished his apprenticeship first, and went to the university after that, we do not discover. We learn from Gresham himself that he served eight years' apprenticeship to trade. Probably his stay at Cambridge was but short, and was taken out of these eight years. In the year 1543 Thomas was in the Low Countries, acting by himself as a merchant, and as an agent for Henry VIII. In 1544 he married a rich widow. His wife was daughter to William Ferneley, esquire, of West Creting, in Suffolk, and widow of William Read, whose ancestors were settled at Beccles, in Suffolk. Read had been citizen and mercer of London, and must have lived on terms of intimacy with the Gresham family, for he appointed Sir Richard (the father of Thomas, who married his widow) overseer to his will, and bequeathed him a legacy of ten pounds and a black gown. Read's age is not mentioned. From the great haste of his widow to marry again, it has been conjectured that Read was a good deal older than his wife, or that upon other grounds she did not much lament his loss. He died in 1544, and she married young Thomas Gresham in the course of the same year. She had two sons by her first husband. Her younger sister, Jane Ferneley, was married to Sir Nicholas Bacon, the lord keeper, father to Nathaniel Bacon, and to the great Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam. To Gresham she bore one son who was named after his grandfather, Richard. This marriage did not keep Gresham at home: he was frequently absent for considerable periods of time in the Low Countries, or elsewhere. His head-quarters abroad were at Antwerp, the great centre of commercial and financial operations; but at times he resided at Bruges. He had acquired a reputation for activity, ability, and stability as a merchant, and was enriched by an hereditary reputation, or by the high consideration to which so many of his family had attained, when the embarrassments of the English government called him fully into employment. Sir William Dansell, financial agent for the crown in the Low Countries, had shown a great lack of financial skill; and through ignorance, or negligence, had so mismanaged matters that the rate of interest was fearfully raised upon the King, and his credit at the same time much injured. He was "revoked from his office of agent by reason of his slackness."^[1]

This happened in the month of April, 1551, in the fourth year of the reign of Edward VI. The court and government, being

then entirely ruled by the incapable protector Somerset and his self-seeking and rapacious crew, were deeply in debt, and so discredited abroad that there was but little prospect of their obtaining any fresh loans. In this perplexity their lordships of the council called in several London merchants, to take their advice as to the means of extricating government from the difficulties under which it lay. Among these merchants was Thomas Gresham. He says himself—"I was sent for unto the council, to know my opinion what way, with least charge, his Majesty might grow out of debt. And after my device was declared, the King's highness and the council required me to take the room [business or office] in hand, without my suit or labour for the same."^[2]

At this time the annual interest on the king's foreign bonds amounted to what was for that time an enormous sum. By the management of the foreign exchanges, over which no English merchant had hitherto attempted to exercise any control, the rate of exchange was ruinously adverse to England. Moreover, the continental capitalists drove their trade much in the manner of certain disreputable modern money-lenders, who give to the spendthrifts with whom they deal so much in cash and so much in bad pictures, or in sour wines in the docks, or in bad jewellery, or the like. At every renewal of debt they required their slow and unpunctual creditors to purchase jewels or other wares and merchandise to a large amount, as a consideration for their giving time for the liquidation of the debt. It should appear that neither Henry VIII. nor his son and successor had ever been able to conclude an original loan without agreeing to take at a price fixed by the money-lenders some jewel "marvellous big," or some "fair and great diamond," or some other article of which they had no manner of need. "This," says Gresham, "was to his Majesty's extreme loss and damage."^[3]

Being thus appointed to serve the king, Gresham now carried his wife and family to Antwerp, and established himself in the house of Gaspar Schetz, a rich merchant, with whom he had long been connected. This Gaspar Schetz was the eldest of three brothers, who were all wealthy, and partners with him in his business. Their family motto, or the motto they adopted on a medal which bore the names of Gaspar, Malchior, and Balthazar Schetz, was "CONCORDIA RES PARVÆ CRESCANT"—By union small things increase. All the brothers, like their father before them (Erasmus Schetz), are described as having a taste for letters and for arts. Gaspar, the eldest, filled very high offices, having been successively chief factor to the Emperor Charles V., and treasurer-general of the Low Countries. He was a connoisseur and collector of coins, and enjoyed besides the reputation of a poet. He was the foremost man in all Antwerp, and Antwerp was then the foremost trading city in Europe. The mind of Gresham was evidently cultivated and improved by his long connection with this family. In other respects Antwerp was a pleasant and joyous residence; but during the earlier part of his employment as royal agent, Gresham was not allowed to live there uninterruptedly. According to his own account, during the first two years of his service to King Edward VI. he posted from Antwerp to the court at Westminster no fewer than forty times, and each time upon short notice. It should appear that whenever there was a money difficulty at court—and such difficulties were constantly occurring during the whole of the reign of Edward VI.—Gresham was called over and taken into council by ministers that were as ignorant and blundering as they were selfish and rapacious. The common process was to discharge, or partially discharge, the interest due upon old debts, by making new debts at Antwerp. And still, goods or useless nicknacks continued to be forced upon the borrower, in the old fashion. More than once we find Gresham perplexed to his wits' end to know how he shall convey over to England scores of bales, the exportation of which is prohibited by the government of the Low Countries, and to devise how his own government are to turn hucksters, and force the immediate sale of commodities for which there is no demand in England. The ingenuity which the perplexed agent exercised in these dilemmas is very amusing, and seems generally to have been attended with success; but it was a system of tricks and expedients, to be excused perhaps in that ignorant, anti-commercial time, but certainly not to be upheld as an exemplar and model to the British merchant of a better, because a more enlightened, age. In many respects Gresham was to the true merchant and financier only what the alchemist and conjurer was to the chemist and true natural philosopher. His errors were indeed those of his age; but beyond his age he never appears to have looked, nor can we discover in him even a germ of those freer and juster ideas of trade which were timidly enounced a century after his death.

The government, and Gresham himself, entertained, in its widest extent, the fallacious notion of the time, that it was a most fatal thing to allow money to be carried out of the country; and, although there was no proper establishment of custom-house officers or coast-guards, no organized police, no suitable organization in any one department of government, they all fondly fancied they could prevent the exportation of coin and bullion, which could not be prevented even now by all the systematized apparatus we possess. Laws were frequently banded that were terrible in the Statute Book, and that would have been very sanguinary—if *only* they had not been impossible of execution. Neither Gresham, any more than those who employed him, ever appear to have thought that the money's worth in good merchandise was as good as the money, or to have felt that what the great Bacon said a few years afterwards of knowledge was strictly

applicable to money—for money, like manure, is meant to be spread, and is of no value when kept idle in heaps. But if they were so chary about coined money, and gold and silver, in bars or in lumps, the wasteful and ever greedy ministers of Edward VI. were not at all scrupulous about sending away bell-metal and other materials plundered from the church. Every English church once had its bell or bells, and the chimes of the great churches, cathedrals, and abbeys, had been famed for their strength and sweetness, and had filled the country with music: but now these were thrown to the ground, were broken to pieces and melted, or in fragments were sent over to Antwerp to help to appease the impatience of the king's creditors, or to procure more money to be absorbed or wasted by the ministers or courtiers, who long kept King Edward all but penniless. Gaspar Schetz had the handling of this bell-metal, and no inconsiderable part of Gresham's business lay in driving the best sales or bargains he could in our fine old English church-bells. It appears that at times Gresham was compelled by his employers to offer cloths and fustians, as well as bell-metal, in lieu of money, and to offer them at a less price than that at which they were being sold by the English merchants in Antwerp. To keep the king's foreign creditors in good humour, he was in the habit of giving them rather frequently dinners or banquets. This cost a great deal of money, and put him otherwise to much inconvenience, for the Dutch and Flemings were deep drinkers, and expected him to drink glass for glass with them. Gresham and his father Sir Richard had been sworn friends or servants to the Duke of Somerset; but when that protector was overthrown and sent to the scaffold by the Duke of Northumberland, Master Thomas transferred his devotion to the new protector, and continued to flourish under him.

After much toil Gresham got Northumberland to agree to a plan of punctual payment, which would keep up the credit of government and save them from the heavy fee-penny in future. His plan was that the government should pay him weekly 1200*l.* or 1300*l.*, to be secretly received by one individual, so that it might be kept secret: having this money punctually paid, he would take up at Antwerp every day 200*l.* or 300*l.* by exchange. "And thus doing," he continues, "it shall not be perceived, nor shall it be an occasion to make the exchange fall, for that the money shall be taken up in my name. And so by these means, in working by deliberation and time, the merchants' turn also shall be served. And also this should bring all merchants out of suspicion, who do nothing to payment of the king's debts, and will not stick to say that ere the payment of the king's debts be made it will bring down the exchange to 13*s.* 3*d.*; but I trust never to see that day."^[4] In the same letter to the Duke of Northumberland Gresham passionately recommended a measure which must have greatly troubled the English merchants. It was to seize instantly all the lead in the kingdom, to make a staple of it, and prohibit the exportation of any lead for five years to come. This, said Gresham, would make the price of the commodity rise at Antwerp, and the king might feed that market with lead as it was needed from time to time, and at his own price. It was a suggestion worthy of a Turkish pasha; yet it has been applauded by a recent biographer; and Gresham (whose ignorance is more excusable) dwelt upon it with a sort of rapture, telling the Duke of Northumberland that by these combined means, or by all the daily payment of 200*l.*, and the seizure and monopoly of all lead, he would keep the money of England within the realm, and extricate the king from the debts in which his father and the Duke of Somerset had involved him. High-handed as he was, Northumberland shrank from the daring and unpopular step of seizing the lead. As for the weekly payments which he agreed to, they were only continued for eight weeks, or rather for less. Yet, by means which have not (*all*) been very clearly shown, Gresham succeeded in raising the rate of exchange in favour of England, and in making the pound sterling, which had passed there for 16*s.*, rise on the bourse of Antwerp to 19*s.* 8*d.* He congratulated himself on his great success; yet some of the means which he says himself he recommended and got adopted for the obtaining of this desirable end are as objectionable in principle, and almost as tyrannical, as the lead project could have been. On one occasion his own uncle, Sir John Gresham, was a great loser by these high-handed proceedings: but with the experience and adroitness of the Gresham family, and with Thomas's great power of control over exchanges and the money-market generally, it must have been strange if "my uncle Sir John" did not get good compensation for what he lost or was robbed of by government. In the course of two or three more years the pound sterling was raised at Antwerp to 22*s.*, and at this rate Gresham discharged all or most of King Edward's debts. So high was the opinion now entertained of Gresham that the Duke of Northumberland employed him diplomatically (though without any credentials) to sound the ambassador of Charles V. as to the emperor's views touching a new connection and family alliance with England. He was also employed on other state business, some portions of which were not of a very honourable nature. He acted as a spy and interceptor or purloiner of letters. He is said to have gratified his government by intercepting some correspondence between the French court and those who governed at Edinburgh in the name of the young but already unfortunate Mary Queen of Scots. In the year 1552 Gresham presented to Edward VI. "a pair of long-Spanish silk stockings," and got great favour and fame thereby; for, continueth that honest chronicler and quondam tailor John Stow, "you shall understand that King Henry the Eighth did wear only cloth hose, or hose cut out of ell-broad taffety; or that by great chance there came a pair of Spanish silk stockings from Spain." For his services of all kinds, Gresham certainly received no stinted reward. He came in for some of the spoils of the church, or monastic bodies,

which had not yet been swallowed up. These lands were all in Norfolk. Three weeks before his death, Edward conferred upon him other church lands; and by an instrument bearing date only six days before that young king's death, Gresham got a good slice out of the lands of the abbey of Our Lady of Walsingham, also in Norfolk, and out of some other church domains in the same county. It was a sad day for Master Thomas that on which the young King Edward died. His patron, the Duke of Northumberland, after the failure of his insane attempt to place his daughter-in-law the Lady Jane Grey upon the throne, was sent to the same scaffold on Tower Hill to which he had sent Protector Somerset. Queen Mary ascended the throne, completely remodelled the government, and commenced a fierce persecution against the despoilers of the Roman Church and the Protestant party generally. On the 4th of September, 1553, about a month after Mary's accession, Gresham, being at Antwerp, was desired "to make his immediate repair to the court;" but the letter of recall (if such it was meant to be) "was again stayed," and was not sent till the 9th, when the tone of it should appear to have been altered.^[5] In the end, and that too very shortly, the storm blew over Gresham's head, leaving him unscathed, and even in the enjoyment of his now very profitable employment. From the evidence before us, we suspect that our knowing and cunning merchant made great haste to comply with the times, and that afterwards, when Elizabeth came to the throne to re-establish Protestantism and proscribe Popery, he not only exaggerated the amount of his risk and danger at the accession of Mary, but was also guilty of falsehood or equivocation, hinting that his danger was owing to his steadfastness in religion. Notwithstanding his usefulness and the hereditary and acquired reputation of Gresham, it may most reasonably be doubted whether he would have been left in office and even taken into favour by Mary and her government if he had not given some assurance of that conformity which was exacted from all men holding places. His family, like so many others, had invariably steered with the shifting winds. Almost as soon as the bigoted Queen Mary was firmly seated he wrote a letter, declaring his allegiance and explaining of what use he had been in getting the king her brother out of debt. As Mary very soon wanted to borrow money herself, Gresham very soon became, to all appearance, as great a favourite at court as he had been during the Protestant rule of the Duke of Northumberland or of the Duke of Somerset. He corresponded directly with Secretary Petre, with the Privy Council, and occasionally with the queen herself.

The court stood in urgent need of specie; but the rulers of Flanders, as well as the governments of all Europe, dreaded, equally with the English government, the exportation of specie or bullion, and thought that gold and silver might be kept at home by severe legislative enactments. And, although money could no more be kept in by such means than water can be prevented from seeking its level and diffusing itself, it was not to be got out without smuggling and an infraction of the laws. Hence we have seen that Gresham in his instructions is ordered to proceed "in the most secret manner." The mistake in principle led to unfairness and treachery in action; and the government which threatened their own subjects with condign punishment for exporting out of their own realms specie and bullion, were ever ready in case of need to tamper with the subjects of other governments, and engage them to infringe these very laws. It is amusing to see the shifts and tricks which our royal agent was obliged to have recourse to. All the specie or bullion was smuggled, Gresham bribing the custom-house officers to prevent a too searching inquest into his bales and vats and casks. After buying up some gunpowder of which the government of Queen Mary stood in need in consequence of the recent insurrection of Sir Thomas Wyatt, and its apprehension of a great Protestant rising in England, Gresham sent to Spain to get more specie. His operations there caused one of the oldest banking-houses in Seville to stop payment, and he said he greatly feared he should be the occasion of making bankrupts of all the bankers of that city. He was detained in Spain by this business nearly five months; during which time he was more than once rather ungraciously reprimanded by the English government. Shortly after his return to England he went over to his post at Antwerp, and there continued to transact the business of queen's agent, as well as other more private commercial affairs as a mercer and merchant-adventurer. A courtier warned him that the best way to continue in favour with Queen Mary was to court the goodwill, and write often about her husband King Philip, who went over to his father's states in Flanders not long after his marriage with the English Queen. The hint was not lost upon Gresham, who, like a good courtier himself, wrote frequently to the queen about the "right good health" and marvellous good looks of King Philip, and thanking and praising God that it should be so, and praying God that so it might continue to be. On the other side, Philip aided our royal agent in getting specie sent out of Flanders and Holland into England, only strictly charging him to convey the money "with as much secrecy and as small bruit" as he could. In other words, Philip himself turned smuggler, and contravened his own or his father's laws. The queen frequently answered Gresham's letters with her own hand, and the correspondence became very friendly and unceremonious on both sides. Now and then Mary's conscience was startled at her agent's bold proceedings, as when Gresham built himself at Antwerp a furnace wherewith to melt down the Spanish coin, a thing heinous in the eyes of the law of the country. His house at Antwerp was the occasional lodging of all the ministers and superior officers of Mary's government who passed that way; and ambassadors and diplomatic agents residing abroad seem frequently to have

received their pay through him or his correspondents. He had, in the principal kingdoms of Europe, paid native agents, who sent him regular intelligence in politics as well as in trade. He organized this intelligence system in the time of Edward VI.; but he continued it under Queen Mary, and extended it under Elizabeth. He witnessed at Brussels the abdication of the Emperor Charles V. in favour of his son Philip II., the unloving and disappointed husband of our queen. But he was now frequently and for long periods resident in London. In 1555 he was among those who presented new year's gifts to her majesty. At this time he was in the very highest favour at court, obtaining from Queen Mary a grant of more lands. But court favour and great prosperity, particularly in a city merchant, were, in those days, likely to excite envy and malice; and in 1556 Gresham was rather severely handled by the Marquess of Winchester, the old lord treasurer, who taxed him with not being quite so honest as he ought to be. Yet the cloud must have soon passed over, for Gresham was soon again busily employed in the queen's affairs in the Low Countries, making fresh loans, buying gunpowder, arms, armour, &c. In November, shortly after receiving a letter from Gresham, in which he prayed God "to preserve her noble majesty in health and long life, and long to reign over us with increase of honour," Queen Mary died. This event rendered necessary in public men another and entire change of principle or profession. But it was not probable that Thomas Gresham, who had been a strenuous Protestant under Edward VI., and then a thorough Papist under Queen Mary, would have any difficulty in becoming again a Protestant under Queen Elizabeth. He hastened to London, and was among the first to be presented to the virgin queen at Hatfield, where she was preparing to make her triumphal entrance into the capital. As she had already appointed William Cecil her principal secretary of state, and as Cecil was the old ally of our merchant, Gresham came before Elizabeth under very favourable auspices. She promised him by the faith of a queen that she would ever deal fairly with him, and that she would give as much lands as ever had been given to him by King Edward her late brother, and Queen Mary her late sister; "which two promises," adds Gresham, "made me a young man again." At the end of the audience her majesty gave him her hand to kiss, and confirmed him in his place. Mary had left an empty treasury; Elizabeth was in immediate want of money, and who could negotiate the foreign loans so well as the long practised Gresham? Before departing for Flanders, the royal agent wrote a letter of advice to the queen to explain to her majesty how the nation had fallen into debt, and how all her fine gold had been conveyed out of the realm. Some of the remedies he suggested were excellent. Henry VIII. had sadly debased the coin: he advised the queen to bring it back to its purity; he advised her to contract as little debt as possible in foreign countries, and to be scrupulous in keeping up her good credit; and "*specially*," said he, "*with your own merchants; for it is they must stand by you at all events in your necessity*." Yet shortly after offering this good counsel, he again recommended the government to stop the fleet of merchant ships loaded and bound for Antwerp, and so bring the merchants to their own terms, and keep up the rate of exchange abroad. He told Cecil that he must lie in wait until he was quite sure that all the cloths and kerseys were entered and shipped; and that then he must pounce upon the fleet, declaring that none should depart till the queen's further pleasure were known. The measure, which is characteristic of the mixed cunning and violence of the times, appears to have been carried into effect as Gresham recommended, and with the immediate success that he anticipated from it. But such measures could not make the name of Gresham a popular one among the merchants of London. Besides his money-dealings at Antwerp, the royal agent was charged with the purchase of saltpetre, ammunition, and arms, as he had been in Queen Mary's days; the difference being, that Mary had wanted the arms and gunpowder to keep down her Protestant subjects, and that Elizabeth wanted them to be employed against her Catholic subjects in case they should attempt any insurrection, and against the Catholic party of Mary Queen of Scots in Scotland. But it was now much more difficult to smuggle these things from the Netherlands than it had been when Philip was husband to the living Catholic Queen of England. Gresham's cunning and address, however, increased with his difficulties; and while there were many zealous Protestants at Antwerp disposed to do the will of the virgin queen, the custom-house officers continued to be as bribable as ever. At the same time Gresham increased his diligence in collecting and remitting to Cecil all sorts of political information, a good part of which was obtained by men who cannot be designated otherwise than as spies. At the end of the year 1560 Gresham attained to still higher honours, being appointed ambassador or temporary minister at the court of the Duchess of Parma, now regent of the Netherlands, and receiving thereupon the honour of knighthood. Notwithstanding this promotion, he continued in business as a merchant-adventurer, and kept his shop open in Lombard Street, with a great grasshopper (his family crest) over the door as a sign. He was one of the first to announce the coming of the great Protestant revolution in the Low Countries, and to tell Cecil that the people were so dissatisfied with their intolerant government, that if it came to a war, Elizabeth would have more assured friends among them than Philip. Well knowing how the queen's heart stood affected, Gresham paid great court to Lord Robert Dudley, who was youngest son of his once great protector, the late Duke of Northumberland, and who soon became Earl of Leicester and the most potent and profligate of court favourites. During his embassy at Brussels, he nursed for Lord Robert a little palfrey, which was destined to carry the queen. He also purchased for her majesty a Turkish horse which he warranted as "a very fair beast," as "one of the readiest horses that is in all Christendom, and

that runs the best." He had, indeed, constantly to attend to purchases for the queen's highness, the lords of the council, and the gallants about court—to buy pairs of Spanish silk hose, curling-irons, iron chests and locks, little nags, well-going clocks, black buttons, white and grey beavers, and in short, all manner of commodities. Most of what he sent to Secretary Cecil appears to have been in the shape of presents or bribes. On one occasion he despatched him one hundred shirts made in Germany, and a warm gown or cloak made of wolf-skin. There were occasional rubs and impediments, and serious apprehensions of the court's displeasure; for we find Gresham writing to Cecil to implore him to stand his friend, and to befriend his poor wife, and to be a suitor to the queen for the getting out his pardon. During the absence of Cecil in Scotland, the lord treasurer—the same old Marquess of Winchester who had brought him before into trouble—accused Gresham of having made his public employment subservient to his private advantage (which no doubt he had done), and of keeping in his strong box a balance of 40,000*l.* of the queen's money. Concurrent with these accusations were various complaints from English merchants as well at home as in the Netherlands. Gresham, who seems to have been for some time in an agony of fear, trusted in God that the queen would remember her promise to keep one ear to hear him when his accusers had possession of the other ear. He protested his innocence of all the charges brought against him, although it might have been more difficult to disprove some of them than it was to prove by his account-book that he had at that time only a small balance of the queen's money in his hands. But Sir Thomas Parry stood his friend, Cecil soon returned from Scotland, and this tempest also blew over. Against the complaining merchants Gresham appears to have speedily obtained some vengeance; for he forthwith recommended Cecil to have again recourse to his sudden surprises and high-handed practices with the merchant-adventurers, and to extract money from them by way of forced loans.

As a much greater storm was brewing on the continent, Gresham had many journeys to make in Flanders upon state business. In one of these his horse fell with him, and his leg was broken. The leg was set, but he is said to have continued lame for the rest of his life. He returned to England in March 1561. In the month of July of that year, he begged Cecil to appoint a day for the meeting of the commissioners, who, with the friendly Cecil at their head, were to examine his accounts. The accounts appear to have been pleasantly passed by the commissioners; and in August Gresham was sent back to Flanders to get 30,000*l.* out of the English merchants, to pay therewith part of the queen's debts, and to ask time of her creditors for the rest. The commotions in the Low Countries had by this time greatly increased, and Count Egmont and the powerful Prince of Orange had placed themselves at the head of the malcontents. These people wanted arms and ammunition for themselves; yet Gresham succeeded in obtaining a good supply of saltpetre, some armour and guns, with which he returned to England. During his now very frequent absences from his post his duties as queen's agent at Antwerp were intrusted to his old and faithful servant Richard Clough, a Welshman, one of the most laborious and minutest of correspondents. Gresham was of opinion that the custom-house at Antwerp was a much more efficient establishment for the collecting of duties than that of her majesty Queen Elizabeth at London: and he wrote to Richard Clough to desire him to get and send him full information as to its constitution and management, with all the details connected with it. Honest Richard, who delighted in details, went to work *con amore*, and soon filled twenty folio pages. He not only ran down the London custom-house, but he also abused the London merchants and the rulers of the city, as a company "that do study for nothing else but for their own profits." "As, for ensample," says Richard, "considering what city London is, and that in so many years they have not found the means to make a Bourse! but must walk in the rain, when it raineth, more liker pedlars than merchants; and in this country and all other, there is no kind of people that have occasion to meet but they have a place meet for that purpose. Indeed, and if your business were done, and that I might have the leisure to go about it, and that you will be a means to Mr. Secretary [Cecil] to have his favour therein, I will not doubt but to make so fair a Bourse in London as the great Bourse is in Antwerp, without molesting of any man more than he should be well disposed to give." Gresham, as we have seen, inherited the notion of a London Bourse or Exchange from his father Sir Richard; but Richard Clough, no doubt, had a good deal to do in maturing the idea, and in aiding him in the execution of it.

By this time Sir Thomas was busily employed in building his new and spacious house in Bishopsgate Street, which afterwards became Gresham College, and which Stow describes as being "the most spacious of all other thereabout; builded of brick and timber." The house was surrounded by open grounds—convertible into pleasant gardens—which extended from Bishopsgate Street to Broad Street. His foreign agents and correspondents in the Low Countries shipped for him such materials as could not easily be had in England. The large sums he was expending on this vast building were a proof of his wealth, and a fresh provocation to envy.

Sir Thomas, being on the continent in 1562, told Cecil that for a certainty there would shortly be a great league for religion's sake against Elizabeth: and partly because the Catholic party in France were so very poor at the time, he

earnestly recommended the queen to support and join the French Huguenots, and thereby regain possession of Calais and the other strips of English territory in France which had been lost under her sister Mary. Soon an English army was sent, over to Havre de Grace under Sir Edward Poynings; and thus was begun a system which never ceased during Elizabeth's reign, she succouring and leaguering herself with the revolted subjects of the Catholic powers, and those powers sending their succours to her disaffected Catholic subjects in England, and sending troops to act with her rebels the Papists of Ireland. In the year 1564 Gresham entered largely into some home manufactures. By an act of parliament, followed by a royal proclamation, England prohibited the importation of cutlery, pins, hats, girdles, ribands, and other articles. These things had hitherto been chiefly imported from the Low Countries, but now Gresham and others had entered upon the speculation of manufacturing them at home. The proclamation was therefore to act as a protection to the speculation of the queen's agent and friends.

In the summer of 1566, the war of religion and independence, which was to last more than half a century, was begun in earnest at Antwerp. His occupation in that country being now almost gone, Gresham busied himself in England about other matters. At the beginning of the year 1565 he had made a proposal to the court of aldermen, that if they would purchase and give him a piece of ground in a proper place, and large enough for the purpose, he would build upon it a Bourse or Exchange, with large and covered walks, where the merchants and traders of all sorts might daily assemble, converse together, and transact business with one another, at all seasons, without any interruption from the weather, or other impediments of any kind. The merchants and citizens had recently had many meetings and consultations upon this subject; for the inconveniences attending the meeting in the open air in Lombard Street were now seriously felt. The court of aldermen accepted the proposal made to them by Sir Thomas, and the subscription was set on foot to raise money for purchasing the land. No fewer than seven hundred and fifty citizens subscribed in small sums, the total sum immediately wanted being short of 4000*l*. The subscription commenced in March 1565, and ended in October 1566. The bargain for the land was concluded in the month of September; but the ground was cleared and the first stone laid some months earlier. The citizens, in conveying the ground to Sir Thomas Gresham, entered into certain covenants with him, and they afterwards complained that these covenants were broken. They also affirmed that the ground cost them more than the sum originally stipulated. It has not been discovered how much the materials and building cost Sir Thomas; but as he derived the then large sum of 700*l*. a year as rent from the Exchange, and as labour was then cheap, and much of the building material furnished by his own estates, he no doubt got something like good interest for his outlay. His architect was one Heinrick, a Fleming. Many of the bricklayers and other workmen came also from the Low Countries; and the statues which decorated the edifice seem in all probability to have been made in Flanders. In short, the building and everything about it had a Flemish character, the design itself being an imitation of the great Bourse or Exchange of Antwerp. According to an engraving, executed most probably at Gresham's own order, the edifice was "full ended" in the year 1569. It consisted of two portions, an upper and a lower: the upper portion was laid out in shops, 100 in number, and the lower into walks and rooms for the merchants, with shops on the exterior. It was to increase the reputation of the place, and especially to get tenants for these shops, and not to open the Exchange, which had been finished and opened long before, that Queen Elizabeth was induced by Gresham to pay her much celebrated visit to the spot in the year 1571. The man[oe]uvre was very ingenious and characteristic of the man. For more than a year after the completion of the Exchange, the shops remained almost empty, thus causing much disappointment to the founder, who had anticipated a handsome income from them in the shape of rent. Gresham's imagination went to work, and hit upon a new "device." It was noised abroad that the queen was coming in state to visit the Bourse, and Gresham "went twice in one day, round about the upper part, and besought those few shop-keepers then present that they would furnish and adorn with wares and wax lights as many shops as they either could or would, and that they should have all those shops so furnished rent-free that year, which otherwise at that time was forty shillings the shop by the year."^[6] All things being prepared, and all the city bells ringing, on the 23rd January 1571 "the queen's majesty, attended with her nobility, came from her house at the Strand, called Somerset House, and entered the city by Temple Bar, through Fleet Street, Cheap, and so by the north side of the Bourse to Sir Thomas Gresham's in Bishopsgate Street, where she dined. After dinner her majesty, returning through Cornhill, entered the Bourse on the south side; and after that she had viewed every part thereof above the ground, especially the Pawne [the upper part of the building wherein were the hundred shops or stalls], which was richly furnished with all sorts of the finest wares in the city, she caused the same Bourse, by an herald and trumpet, to be proclaimed the Royal Exchange, and so to be called from thenceforth, and not otherwise,"^[7]

After this grand celebration, Gresham's bazaar or shops began to be filled and the rents to be raised! "And within two years after, he raised that rent unto four marks a year; and within a while after that he raised his rent of every shop unto four pounds ten shillings a year, and then all shops were well furnished according to that time; for then the milliners or haberdashers in that place sold mouse-traps, birdcages, shoeing horns, lanthorns, Jew's trumpets, &c. There were also at

that time that kept shops in the upper Pawne of the Royal Exchange, armourers that sold both old and new armour, apothecaries, booksellers, goldsmiths, and glass-sellers: although now it is as plenteously stored with all kinds of rich wares and fine commodities as any particular place in Europe, unto which place many foreign princes daily send, to be served of the best sort."^[8]

But great fame as well as great profit was derived by Gresham from this royal visit. Dramatists and poets took up the subject and treated it not only in English, but also in Latin. Old Thomas Heywood, in celebrating the queen's visit and Gresham's wealth and glory and loyalty, became rather rhapsodical, making the cool and cautious Gresham perform the extravagant feat which is related of Cleopatra. He makes Gresham reduce a costly pearl to powder, put the powder into a cup of wine, and then swallow wine and pearl-powder together with these words:—

"Here fifteen hundred pound at one clap goes!
Instead of sugar, Gresham drinks the pearl
Unto his queen and mistress: Pledge it, lords!"

It appears from various complaints of the citizens, that parts, at least, of the Exchange had been run up with too much haste, or had been built of bad materials. On the ground-floor there were said to be holes in the walls, and indications which seemed to threaten the passers by with a tumble down of the upper stories. Gresham's building did not exist quite a century, being burned to the ground in the great fire of London in the year 1666. The statues of kings and queens fell to the ground upon their faces, and the greater part of the building fell upon them. "But Sir Thomas Gresham's statue," says Evelyn, "though fallen from its niche, remained entire, when all those of the kings since the conquest were broken to pieces." Sir Christopher Wren, who had the glory, at a later period, of building St. Paul's, and so many other splendid churches in London, presented a magnificent plan for rebuilding the Exchange; but the Gresham committee and the other city magnates preferred employing a Mr. Jerman, one of the city surveyors. Jerman's design did not differ materially from Gresham's or Heinrick's copy of the Bourse of Antwerp. The first foundation stone was laid on the 6th of May, 1667, in the time of Charles the Second. Old Cibber, the sculptor, father to the dramatist, and Gibbons the carver and sculptor, were employed to decorate the interior of the new building with statues of kings, carvings, &c. In the midst of the uncovered quadrangle was placed the statue of Charles II.; but the statue of the original founder was placed in an obscure corner of the Exchange, where it was commonly shrouded with placards, shop bills, and advertisements. It would have been well if the citizens had not shrouded more of Gresham than this stone effigies. The recent history of the great centre of the commerce of the World is familiar to all. The edifice erected in the time of Charles II. was burned down on the night of Wednesday, the 10th of January 1838. The foundation of the present building was laid shortly after, and the new Exchange was opened by her Majesty Queen Victoria on the 28th of October 1844.

The vast mansion or city palace which Gresham built for his own habitation, in Bishopsgate Street, or rather on the ground which lies between that street and Broad Street, had been finished as early as the year 1562. To speak critically of the building, from the engravings of it which remain (and the mean-spirited barbarism of our grandfathers has left us nothing else), we should say that the building was noticeable rather from its extent than from any beauty in its architecture. Like the Exchange, it was built after a Flemish model. A quadrilateral range of building, one story high, with attics above, enclosed a large open square, which was ornamented by a row of trees on each of its sides. But the building, the quadrangle, with nearly everything about it, had a quiet, collegiate air; and when two hundred years had made it venerable, it must, with its associations, have been an interesting place to all persons of taste and feeling. It was here that Gresham feasted the great Elizabeth the day she went to the Exchange, and it was here that, by her command and in order to save her money, he kept in captivity as a state-prisoner the sister of the beheaded Lady Jane, the poor little Mary Grey, who must oft times have looked out from the windows upon the quiet quadrangle or upon the busy street beyond, envying the condition of the poorest woman that passed through them toiling for her daily bread. But Gresham House had some pleasanter associations than these. Although our city knight liked to get, and to keep what he got so long as he lived, yet after the death of his only son, which happened before he began to build the Exchange, Gresham was quite capable of a posthumous generosity and munificence. His Cambridge studies, his long residences abroad, and his intimate connection with some of the best educated men at home, had given him a respect and love for the liberal arts, and, with the means, he had the ambition of doing something important for their promulgation. He therefore resolved that, after his own death, and the death of his wife, his stately London house should be converted into a college, or seat of learning, and be endowed with the rents derivable from the Royal Exchange. The edifice seemed as if it had been built for such a purpose. It is thought that it was about the year 1575 that he had sufficiently matured his plan to announce his intention of founding this college for the gratuitous instruction of young citizens and of all who might choose to go and

attend the lectures. The university of Cambridge, his own Alma Mater, conjured him to abandon this project and to endow a new college at Cambridge instead. Seeing how shamefully that part of his will has been administered in London, we may wish that the property had really gone to his own Alma Mater; for if it had been left to Cambridge, Cambridge would have known how to keep it. But Gresham kept steadily to his London design. By his last will and testament, dated the 5th day of July, 1575, he ordained that the Lady Gresham should enjoy his now dwelling-house in Bishopsgate Street, as well as all the rents arising from the Royal Exchange, during her lifetime, in case she should survive him; but that from the period of her death both these properties should be vested in the hands of the Corporation of London and the Mercers' Company. These two bodies corporate were conjointly to nominate seven competent professors to read lectures successively, one on every day of the week, on the seven sciences of divinity, astronomy, music, geometry, law, medicine, and rhetoric. The lectures were to be delivered in Gresham House or College, and the professors were to be comfortably lodged therein. The salaries of the lecturers, which were far more than defrayed by the rents arising from the Royal Exchange, were fixed at 50*l.* per annum each, a sum equivalent to at least 400*l.* or 500*l.* a year at the present day. It might have been expected from a financier and man of business like Gresham, that he would have foreseen that the increasing trade, industry, and ingenuity of the country would rapidly bring in money, and decrease the representative value of the pound sterling and of all other coin; that the rents derivable from the Royal Exchange must be rapidly raised in proportion; and that with this foresight he would have abstained from fixing the salaries according to the value of money and of the rents derivable from the Exchange in his day. But, in cases like this, an enlightened and high-minded legislature would so far interfere with the mere letter of a will as to alter it into the intention of the donor; and the real intention of Gresham could only have been that the seven professors should have and enjoy in all time to come what should be equivalent to the fifty pounds per annum of his own time, and the amount of which would be defrayed by the rising rents of the Exchange. Nothing could be more earnestly worded than all these portions of his will. He conjures the parties charged with the administration of his will to see his intentions carried out, "*as they will answer the same before Almighty God;*" and he tells them that the default thereof "*shall be to the reproach and condemnation of the said corporations afore God.*"^[9]

As such bequests have been most rare among us, it is the more lamentable that the good example set by Gresham should have been in a manner destroyed by those corporate bodies whose bounden duty it was to uphold it, and diffuse the benefits which might have resulted from it. In his great scheme of education the mind of our royal merchant took a high flight. His notion was that the citizens of London, who were all to have free access to the lectures, would be quite capable of learning the higher sciences and the elegant arts. He instituted a lectureship upon astronomy at a time when the science was not taught in any school or university in this country, and when its rudiments were almost unknown. Ever since the destruction of the Chantries under Henry VIII. and Edward VI., the taste for music had been on the decline. Gresham included music among his endowed lectures, intending to give a new impulse to that delightful science in the capital of the empire. And, upon the whole, though subjected to disheartening inconveniences and long interruptions, the musical class of Gresham College appears to have conferred more benefit upon society than any of the other classes, or than all the others put together. If from the first there had been in each class or faculty a succession of professors like Mr. Taylor, the present excellent Gresham professor of music, Gresham College would never have become a nonentity or a laughing-stock, and a taste for the arts which civilize, adorn, and cheer the life of man would not have been allowed to perish or decline as it long did among those "in populous cities pent."

Nor did Sir Thomas Gresham forget in his will charities and pious uses. In his lifetime he had built at the back of his London mansion eight substantial alms-houses, and to the inmates of each of these houses he bequeathed the annual sum of 6*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* Furthermore he left 50*l.* a year to be distributed among the poor prisoners for debt in the London jails. These and other sums for charitable purposes were to be paid by the Corporation and the Mercers' Company, out of the revenues derived from the Exchange, for those rents amounted to more than 700*l.* per annum, and the salaries of the seven Gresham professorships came only to 350*l.* per annum. He left 100*l.* a-year to his Company for four dinners in the course of a year; and no doubt the worshipful Mercers, however careless as to other parts of his last will and testament, have taken especial care to keep up these celebrations, and to eat the dinners thus provided for them; taking also into account the difference between the costs of a civic feast in the seventeenth and in the nineteenth century.

Gresham had an illegitimate daughter by a Flemish woman, whom he brought up in his own house in England. He is said to have given her a good education and a good dower. The last fact, at least, seems to be proved by the importance of the family into which she married. This Anne Gresham could call the great Lord Bacon brother-in-law: her husband was Sir Nathaniel Bacon, second son of Sir Nicholas, the Lord Keeper, by his first wife Jane Ferneley, sister to Lady Gresham. As her name does not occur in his will it is supposed that Gresham's daughter died before the year 1575, when that will

was made.

Sir Thomas had no fewer than four or five stately mansions in the county of Norfolk, his favourite house in that county being at Intwood. Besides these he had a fine seat (Osterley) in the county of Middlesex, not far from Brentford; a magnificent old place (Mayfield) in Sussex, and apparently one or two houses in other parts of the kingdom, in which he occasionally resided. Osterley Park (now the property of the Countess of Jersey) came into the possession of our splendid merchant before the year 1562. It is believed that he knocked down an old house and built a new one upon the site. Norden, who wrote in 1593, describes the house as being a stately building of brick, and the park as being extensive, and "garnished with many fair ponds, which afforded not only fish and fowl and swans, and other water-fowl, but also great use for mills,—as paper-mills, oil-mills, and corn-mills." Here Queen Elizabeth paid Gresham a visit in the year 1570. It is quaint old Fuller that tells this pleasant and well-known story:—

"Her majesty found fault with the court of the house, as too great, affirming that it would appear more handsome if divided with a wall in the middle. What doth Sir Thomas, but, in the night-time, send for workmen to London (*money commands all things*), who so speedily and silently apply their business, that the next morning discovered that court double which the night had left single before. It is questionable whether the queen next day was more contented with the conformity to her fancy, or more pleased with the surprise and sudden performance thereof: whilst her courtiers disported themselves with their several expressions; some avowing it was no wonder he could so soon change a building who could build a 'Change; others (reflecting on some known differences in the knight's family) affirmed that 'any house is easier divided than united.'"^[10] It is not wealth that always makes the best temple for the household gods. It has been conjectured that many of our merchant's family differences arose out of his affection for his natural daughter; but it should appear that his wife was, on other matters, an irritable sour-tempered woman.

Old and wealthy as he was, the last moments of Sir Thomas's life were devoted to business. "On Saturday the 21st of November, 1579, between six and seven of the clock in the evening, coming from the Exchange to his house (which he had sumptuously builded) in Bishopsgate Street, he suddenly fell down in his kitchen, and being taken up, was found speechless, and presently dead."^[11] By his death many large estates in several counties of England, amounting at that time to the yearly value of two thousand three hundred pounds and upwards, came to his lady, who survived him many years. He, in fact, took nothing from her; for neither Gresham House nor the rents of the Exchange were to be appropriated to the college until after her decease, and yet she begrudged those two well-intended donations, and quarrelled and litigated with the corporation about insignificant sums; and it is quite clear that if she could have annulled the will she would have done so in order to add Gresham House and the rents derived from the Exchange to the great estates which she left to her son by her first marriage. On the 15th of December, the remains of our great merchant were deposited in St. Helen's Church, Bishopsgate Street, close to his own house, and the resting-place of his son Richard. He had prepared for himself a sumptuous tomb or monument during his lifetime: but neither his widow, nor his step-son William Read, who, after her, came into possession of the mass of his splendid fortune, ever went to the expense of putting an inscription on the tomb, and it remained without a date and without a name until the year 1736, when the following brief inscription was cut on the solid black marble slab which covers the alabaster tomb, by order of the churchwardens:

SIR THOMAS GRESHAM, KNIGHT,

Bury'd.-Decem^{br}. the 15th 1579.

Lady Gresham twice attempted to act contrary to her husband's will; and wealthy as she was (being reputed the richest widow of those days) she tried hard to derive unfair advantages from that small portion of property, the rent derivable from the Exchange, &c., which was entrusted to her for her lifetime only. And these things she did in spite of the solemn trust and confidence which her husband in his will said he placed in her as his faithful loving wife. Parliament was obliged to interfere. In the year 1581 an act was passed, confirming all the good uses and intents of the will of Sir Thomas, and sanctioning and guaranteeing not only the private appointments of his will, but likewise his public benefactions (as the college and professorships) and his charities to the poor. Yet still begrudging her husband's bequest for the promotion of learning, not contented with the *usufructu*, and looking beyond the natural term of her own life and to the further enriching of her already wealthy son William Read, Lady Gresham, in the year 1592, endeavoured to get an act of Parliament to empower her and her heirs to make leases from time to time of twenty-one years of the shops in the Exchange, reserving the fines to herself and her heirs. In petitioning the Privy Council she suggested, or insisted, that she

ought to have what she asked for, inasmuch as the two corporations (the Mercers' Company and the City Corporation) would assuredly not employ the profits thereof according to the will of Sir Thomas Gresham in paying the seven professors. It is to be deplored that the greedy old lady was but too true a prophet. But the Lord Mayor and aldermen of the day met her petition with a spirited and convincing answer, which set the question at rest for that time. Nevertheless, the leases of twenty-one years, which had been granted by Sir Thomas to the tenants upon the Royal Exchange, being nearly expired in the year 1596, his widow prevailed upon them to take fresh leases of her for the like term of twenty-one years at the old rent, together with the addition of a fine amounting to 4000*l*. The greater part of the fine was paid to her ladyship not many months before the estate, in conformity with Sir Thomas's will, came into possession of the Corporation of London and the Mercers' Company. Thus, the widow made it quite evident, that regardless of the solemn injunctions of her husband's will, she was more anxious to get money for herself and her son and heir, William Read, Esq., than to settle Gresham College, or to give to it that which Sir Thomas had bequeathed. When a party so near to the testator could thus disregard his intentions, it is less surprising, though still lamentable, that others at a distant period of time should heap dirt upon the last testament. The reader will be indifferent about the fact (perhaps he may believe that the old woman is still alive, and presiding with an undiminished selfishness over some of the civic incorporations), but she died, at a very old age, on the 23rd of November, 1596, at Osterley Park. Her son, and the heir to her vast property, William Read, Esquire, was a genial successor. He must have been a grasping and a very litigious man, for the little that is known of his history is known through lawsuits. He stirred not a step nor moved a finger for the execution of Gresham's liberal intentions.

In the year 1614, the twelfth of King James I., and eighteen years after the death of Gresham's widow—and not earlier—the two corporations entrusted with the management of Gresham College obtained a patent from the crown to hold for ever the rents of the Royal Exchange and the mansion-house in Bishopsgate Street, upon the terms and conditions expressed in the last will of the donor. But before this time they had put themselves in possession of the property, and after consulting the universities, had appointed persons "meet to read the several lectures." They took possession of the property in the month of December, 1596, just after the funeral of the old widow. The trustees drew up a set of rules to direct the professors as to the manner in which they should manage their lectures. If these rules had been adhered to, Gresham College would have been of inestimable value to the community. These citizens clearly understood that the lectures were meant, and ought to be, practical, popular, and attractive; and that to deliver them in Latin, or to make them difficult, abstruse, and drily theoretical, would be a defeating of the end proposed by Gresham. Under these good rules and other good regulations, which seem for a time to have been carefully attended to by the trustees and by the professors they appointed, Gresham College rose into celebrity, and attained to much of the usefulness contemplated by its founder, who had taught the citizens by example "that commercial activity is not of necessity dissociated from the love of science and literature, and that commercial success may be obtained without an abandonment of mental cultivation."^[12] The college being the fixed abode of several men of high attainments, attracted many congenial minds, and became a centre of union for men of letters and science. It appears to have been under the old sloping roof of the mansion in Bishopsgate Street that the first foundation was laid for that scientific association which afterwards took the name of the "Royal Society;" while it is quite certain that it was within the walls of that house that the members of that Society first congregated and tried their experiments in physic. After the great fire of London which destroyed the Exchange, the Gresham professors placed their rooms for a time at the disposal of their fellow-citizens. The building became a temporary mansion-house as well as a temporary Exchange; some of the spacious rooms were converted into courts of law, and others were fitted up as a residence for the Lord Mayor; shops were erected in the piazzas and galleries, and the merchants assembled at 'Change hours in the quadrangle.

During the seventeenth century we find a good many eminent names among the Gresham professors, as Dr. Barrow, Sir William Petty, Sir Christopher Wren, Briggs, Hooke, Greaves, Bull the Music Doctor, &c. But as early as the year 1701, the trustees of the Gresham property entirely fell off from their duty, and having already made extensive innovations, and suspended for two years all payments to the professors, they petitioned Parliament to allow them to make great and lasting changes. Parliament refused its assent to the prayer of the petition; but from this moment the college, the building, and everything connected with it, appear to have been shamefully neglected; the two wealthy trustee corporations pleading poverty, and feasting away more sumptuously and gluttonously than ever. As the auditory fell off, the city magnates thought that any man was good enough for a dumb or a non-lecturing professor; and in some instances they put broken-down tradesmen, or connexions, or dependants, or mere lacqueys of their own into the college, in order that they might draw the annual salaries which the founder had intended for the support of competent and eminent men. The institution became contemptible in the eyes of the citizens, and the citizens had not taste and spirit enough to take any steps or to raise any reproach against the two trustee corporations. In the year 1706, however, some citizens of a higher

and more intellectual order made strenuous efforts for obtaining the revival and restitution of the lectures. But the city magnates were not to be moved; and so nothing was done of the least consequence. The two trustee corporations were thinking much less about keeping up the lectures than of knocking down the great house in which they were given and making large sums by letting out the ground upon building leases. In the year 1717 they again petitioned Parliament for leave to knock down the college, &c. Still, however, they had the conscience or decency to state, that if this permission were granted by the legislature, they would erect upon part of the site another building capable of accommodating the professors and such as went to hear them. Their petition was again rejected. Thus did the government and Parliament of King William III. and George I. show more reverence for the will of Sir Thomas Gresham, and more regard for an institution intended for the enlightenment of the citizens of London than were shown afterwards by a government and a Parliament of George III.

As the value of the ground-plot continued to rise rapidly, the trustees became proportionably more eager to carry out their old scheme. Their exceeding eagerness drove them in the end into a very bad bargain, even for themselves. Their greed, like other men's ambition, over-leaped itself. For some time the government and Parliament turned a deaf ear to the impatient wishes of the two bodies corporate. But in the year 1767, government wanted a place whereon to build a new Excise-office, and thereupon they resolved that Gresham College should be pulled down. This could not be done without an Act of Parliament; but the Parliament then sitting was quite ready to give the power to the crown, and a bill was carried through without loss of time, and apparently without the slightest murmur or opposition: its progress being facilitated by the very trustees of the Gresham property, who were bound, as they would answer for it before God, to maintain the college. The bill ran as smoothly as a common turnpike act; and for the miserable sum of 500*l.* a-year, the city trustees agreed to demolish the building, and to alienate for ever from the public (whose property it really was) the whole of the ground on which Gresham College stood! Nor was this all. By the Act of Parliament the City Corporation and the Mercers' Company, the joint trustees and guardians of this property, were bound "to pay the sum of 1800*l.* within the space of one month from the passing of the Act, for and towards the expense of pulling down the same." "That is," says the excellent living Gresham professor of music, "they were constrained by an especial law, framed for the purpose, to commit a gross and flagrant violation of their trust, and to employ those very funds which Sir Thomas Gresham had vested in them for the support and maintenance of his college, in demolishing and destroying it!"^[13]

The work of demolition was begun on the 8th of August, 1768; and in brief space of time the Excise Office began to show its shameless face on the spot where the college had once been. If the citizens of London alone had felt as they ought, the corporation of London and the mystery of mercers would not have trafficked away their rights and the rights of their posterity, and the legislature would no more have dared to demolish Gresham College than it would have dared to knock down the cathedral of St. Paul's. But the citizens had become gross and unintellectual, were indifferent to the reading of lectures, which had been allowed to become ridiculous, and careless about the preservation of rights and emoluments which had been so shamelessly abused by trustees and professors. It was because the city cared nothing about Gresham College that Gresham College was destroyed. It was only known to them as a place where a few prosing men, at very inconvenient hours for men of business and of feasts, read or spoke about astronomy, mathematics, law, medicine, and music. It does not appear, either from the newspapers or from the other publications of the day, that any effort whatsoever was made by the citizens of London to perpetuate the existence of their only college.

To compensate the worthless or neglectful Gresham professors for the loss of their apartments in the old college, their salaries were raised from 50*l.* to 100*l.* a year. A small, dirty, dusky room in an upper story of the old or second Royal Exchange was selected by the liberal and enlightened trustees of the Gresham property, as "a proper and convenient room for the public exhibition of the lectures:" and there, at very inconvenient hours, during Term time, certain of the Gresham professors drawled out vapid nonsense to a thin and sneering auditory until that edifice was consumed by fire. After that catastrophe the learned body met occasionally in the City of London School; and there Mr. Taylor delivered those inaugural lectures from which we have repeatedly quoted. This gentleman has done more than any one else, or than all other persons put together, to awake an interest in the public mind for the shipwrecked institution to which he belongs. The joint trustees have recently built a lecture-room in Gresham Street; but they must do more than this ere they can be relieved from the weight of the odium accumulated by their predecessors and themselves.

FOOTNOTES:

Letters as quoted by J. W. Burgon, in Life and Times of Sir Thomas Gresham.

Cottonian MS. as cited by J. W. Burgon.

Original letters, as quoted by Mr. Burgon.

Letter in Strype.

Minutes of the Council Office, as quoted by J. W. Burgon.

Stow.

Id.

Id.

Sir Thomas Gresham's will, as given in Dr. Ward's 'Lives of the Gresham Professors.'

Fuller, Worthies, vol. ii.

Holinshed. Chronicle.

Gresham College. Three Inaugural Lectures, delivered in the Theatre of the City of London School, January 29th and 31st, and February 1st, 1838. By Edward Taylor, Gresham Professor of Music.

Edward Taylor. Inaugural Lectures.



GEORGE BUCHANAN.

George Buchanan was born in February, 1506, at a small village called Killearn, on the borders of Stirlingshire and Dumbartonshire, and received his early education, it is said, in the school of that parish. He came, as he says, "of a family more gentle and ancient than wealthy." His father dying, left a wife and eight children in a state of poverty. George, one of the youngest, was befriended, and, perhaps, saved from want and obscurity, by the kindness of his mother's brother, James Heriot, who had early remarked his nephew's talents, and determined to foster them by a good education. The ancient friendship between France and Scotland, cemented by their mutual hate of England, was then in full force. The Scotch respected the superiority of the French in manners, arts, and learning; and very commonly sent the wealthier and more promising of their youth to be educated by their more polished neighbours. Accordingly Buchanan, at the age of fourteen, was sent by his uncle to the University of Paris. Here he applied himself most diligently to the prescribed course of study, which consisted principally in a careful perusal of the best Latin authors, especially the poets. This kind of learning was peculiarly suited to his taste and genius; and he made such progress, as not only to become a sound scholar, but one of the most graceful Latin writers of modern times.

After having remained in Paris for the space of two years, which he must have employed to much better purpose than most youths of his age, the death of his kind uncle reduced him again to poverty. Partly on this account, partly from ill health, he returned to his own country, and spent a year at home. After having recruited his strength, he entered as a common soldier into a body of troops that was brought over from France by John duke of Albany, then regent of Scotland, for the purpose of opposing the English. Buchanan himself says that he went into the army "to learn the art of war;" it is probable that his needy circumstances were of more weight than this reason. During this campaign he was subjected to great hardships from severe falls of snow; in consequence of which he relapsed into his former illness; and was obliged to return home a second time, where he was confined to his bed a great part of the winter. But on his recovery, in the spring of 1524, when he was just entering upon his eighteenth year, he again took to his studies, and pursued them with great ardour. He seems to have found friends at this time rich enough to send him to the University of St. Andrew's, on which foundation he was entered as a *pauper*, a term which corresponds to the servitor and sizar of the English universities. John Mair, better known (through Buchanan) by his Latinized name of Major, was then reading lectures at St. Andrew's on grammar and logic. He soon heard of the superior accomplishments of the poor student, and immediately took him under his protection. Buchanan, notwithstanding his avowed contempt for his old tutor, must have imbibed from Major many of his opinions. He was of an ardent temper, and easy, as his contemporaries tell us, to lead whichever way his friends desired him to go; he was also of inquiring disposition, and never could endure absurdities of any kind. This sort of mind must have found great delight in the doctrines which Major taught. He affirmed the superiority of general councils over the papacy, even to the depriving a pope of his spiritual authority in case of misdemeanour, he denied the lawfulness of the pope's temporal sway; he held that tithes were an institution of mere human appointment, which might be dropped or changed at the pleasure of the people; he railed bitterly against the immoralities and abominations of the Romish priesthood. In political matters his creed coincides exactly with Buchanan's published opinions,—that the authority of kings was not of divine right, but was solely through the people, for the people; that by a lawful convention of states, any king, in case of tyranny or misgovernment, might be controlled, divested of his power, or capitally executed according to circumstances. But if Major, who was a weak man and a bad arguer, had such weight with Buchanan, John Knox, the celebrated Scotch reformer, who was a fellow-student with him at St. Andrew's, must have had still more. They began a strict friendship at this place, which only ended with their lives. Knox speaks very highly of him at a late period of his own life: "That notabil man, Mr. George Bucquhanane, remainis alyve to this day, in the yeir of God, 1566 yeares, to the glory of God, to the gret honor of this natioun, and to the comfort of thame that delyte in letters and vertew. That singular work of David's Psalmes, in Latin meetere and poesie, besyd many uther, can witness the rare graices of God gevin to that man." These two men speedily discovered the absurdity of the art of logic, as it was then taught. Buchanan tell us that its *proper* name was the art of sophistry. Their mutual longings for better reasonings, and better thoughts to reason upon, produced great effects in the reformation of their native country.

After Buchanan had finished his studies at St. Andrew's, and taken the degree of Bachelor of Arts, he accompanied Major to Paris, where his attention was more seriously turned towards the doctrines of the Reformation, which at that time were eagerly and warmly discussed; but whether from fear of the consequences, or from other motives, he did not then declare himself to be a Lutheran. For five years he remained abroad, sometimes employed, sometimes in considerable want; at the end of which time he returned to Scotland with the young Earl of Cassilis, by whom he had

been engaged as a travelling companion. His noble patron introduced him at the court of James V. the father of Mary Stuart. James retained him as tutor to his natural son, James Stuart, afterwards Abbot of Kelso. It has been proved that he was *not* tutor to the king's other natural son, James Stuart, afterwards Earl of Murray and regent of Scotland, whose first title was Prior of St. Andrew's.

While he was at court, or perhaps while residing with the Earl of Cassilis, having a good deal of leisure, he amused himself with writing a pretty severe satire on the monks, to which he gives the name of 'Somnium.' He feigns in this piece that Saint Francis d'Assize had appeared to him in a dream, and besought him to become a monk of his order. The poet answers, "that he is nowise fit for the purpose; because he could not find in his heart to become slavish, impudent, deceitful, or beggarly, and that moreover very few monks had the good fortune, as he understood, to reach even the gates of paradise." This short satire was too well written, and too bitter, to pass unnoticed, and the sufferers laid their complaint before the king: but as Buchanan's name had not been put to it, they had no proof against him, and the matter dropped. Soon after the Franciscans fell into disgrace at Court: and James himself instigated the poet to renew the attack. He obeyed, but did not half satisfy the king's anger in the light and playful piece, the 'Palinodia,' which he produced. On a second command to be still more severe, he produced his famous satire 'Franciscanus,' in which he brings all his powers of wit and poetry to bear upon the unfortunate brotherhood. The argument of the poem is as follows:—he supposes that a friend of his is earnestly desirous to become a Cordelier, upon which he tells him that he also had had a similar intention, but had been dissuaded from it by a third person, whose reasons he proceeds to relate. They turn upon the wretched morals and conduct of those who belonged to the order, as exhibited in the abominable lessons which he puts in the mouth of an ancient monk, the instructor of the novices. He does not give this man the character of a rough and ignorant priest, but makes him tell his tale cleverly, giving free vent to every refinement in evil which the age was acquainted with, and speaking the most home truths of his brethren without fear or scruple. The Latin is pure, and free from the barbarisms of the time.

After such a caustic production, it is no wonder that the party assailed made use of every means to destroy its author. The king, who was a weak and variable man, after much importunity on their part, allowed them to have Buchanan arrested in the year 1539, on the plea of heresy, along with many others who held his opinions about the state of the Scottish church. Cardinal Beatoun, above all others, used his best endeavours to procure sentence against him; he even bribed the king to effect his purpose. But Buchanan's friends gave him timely warning of the prelate's exertions, and, as he was not very carefully guarded, he made his escape out of the window of his prison, and fled to England. He found, however, that England was no safe place for him, for at that time Henry VIII. was burning, on the same day and at the same stake, both Protestant and Papist, with the most unflinching impartiality. He went over, therefore, for the third time into France; but on his arrival at Paris, finding his old enemy the Cardinal Beatoun ambassador at the French court, and being fearful that means might be taken to have him arrested, he closed with the offer of a learned Portuguese, Andrea di Govea, to become a tutor at the new college at Bordeaux. During his residence there he composed his famous Latin Tragedies, 'Jephthes' and 'Joannes Baptistes,' and translated the Medea of Euripides into Latin metre, for the youth of his college. The last shows that his acquaintance with the Greek language was by no means superficial. But being continually harassed by the clergy under letters from Cardinal Beatoun, who had traced his retreat, he removed to Paris, and from the year 1544 till about 1547 taught Latin in the college of the Cardinal de la Moine, along with the learned philologists Turnebus and Muretus.

After holding this situation for about three years, Buchanan went with Govea, in 1547, at the instance of the King of Portugal, to a lately established school at Coimbra, in which he subsequently became regent. Before he ventured into Portugal, however, he took care to let the king know that his Franciscanus was undertaken at the command of his sovereign, and therefore ought nowise to endanger his safety in Portugal. The king promised him his protection. But he had not been at Coimbra long, before he was accused by the monks of heresy, and the king, forgetting his promise, allowed them to keep Buchanan prisoner in a convent, as they declared, for the purpose of reclaiming him. They gave him as a penance the task of translating the Psalms of David from the Vulgate into Latin verse. This he accomplished to admiration; and his production is acknowledged to surpass all works of the like sort. The metres are chiefly lyrical. He was soon after dismissed from prison, and took ship for England, and staying there but a short time, he returned again to France. Here he was almost immediately appointed regent in the college of Boncourt, which appointment he resigned in 1555, on being intrusted by the Maréchal de Brissac with the education of his son Timoleon de Cossé. While thus employed he studied, more particularly than he had hitherto done, the controversies of the day with regard to religion, and became most probably a confirmed Protestant, though he did not openly renounce Catholicism till some time afterwards. He wrote, and dedicated to his pupil, a much admired piece, entitled 'Sph[oe]ra,' during his tutorship, and

also published several poetical works, among others his translation of the *Alcestis* of Euripides. In the year 1560 he returned again to Scotland, the reformed religion being then prevalent there, and became publicly a member of the Protestant Kirk.

The most important, because the most public part of Buchanan's life now begins. Such a man could not long remain unnoticed by the great in Scotland, and Mary Stuart herself became one of his best friends. He had written for her two epithalamia, one on her marriage with the Dauphin, and one on her marriage with Lord Darnley, and we find him in the beginning of the year 1562 classical tutor to the young queen. For his services in that capacity she gave him a pension of 500*l.* Scots a-year for life out of the temporalities of the abbey of Crossragwell; and in the year 1566 the Earl of Murray, her brother, to whom he had dedicated a new edition of his '*Franciscanus*,' presented him with the place of principal of St. Leonard's College at St. Andrew's. The following year he was chosen Moderator of the General Assembly of the church of Scotland, which was a still more extraordinary homage to his character and various abilities.

In 1570 he resigned the office of principal of St. Leonard's college, having been appointed one of the preceptors to the young King James, then in the fourth year of his age.

It is a matter of no small wonder, that Buchanan, who was James's most influential tutor, for the three others, who were joined in the commission with him, were under his superintendence, should have educated him as he did, or make him what he was. A book which Buchanan published, and which is among the most famous of his works, '*De Jure Regni apud Scotos*,' being a conversation between himself and Maitland the Queen's secretary, contains (though dedicated to his royal pupil) sentiments totally at variance with all the notions of James. In it Buchanan follows the ancient models of what was thought a perfect state of policy. He proves that men were born to live socially,—that they elected kings to protect the laws which bind them together,—that if new laws are made by kings, they must be also subjected to the opinion of the states of the nation,—that a king is the father of his people for good, not for evil,—that this was the original intention in the choice of Scottish kings,—that the crown is not necessarily hereditary, and that its transmission by natural descent but for its certainty is not defensible,—that a violation of the laws by the monarch may be punished even to death according to the enormity of it,—that when St. Paul talks of obedience to authorities he spoke to a low condition of persons and to a minority in the various countries in which they were,—that it is not necessary that a king should be tried by his peers. He concludes by saying, "that if in other countries the people chose to exalt their kings above the laws, it seems to have been the evident intention of Scotland to make her kings inferior to them." In matters of religion he rails against episcopal authority of all kinds. Now nothing can be more opposed than all this to the opinions of James, who most strongly upheld the divine right of kings, and episcopal authority. Buchanan, when he was accused of making James a pedant, declared it to be "because he was fit for nothing else." He was a stern and unyielding master, and no sparer of the rod, even though applied to the back of royalty; and this may in some measure account for the want of influence which he had over the king's mind. James advises his son, in his Βασιλικὸν Δῶρον, not to attend to the abominable scandals of such men as Buchanan and Knox, "who are persons of seditious spirit, and all who hold their opinions."

It might have been well, however, for the unfortunate Charles if he had been rather more swayed by the opinions of the tutor, and less by the lessons of the pupil. In the early part of Buchanan's tutorship he attached himself strongly to the interests of the Regent, Murray; and as the patron fell off from the interests of Mary, so did the historian, till at last he became the bitterest of her enemies. He alone has ventured to assert in print his belief of her criminal connexion with David Rizzio, in his '*Detectio Mariæ Reginae*,' published in 1571; and he was her great accuser at the court of Elizabeth, when appointed one of the commissioners to inquire into Mary's conduct, she being a prisoner in England. Buchanan too lies under the serious charge of having forged the controverted letters, supposed to have passed between Mary and her third husband Bothwell, while she was yet the wife of Earl Darnley, from which documents it was made to appear that she was art and part in the murder of her royal consort. Whether he really forged these letters or not, is a question perhaps too deeply buried in the dust of antiquity to admit of proof. He offered to swear to their genuineness, however, which was an ill return, if that were all his fault, to the kindness he had received from her. His friendship for Murray continued firm all his life; this man was one of the few persons he seems to have been really attached to. Through the Earl's interest, Buchanan, in 1570, had the place of Director of the Chancery for his services conferred upon him, and soon afterwards those of Lord Privy Seal and Lord of Session. The office of keeper of the Scottish seals was a highly honourable and lucrative office, and entitled its holder to a seat in parliament. He retained it till at least 1578, when he nominally resigned it in favour of his nephew, Thomas Buchanan, of Ibbert. In the same year, 1578, he was joined in several parliamentary commissions, legal and ecclesiastical; and particularly in a commission issued to visit and reform

the universities and colleges of the kingdom. The scheme of reformation suggested, and afterwards approved of by parliament, was drawn up by him. The same year also he brought forth his celebrated treatise 'De Jure Regni apud Scotos.' Nothing is told us of his abilities as a practical politician, but it may be supposed that he was fitted for the office he held, for Murray was very careful in the choice of his public servants.

Buchanan's last work, on which he spent the remaining fourteen years of his life, is yet to be spoken of,—his 'History of Scotland.' In this, which like the rest of his productions was written in Latin, he has been said to unite the elegance of Livy with the brevity of Sallust. With this praise, however, and with that which is due to his lively and interesting way of relating a story, our commendations of this work must begin and end. As a history, it is valueless. The early part is a tissue of fable, without dates or authorities, as indeed he had none to give; the latter is the work of an acrimonious and able partisan, not of a calm inquirer and observer of the times in which he lived. The work is divided into four books. The first three contain a long dissertation on the derivation of the name of Britain,—a geographical description of Scotland, with some poetical accounts of its ancient manners and customs,—a treatise on the ancient inhabitants of Britain, chiefly taken from the traditionary accounts of the bards, and the fables of the monks engrafted on them, on the vestiges of ancient religions, and on the resemblances of the various languages of different parts of the island. The real history of Scotland does not begin till the fourth book; it consists of an account of a regular succession of one hundred and eight kings, from Fergus I. to James VI., a space extending from the beginning of the sixth century to the end of the sixteenth. The apocryphal nature of the greater part of these monarchs is now so fully admitted, that it is unnecessary to dilate upon them. Edward I., as is well known, destroyed all the genuine records of Scottish history which he could find. Buchanan, instead of rejecting the absurd traditionary tales of bards and monks, has merely laboured to dress up a creditable history for the honour of Scotland, and to "clothe with all the beauties and graces of fiction, those legends which formerly had only its wildness and extravagance."

This work, and his 'De Jure Regni apud Scotos,' he published at the same time, very shortly before his death; and, while he was on his death-bed, the Scottish Parliament condemned them both as false and seditious books. We may lay part of this condemnation to James's account. It is not probable that he would allow so much abuse of his mother as they contained, directly or indirectly to pass without some public stigma. There remain to be noticed only two small pieces of this author in the Scottish language, one a grievous complaint to the Scottish peers, arising from the assassination of the Earl of Murray; the other, a severe satire against Secretary Maitland, for the readiness with which he changed from party to party: this has the title of 'Chameleon.'

Buchanan died at the good old age of seventy-four, in his dotage as his enemies said, but in full vigour of mind, as his last great work, his History, has proved. Much has been said in his dispraise by enemies of every class, his chief detractors being the partisans of Mary Stuart and the Romish priesthood. The first of these accuse him of ingratitude to Major, Mary, Morton, Maitland, and to others of his benefactors; of forging the letters above mentioned, and of perjury in offering to swear to them. The latter accuses him of licentiousness, of drunkenness, and falsehood; and one of them has descended so far as to quarrel with his personal ugliness. Of these charges many are, to say the least, unproved; many appear to be altogether untrue. But his fame rests rather on his persevering industry, his excellent scholarship, and his fine genius, than upon his moral qualities. Buchanan wrote his own Life in Latin two years before his death. To this work, to Mackenzie's 'Lives and Characters of the most Eminent Writers of the Scots Nation,' to David Irving's 'Memoirs of his Life,' to the 'Biographia Britannica,' and the numerous authorities on insulated points there quoted, we may refer those who wish to pursue this subject.

There are two collective editions of the works of Buchanan. One is by Ruddiman, published at Edinburgh in 1715, in two vols. folio. The other is by Peter Burman, Lug.-Bat., 1725, in two vols. 4to. In this the editor has, besides his own critical annotations, incorporated the notes, dissertations, &c. of his predecessor.

Sir W. Sidney



SIR PHILIP SIDNEY.

In judging of the characters of eminent men it is an excellent practical rule to put aside the opinions that others have expressed of them, and endeavour to form independent ones of our own, by obtaining a plain answer to a plain question—What have they *done*? Thus only can we guard ourselves from the danger of being misled by the mists that men's predilections or dislikes may have raised, and through which, according as the point of sight we choose makes us look upwards or downwards, are the figures we gaze upon apt to appear unduly magnified or diminished. But this rule cannot be always acted upon alone. Peculiar circumstances, such as the sudden and unlooked for termination of an important career, may render it only an act of justice to consider whither that career tended. The light that still casts such a trail of glory behind, extended equally far before—until eclipsed by the impenetrable shadow.

It is thus then we must study the life and character of Sir Philip Sidney. We ought not to take them upon trust from contemporary opinion, or from the opinion, scarcely less unanimous and enthusiastic, of posterity. To borrow a phrase from his gracious mistress, Sidney would have been the first to express his "foul scorn" of such treatment; but undoubtedly it *is* necessary, after weighing carefully all that he did, to judge what he would have done had the ordinary term of man's life been granted. But alas! as he says, it too often happens that the

"noble gold down to the bottom goes,
When worthless cork, aloft, doth floating lie."

Sidney died in his *thirty-third* year. A brief life; yet let us see what he accomplished in it: the facts are among the most instructive lessons ever bequeathed to the world.

Sidney himself in the 'Arcadia,' and Ben Jonson in one of his poems, have given us delightful pictures of an old and noticeable manor-house. The former says the house "was built of fair and strong stone, not affecting so much any extraordinary kind of fineness as an honorable representing of a firm stateliness. The lights, doors, and windows, rather directed to the use of the guest than to the eye of the artificer, and yet as the one [was] chiefly heeded, so [was] the other not neglected; each place, handsome without curiosity, and homely without loathsomeness; not so dainty as not to be trod upon, nor yet slubbered up with good fellowship; all more lasting than beautiful, but that the consideration of the exceeding lastingness made the eye believe it was exceedingly beautiful." There can be no doubt that this is the same place as the one described by Jonson; which was not

"built to envious show
Of touch or marble,"

but an ancient and revered pile, whose beauty consisted in its surrounding soil, air, wood, and water, which had its walks for health as well as sport, and the mount where the Dryads resorted, and

"Where Pan and Bacchus their high feasts have made,
Beneath the broad beech and the chesnut shade."

The attractive character of the scenery without was but a type of the hospitality within. In that mansion they "knew," says Sidney, "that *provision* is the foundation of *hospitality*, and *thrift* the fuel of *magnificence*;" hence the extent of the buildings, and the grand scale of all the arrangements; hence the admirable system of management, that knew no waste. And here every guest might feel himself at home—might eat and drink and enjoy himself, without fear. Here too old customs were preserved in all their simplicity and kindliness. Here, for instance, the tenants, according to Jonson, would come in, the farmer and the clown,

"And no one empty handed, to salute
The lord and lady, though they have no suit.
Some bring a capon, some a rural cake,
Some nuts, some apples; some that think they make
The better cheeses bring 'em;—or else send
By their ripe daughters, whom they would commend
This way to husbands, and whose baskets bear

An emblem of themselves, in plum or pear."

In that mansion too all its numerous residents were bound together, high and low, by the faith and practice of a common creed. Thus the poet says of the children of its lord,

"They are and have been taught religion; thence
Their gentler spirits have suck'd innocence:
Each morn and even they are taught to pray
With the whole household."

And that was the mansion in which Philip Sidney was born, on the 29th of November, 1554; that was the household and the kind of life amid which his earlier years were passed, and by which, to a certain extent, his character was moulded. It is Penshurst of which Jonson and himself both speak.

To be born in the midst of such genial influences was an advantage of no ordinary character: but it was much more to have such a father as the then lord of Penshurst, Sir Henry Sidney, a man of "excellent natural wit, large heart, and sweet conversation:" and whose ability as a statesman was put to the severest possible test by Elizabeth when she conferred upon him the government of Ireland, and he passed honourably through the ordeal: Edmund Spenser was but one among the many who bore testimony to the wisdom of his rule. Add, to the qualifications here evidenced, the deepest love for and pride in his son, and we may judge how unwearied must have been the care and how potential the guidance that Sir Henry Sidney exercised over the future poet-hero of England. A letter of his still exists that was written to Philip in 1566, whilst he was at school at Shrewsbury, which is admirable for the spirit and the sterling character of its advice. And if ever father had his reward, he had it. The seed fell upon no barren soil. Already the boy of twelve years old was distinguished for his intelligence and for a gravity beyond his years; and from this time we shall find him constantly addressing himself, step by step, to the great business of self-culture, and of worldly duty and occupation; seduced by no temptations, deterred by no difficulties, enduring with cheerful patience the utmost severities of intellectual or physical toil. Of course, the first step is to master what other men have already mastered, and can usefully teach. He goes to the University in 1569; he becomes a member of Christ Church, Oxford, and begins immediately to "cultivate the whole circle of arts and sciences; his capacious and comprehensive mind aspiring to pre-eminence in every part of knowledge attainable by human industry or genius." And the gigantic character of the attempt was triumphantly justified by the result. An interesting glimpse of Sidney at the University has been given us by Carew, the historian of Cornwall, who says, "being a scholar at Oxford, of fourteen years of age, and three years' standing, upon a wrong conceived opinion touching my sufficiency, I was then called to dispute *extempore* with the matchless Sir Philip Sidney, in presence of the Earls of Leicester and Warwick, and divers other great personages." The Earl of Leicester, who was the High Chancellor of the University, was Philip's uncle. Three years soon passed, and Philip Sidney had then nothing more to learn that colleges could teach him.

What next?—The continental tour, of course. He must see personally the countries and the people with whom he may in after life have so much to do, whether in peace or in war. He would see, too, the great men of whom he had heard as the chief continental ornaments of letters. Above all, he would learn whatever there may be to learn, by moving among persons of different religious, political, and social views and customs; and so modify, at least, by the larger experience of the man of the world, the narrow and self-sufficient ideas that are apt to occupy the mind and guide the conduct of "home-keeping youth." Sidney set out for the Continent at a critical and dangerous time. Whilst he was at Paris the great massacre of St. Bartholomew took place; and he was compelled, as a Protestant, to seek the shelter of the house of the English ambassador, Sir Francis Walsingham, a gentleman to whom he had been introduced by the Earl of Leicester, and whose daughter he subsequently married. As yet, however, that connection was undreamt of. Another, and more absorbing and eventful one, was to be first formed and broken, and the poet's peace of mind well-nigh shipwrecked in the severance. From France he proceeded to Belgium, Germany, Hungary, and Italy, making friends everywhere he went, among whom may be named Hubert Languet, who addressed a volume of letters to him; the brother of Sir Edward Wotton; and above all, if some writers whose authority is not very highly estimated are to be believed, Tasso.

During this tour he prepared himself for the development of another phase of his many-sided character. Whilst at Vienna he studied and practised all those personal exercises that were requisite for success in the tilt-yard or in the battle-field. We learn from the commencement of his 'Defence of Poesy,' that he met with an enthusiast in these matters at the emperor's court, one Gio. Pietro Pugliano, an equerry of the royal household, who taught Sidney and Edward Wotton horsemanship; "and he, according to the fertility of the Italian wit, did not only afford us the demonstration of his

practice, but sought to enrich our minds with the contemplation therein, which he thought most precious. But with none, I remember, mine ears were at any time more loaden, than when (either angered with slow payment or moved with our learner-like admiration) he exercised his speech in the praise of his faculty. He said, soldiers were the noblest estate of mankind, and horsemen the noblest of soldiers. He said they were the masters of war and ornaments of peace, speedy goers and strong abiders, triumphers both in camp and courts: nay, to so unbeliev'd a point he proceeded, as that no earthly thing had such wonder to a prince as to be a good horseman; skill of government was but a *Pedanteria* in comparison. Then would he add certain praises by telling what a fearless beast the horse was, the only serviceable courtier, without flattery, the beast of most beauty, faithfulness, courage, and much more, that if I had not been a piece of a logician before I came to him, I think he would have persuaded me to have wish'd myself a horse." Sidney however did not do that,—he did not even take into his heart his teacher's notions of the soldier's inestimable and transcendent value; what he did was this—he made himself a perfect horseman and soldier, as he knew such accomplishments were indispensably necessary; but for the rest of Gio. Pietro Pugliano's many "words," their only effect was to teach Sidney that "self-love is better than any gilding, to make that seem gorgeous wherein ourselves be parties." Altogether, it is evident, Sidney had good reason to be satisfied with his continental journey; and thus three years more passed over; and he returned to England in 1575. It was probably not very long after this, that Sir Henry had occasion to write another of his letters of advice; but it was a younger brother of Philip, Henry, who was the recipient. And how does the father direct this son into the best paths for the attainment of knowledge and virtue? "Follow," he writes, "the advice of your most loving brother, who in loving you is comparable with me, or exceedeth me. Imitate his virtues, exercises, studies, and actions. He is a rare ornament of his age; the very formula that all well-disposed young gentlemen of the court do form also their manners and life by. In truth I speak it without flattery of him, or myself, he hath the most virtues that I ever found in any man." This is, we presume, without known exception, the most striking testimony ever given by a father to the excellences of a son. And it may show us what the character and attainments of Philip Sidney were, before any sufficient earnest of them were given to the world; before, in short, he had *done* anything that would be thought of, by the men of a later generation. In connection with the subject of the letter just mentioned, we may observe in passing, that there is preserved at Penshurst, a picture by Gerard, of an exceedingly interesting kind, representing Philip and Robert Sidney standing side by side, their arms linked together; the former looking the Protector, and the latter the Protected, to the very life.

And now, as this letter shows us, Sidney had, after most comprehensive preparations, plunged into the world, and was already a courtier, winning the same kind of golden opinions that had everywhere followed him before, and which had even preceded him to the court of Elizabeth; where it was seen with surprise that the young Atlas of learning did not stoop with his burden, but was, on the contrary, one of the most airy, graceful, and in every way accomplished persons that had ever graced a court, or turned all the heads of the gentlemen with envy or jealousy, and of the ladies with admiration, near akin to love. He was soon the "My Philip" of the virgin queen, that being the mode Elizabeth adopted to distinguish him from a very different personage, Philip of Spain, the husband of her deceased sister Queen Mary.

In a single touch Sidney has described himself in the 'Arcadia,' while aiming to describe another, whom he characterises as possessing "high erected thought, seated in a heart of courtesy." The court could best appreciate the "heart of courtesy;" but what Sidney desired was worthy employment for the "high erected thought:" so he was speedily employed. He was sent to Vienna upon an honourable but not very important mission; then returned, and presently astonished every one, from the queen downwards, by his remonstrance against the proposed marriage of Elizabeth with the Duke of Anjou,—a measure that Catherine de Medicis of France was very anxious to carry into effect, but which was looked upon with dread and horror by the Protestant people of this country.

The remonstrance has been admired for its unusual elegance of expression, as well as for its force of reasoning, by one who was a consummate master in both qualities—Hume. But the patriotic character of the act itself is the grand thing to reflect upon. For expressing such views many persons were imprisoned, and some mutilated; and, if Sidney had no reason to fear that matters would be carried to such extremities with him, he had, what men generally would call, overwhelming motives for holding his peace: to mention but one, it was exceedingly probable that he was closing for ever against him the palace doors, and all that lay beyond, as state honours, public employment, reputation. Nevertheless the remonstrance was made; and such was the respect, love, and admiration that the queen seems to have felt for him, that she received it patiently, as though coming from one who could not have intended to wound or to injure her. Sidney has said in the 'Arcadia,' "Men are loving creatures, when injuries put them not from their natural course." Assuredly he at least (perhaps because of his own love) almost ever found it so. It will be acknowledged that something had now been done; but it was to be speedily followed by a much more important achievement.

Sidney, it appears, had never learnt, among all his acquirements, that there was any essential difference between a mere gentleman like himself, and one who might happen to have his gentility crowned by the coronet of the nobleman; so one day, whilst playing at tennis in the palace court, not liking the behaviour of the Earl of Oxford, he resented it in a very spirited and fearless manner. The quarrel grew violent, and Elizabeth was obliged to interfere in order to prevent a recourse to arms; but as Sidney did not receive the satisfaction he thought he had a right to expect, and was deaf to all that his royal mistress could urge as to difference of rank, he withdrew from the court, buried himself in the delightful solitudes of Wilton, the seat of the Earl of Pembroke, and began the 'Arcadia.' He has himself narrated who it was that advised him to undertake this task, and in what manner it was executed. In the dedication of the 'Arcadia' to his sister, the Countess of Pembroke, the subject of Jonson's famous epitaph, he says—

"Here now have you (most dear, and most worthy to be dear, lady!) this idle work of mine, which I fear, like the spider's web, will be thought fitter to be swept away, than worn to any other purpose. For my part, in very truth (as the cruel fathers among the Greeks were wont to do to the babes they would not foster), I could well find in my heart to cast out in some desert of forgetfulness this child, which I am loth to father. But you desired me to do it, and your desire to my heart is an absolute commandment. Now, it is done only for you, only to you: if you keep it to yourself, or commend it to such friends who will weigh errors in the balance of good will, I hope, for the father's sake, it will be pardoned, perchance made much of, though in itself it have deformities. For, indeed, for severer eyes it is not; being but a trifle, and that triflingly handled. Your dear self can best witness the manner, being done in loose sheets of paper, most of it in your presence, the rest by sheets sent unto you as fast as they were done."

And how shall we describe the nature of the work thus written—this most popular of all romances, in its day, and which, though now neglected, better deserves attention than nineteen out of every twenty of the works of fiction that are read and called popular for a brief time, then die, and are forgotten? The happiest description of it we have met with is that given by the author of the Life of Sidney, that is prefixed to his works (fourteenth edition, 1725), who says, "the 'Arcadia' is a continual *grove* of morality, shadowing moral and politick results under the plain and easy emblems of lovers;" who are for ever wandering to and fro in this "grove," experiencing all sorts of adventures. The 'Arcadia' is, in short, a prose pastoral, with a latent—and, on the whole, perhaps, much too latent—application to the affairs of the world, and especially to that portion of it which Sidney most desired to see become Arcadian in simplicity, virtue, and happiness. It is tedious to read as a whole; all pastorals are (unless it be that pretty "Newgate pastoral"—'The Beggar's Opera,' of which Swift speaks), and much of it, indeed, seems written as an exercise. Thus we have poetical pieces interspersed, of every different species—eclogues—songs—sapphics—epitaphs—and one epithalamium—tales; thus we have verses of all possible diversity as to length of feet and number of lines. But through the whole run veins of the purest ores of poesy, wisdom, and a truly startling knowledge of man and men, considering the youth of the author. You cannot glance over the pages in the most hurried manner, but you see them rising at frequent intervals to the surface, and presenting some bright and beautiful fancy, or some weighty and elevated thought, calculated at once to gladden and to enrich the wayfarer. A coward is one "whose faith could never comprehend the mysteries of courage." On the same subject he has in verse,

"Pain is more pain than is the pain it fears."

A certain governor is "not of the modern minds, who made suitors magistrates; but did ever think the *unwilling worthy man* were fitter than the *undeserving desirer*." We may learn from this remark, in what spirit Sidney was prepared to govern, should opportunity be ever afforded to him. In the following passages we may discover something of the principles that actuated him through life, and made him an illustrious and a happy man: "Whoever in great things will think to prevent all objections, must lie still and do nothing." Elsewhere he observes the "highest point outward things can bring us unto, is the contentment of the mind; with which, no estate—without which, all estates—be miserable." And yet again—"They are never alone, said I, that are accompanied with noble thoughts." As to his knowledge of the world, let a couple of touches suffice:—"Who prayeth his servants, shall never be well obeyed." There is "nothing more terrible to a guilty heart, than the eye of a respected friend."

It might be said of the 'Arcadia,' that for the most part the prose is poetry, and the poetry prose; but there are, notwithstanding, exquisite things among the verses, as for example,

"If the spheres senseless do yet hold a music,
If the swan's voice be not heard but as death,
If the mute timber when it hath the life lost

Do not the following passages recall to the reader's mind a strain of well-known poetic music, that seems to half repeat and wholly to have been suggested by them? "Her breath is more sweet than a gentle *south-west wind*, which comes creeping over *flowery fields*, and shadowed waters in the extreme heat of summer." Her "jacinth hair, curled by nature but intercurled by art, like a fine brook through golden sands, had a rope of fine pearl, which now hiding, now hidden by the hair, did as it were play at fast and loose each with other, mutually *giving and receiving richness*."

But of all the contents of the 'Arcadia,' the most extraordinary is the prayer put into the mouth of one of the characters, which we know not how otherwise to describe than by saying that it is perhaps the noblest appeal ever made by man unto his Maker, and from its very earnestness, solemnity, and grandeur, strangely out place in such an unreal atmosphere. Milton said the prayer in the book attributed to Charles I., the 'Eikon Basilike,' was stolen from it.

But there was probably an object dearer to the heart of Sidney than any we have yet mentioned, when he sat down to write the 'Arcadia,' and that was to embody in the discourses of the lovers the ebbings and flowings of his own passion for the lady whom he has immortalized in a series of beautiful poems, under the name of Stella, and who appears in the 'Arcadia' as Philoclea. This was Lady Penelope Devereux. She has been painted by Sidney in colours that belong only to the poet-lover. Of "her hair," for instance, he says, "alas! too poor a word, why should I not rather call them her beams?" And in another part he thus playfully describes the condition in which the lover of Philoclea is placed:—"The force of love to these poor folk, that feel it, is many ways very strange, but no way stranger than that it doth so enchain the lover's judgment upon her that holds the reins of his mind, that whatsoever she doth is ever in his eyes the best..... If she sits still, that is best, for so is the conspiracy of her several graces held best together to make one perfect figure of beauty. If she walk, no doubt that is best, for, besides she making happy the more places by her steps, the very stirring adds a pleasing life to her native perfections. If she be silent, that without comparison is best, since by that means the untroubled eye most freely may devour the sweetness of his object. But if she speak, he will take it upon his death that is best, the quintessence of each word being distilled down into his affected soul." But whilst there are many indications of Sidney's position as a lover to be found in the 'Arcadia,' they are too distant and uncertain to be much relied on; it is in that charming collection of sonnets entitled 'Astrophel and Stella' that we must look for the means to trace the entire progress and issue of this passion; and for what has since become of infinitely greater importance—the materials with which to determine the true height and breadth of Sidney's poetic reputation. A kindred spirit has written,

"Poets are cradled into wrong;
They learn in sufferance what they teach in song;"

and there can be little doubt that, though in the progress of this connection Sidney knew all the usual alternations of the lover—now raised in his hopes to the stars, now sunk to the deepest abysses of gloom—there was on the whole a sad preponderance of "sufferance." Throughout these sonnets he assumes a more earnest, as well as in every way a more powerful and elevated tone. The first sonnet expresses his own consciousness of this in a very charming manner; it also shows the lover-like object he had in view in the composition of the series:—

"Loving in truth, and fain in verse my love to show,
That she, dear she, might take some pleasure of my pain,
Pleasure might cause her read, reading might make her know,
Knowledge might pity win, and pity grace obtain:
I sought fit words to paint the blackest face of woe,
Studying inventions fine, her wits to entertain—
Oft turning others' leaves, to see if thence would flow
Some fresh and fruitful showers upon my sun-burn'd brain:
But words came halting forth, wanting invention's stay,
Invention, Nature's child, fled step-dame Study's blows
And others' feet still seem'd but strangers in my way.
Thus great with child to speak, and helpless in my throes,
Biting my truant pen, beating myself for spite;—
Fool! said my Muse to me, look in thy heart, and write."

He did so; and England in consequence received a precious storehouse of the most exquisite thoughts and fancies, set in verse, that is for the most part of unsurpassable excellence. What was the true character of the obstacles that beset the course of the poet's love, is buried to a certain extent in obscurity; but it is hardly more than the lady's subsequent history warrants to say,—that they must have chiefly consisted in her inability to appreciate as he deserved the man who, enjoying universal admiration, made it his utmost ambition to throw himself at her feet. Not but what she could see the grace and beauty of his person—hear and be pleased with the continual voice of praise that was raised in his favour—nay, she could hardly even avoid some consciousness of his lofty excellences of mind and character, were it only by seeing them everywhere reflected back upon her by the opinions of others who were the most worthy to give an opinion; but there seems to have ended all Lady Devereux's sympathy with or understanding of the man, whose love might have made the noblest of earthly women proud, and whose powers have conferred upon her immortality. It is painful to think that one who could listen at all, and apparently at times with more than tolerance to Sidney, should have felt so little the pathos of these lines, or have been struck so little by the responsibility they threw upon her:—

"For since mad *March* great promise made of me,
If now the *May* of my years must decline,
What can be hop'd my harvest-time will be?"

We learn from one sonnet (xxiii.) that his pensiveness attracted attention, and that all sorts of guesses were thrown out as to the cause; some, he says, and the remark gives us a glimpse of the popular appreciation of his character—some,

"Because the Prince my service tries,
Think that I think state-errors to redress."

In another sonnet he remarks that his dark abstracted guise—his seeming

"most alone in greatest company,
With dearth of words, or answers quite awry,"

are attributed to the foul poison of pride. And in yet a third he runs over all the questions that are put to him relating to the great foreign political questions of the time, as—

"How Ulster likes of that same golden bit
Wherewith my father once made it half tame," &c.;

but in all these cases he laughs at the speculations and the inquirers, and turns everything still to the service and glorification of his mistress. And did ever poet and lover more exquisitely express his reproaches for unkind treatment than in the following sonnet, the last that our space will permit us to quote entire?—

"With how sad steps, O Moon, thou climb'st the skies,
How silently, and with how wan a face!
What,—may it be, that even in heavenly place
That busy archer his sharp arrows tries?
Sure, if that long, with love-acquainted eyes,
Can judge of Love, thou feel'st a lover's case,
I read it in thy looks, thy languish'd grace,
To me, that feel the like, thy state describes.
Then even of fellowship, O Moon, tell me
Is constant love deem'd there but want of wit?
Are beauties there as proud as here they be?
Do they above love to be lov'd, and yet
Those lovers scorn, whom that love doth possess?
Do they call virtue there—ungratefulness?"

We need not seek further for a full comprehension of the relations of Sidney and the Lady Penelope Devereux. As usual in such cases—the ever-impending blow was struck at last—Sidney's mistress married another, a man for whom it

should seem she had herself—subsequently—no respect. After the first shock, the connection appears to have been renewed, with no other result—we might almost say with no other object on the part of Stella, now Lady Rich,—than to feed the vanity of the one party, and the anguish of the other. Most painfully evident in some of the sonnets are the attempts made by the poet to rise superior to the unnatural position in which he found himself, to set at rest the struggle between his desires and his conscience, and be intent thenceforth to show

"Service and honour, wonder with delight,
Fear to offend, well worthy to appear;
Care shining in mine eyes, faith in my sprite:
These things are left me by my only dear."

Embarrassed by excess of wealth, we hardly know how to discontinue our selections from the poetical fruits of this period: so sad a one on the whole to Sidney; so full of matter for congratulation, in a literary sense, to his fellow-men. Let then this be the last—in which Sidney, turning ever his mistress's worst faults into something pleasant and delightful for his imagination to rest upon, thus explains why it is his complaints are not received as they should be by her to whom they are addressed—

"I much do guess, yet find no truth, save this,—
That when the breath of my complaints doth touch
Those dainty doors unto the court of bliss,
The heavenly nature of the place is such
That once come there, the sobs of mine annoys
Are metamorphosed straight to tunes of joys."

In these snatches from the poet's fuller song, many no doubt will see, like ourselves, that Shakspeare's were not the only "sugar'd sonnets" produced in the sixteenth century. Truly Sidney was now *doing* in genuine earnest.

And notwithstanding the nature and end of the influences that thus developed the poet's powers, being developed, the poet—as apart from the lover—went on his way rejoicingly. Not long, after all, did he allow this ill-assorted passion to bend him beneath its storms. In 1581 was written the 'Defence of Poesy,' the noblest work on one of the noblest of subjects that exists in any language. It is but the simple truth to state, that "nothing more can be said upon the cause which it advocates; and what is said is placed in such a point of view, and expressed in so happy a manner, as to leave nothing to desire." ('Penny Cyclopædia,' article "Sidney.") Many who are familiar with the name and reputation of this work may not perhaps be aware that its production was as well timed as it was effective. It seems truly extraordinary to state that the period which produced Spenser, Sidney, Shakspeare, and his brother dramatists, should be one in which the *general* estimation of the divine art was very low; but there is no resisting Sidney's direct statements to that effect. He says in one place, that it is "fallen to be the laughing-stock of children;" in another, he speaks of its being "thrown down to the ridiculous in estimation;" in a third, that the poets of England are "almost in as good reputation as the mountebanks at Venice." Then, again, he refers to certain "poet-whippers," with whom it falleth out, as "with some good women, who often are sick, but in faith they cannot tell where." Lastly, he enumerates the high crimes and misdemeanors charged against the poets, which, it appears, consist in their drawing away the attention from more "fruitful knowledges;" that it is the mother of lies, that it is the "nurse of abuse, infecting us with many pestilent devices, with a Syren sweetness, drawing the mind to the serpent's tail of sinful fancies;" and, above all, that Plato banished them out of his commonwealth. It is too late in the day to notice, for the purpose of answering, such charges; but it is in no slight degree owing to Sidney's labours that we have not still some such necessity imposed upon us.

In the course of his work Sidney compares the poet with men in all the other chief walks of learning and intellectual manifestation, and even with Nature itself. Our only quotation must be from the part that contains this last-named parallel: "Neither let it be deemed too saucy a comparison, to balance the highest point of man's wit with the efficacy of nature; but rather give right honour to the *Heavenly Maker of that maker*, who having made man to his own likeness, set him beyond, and over all the works of that second Nature, which in nothing he showed so much as in poetry, when with the force of a divine breath he bringeth things forth surpassing her doings, with no small arguments to the incredulous of the first accursed fall of Adam, *since our erected wit maketh us know what perfection is, and yet our infected will keepeth us from reaching unto it.*" Sidney, be it remembered, was now but in his twenty-seventh year.

In 1583 the poet married the daughter of his friend Sir Francis Walsingham. Many, no doubt, addressed him in heart, if

not in actual words, upon the occasion, after the style of his own Epithalamium in the 'Arcadia:'

"Virtue, if not a God, yet God's chief part,—
Be thou the knot of this their open vow,
That still he be her head, and she his heart:" &c.

but unhappily, neither past circumstances nor the lady's mind and character seem to have admitted of any such result. No real happiness appears to have resulted from the union. As to Stella, after all her prudery with Sidney, she lived to excite the tongue of scandal by her unfortunate connection with the Earl of Devonshire. Public scenes and occupations now began to reopen upon the poet. On his former ambassadorial visit to Vienna, he had established a friendship with Prince Casimir; he was now chosen by the prince to act as his proxy, on his installation into the order of the Knights of the Garter. Elizabeth, glad no doubt to see him back again to court, knighted him, and thus plain Philip became Sir Philip Sidney. About the same time he entered into a political controversy with Parsons, the Jesuit, who had attacked his uncle, the Earl of Leicester. But it was not thus Sidney's chivalrous spirit desired to expend that portion of his life which he had determined to devote to the public service. He evidently pined for a field that would enable the already distinguished man of letters to achieve an equally high distinction as a man of action. At last, when Drake's second expedition was fitted out against the Spanish West Indies, in 1585, Sidney's impatience could no longer brook delay; so making his preparations with all possible secrecy, to prevent Elizabeth from stopping him, he succeeded in joining Drake at Plymouth, just before he was about to embark. But Elizabeth was too sharp for him. The truant was caught and effectually stayed at the last moment, by a royal mandate which threatened the queen's high displeasure if he proceeded, but promised him immediate employment, under his uncle the Earl of Leicester, if he returned to the court. Certainly this was the most complimentary act of despotism upon record; and accompanied, according to report, by equally complimentary words. It is said the queen was in a great fright lest she should "lose the jewel of her dominions." But what even was this to the offer of a crown—that of Poland—which Fuller says was made to him, and *declined*? The poet Lee also says, he was so "most extravagantly great, that he refused to be a king."

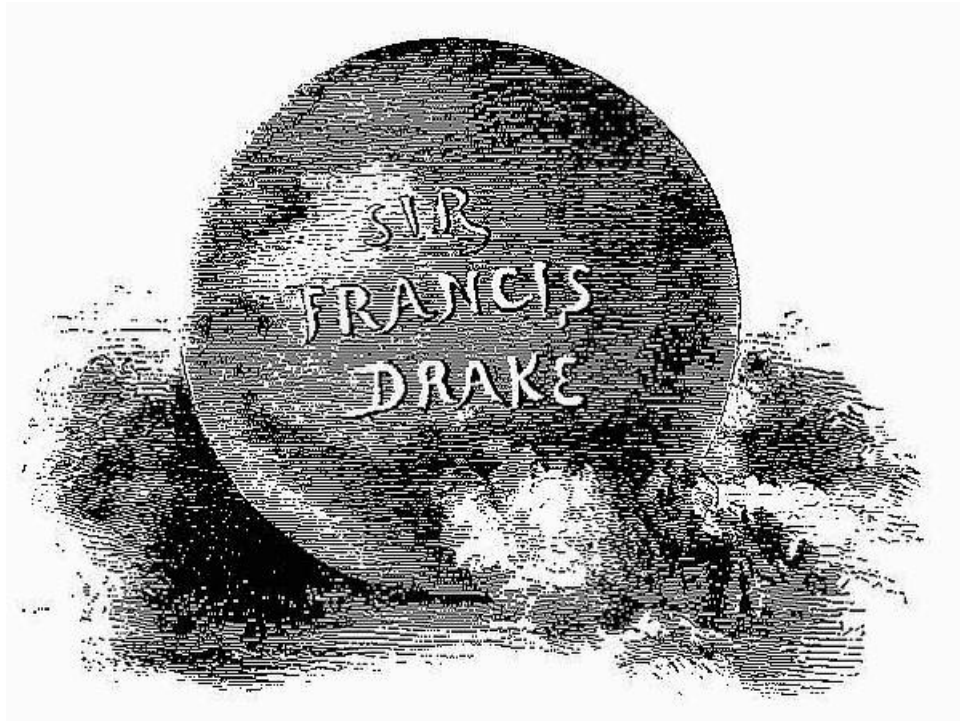
Elizabeth kept her word. Sidney was appointed governor of Flushing in 1585. Spain and Holland were then at war; England being in close alliance with the latter. The field for action was now daily widening upon his view at every step he took, when, to the sudden and universal grief of Europe, he was struck down before he had reached in years even the prime of manhood. Sidney had already obtained some considerable successes against the enemy; but one day his forces accidentally encountered a body of three thousand men who were marching to relieve Zutphen, a town of Guelderland: and there, under the walls, the conflict ensued that was to invest the name of a previously obscure place with undying interest. Sidney had two horses successively shot under him, but was still pressing on with heroic resolution, when a musket-shot from one of the trenches wounded his left thigh a little above the knee and broke the bone. The injury was fatal, though for some days there was a hope of recovery: and as Sidney has said in the 'Arcadia,' "In extremities the winning of time is the purchase of life;" would that it could have here proved so! He died in the arms of Lady Sidney, and of his attached secretary William Temple, on the 7th of October, 1586. He had never desired to make a "perpetual mansion of this poor baiting place of man's life" ('Arcadia'); but he might have been reasonably expected to have shown how terribly he felt this premature termination to such a magnificent career as that he had run, and which was but the beginning of the mightier one he contemplated; he was, however, as patient when the time of death came, as though it were not the "time that the wings of night do blow sleep most willingly into mortal creatures." ('Arcadia.')

With that fatal bullet, then, the career of most men would have ended. There would have been nothing more to *do* in which men could have any interest, except that arising from their sympathies with his sufferings—their grief for his loss. It was not so with Sidney. One of the greatest acts of his life was performed after the receipt of his death-wound. No reader but must know to what incident we allude. No reader but must have felt at some time or other his heart expand with unwonted love for and devotion to his fellow-men, as he read the story of Sidney and the soldier on the bloody field of Zutphen. This story cannot be better told than in the words of him who desired that his own epitaph should state simply that he was the friend of Sidney. Lord Brooke, in describing the progress of the sad procession which bore Sidney to his tent, continues: "Passing along by the rear of the army, where his uncle (Leicester) the general was, and being thirsty with excess of bleeding, he called for some drink, which was presently brought him; but as he was putting the bottle to his mouth, he saw a poor soldier carried along, who had eaten his last at the same feast, ghastly casting up his eyes at the bottle, which Sir Philip perceiving took it from his head before he drank, and delivered it to the poor man with these words, 'Thy necessity is yet greater than mine.'"

Never, probably, before or since, did any death cause more universal lamentation. Every one felt that a glory had suddenly passed away from the earth; yet at the same time every one felt as though he had lost a personal friend: so honoured and so loved was Philip Sidney. A general mourning was observed, the first of the kind, it is believed, in this country. The body lay in state in St. Paul's for many days. A deputation from the United Provinces formed a portion of the mourners at the funeral.

Besides the works specially noticed in the foregoing pages, Sidney wrote a Masque (his first literary attempt), which was exhibited before Elizabeth, and he contributed occasional poems, &c. to various publications.

We have not hitherto dwelt, nor is it now our intention to dwell, on the opinions of Sidney's contemporaries on his poetry or character; they have been repeated so incessantly, that one is apt, before examination, to think that there must be something too much of all this praise—notwithstanding that the praisers include nearly all the most illustrious names in English letters. And if this danger be avoided, we are still liable to another, that of substituting for the real man—the real poet—the real hero Sidney, such as he was—a kind of dreamy abstraction of him, formed simply of the opinions of his admirers. And certainly that is not the way to make our own admiration of any value. Referring, in conclusion, to the remarks we made in the commencement of this paper, we trust there will be found in these pages a sufficient answer to the question—What has Sir Philip Sidney *done* to deserve such pre-eminent fame?



SIR FRANCIS DRAKE

"This Drake," says Camden, "(to relate no more than what I have heard from himself) was born of mean parentage in Devonshire, and had Francis Russell (afterwards Earl of Bedford) for his godfather, who, according to the custom, gave him his Christian name. Whilst he was yet a child his father, embracing the Protestant doctrine, was called in question by the law of the Six Articles made by Henry VIII. against the Protestants, fled his country, and withdrew himself into Kent."^[14]

"Thus," says quaint old Fuller, "did God divide the honour betwixt two counties, that the one might have his birth and the other his education." The date of his birth is involved in great uncertainty, which has not been cleared up by his latest biographer, who quotes the inscriptions of two portraits, which disagree as to his age.^[15] The years 1539, 1541, and 1546, not to mention others, have been assigned by different writers; but the safest assertion to make is that he was born somewhere between those extreme periods, and probably about 1542. According to local tradition, Drake first saw the light in an humble cottage on the banks of the Tavy in Devonshire, and not far from South Tavistock. The cottage was demolished some forty years ago, till which time it had remained unchanged; a stall for cattle belonging to the farmhouse hard by now stands, or recently stood, upon its site.^[16] Sir Francis Drake, the nephew of the great sea hero and the inheritor of his fortune and honours, in the dedication of the 'Voyage Revived,' gives some information of the family. He describes the poverty and the persecution for conscience' sake of the hero's father. He says, that after his flight into Kent, the good man was constrained to inhabit in the hull of a ship, wherein many of his younger sons were born. He adds, that he had twelve sons in all, and that "as it pleased God to give most of them a being upon the water, so the greatest part of them died at sea: but the youngest, though he went as far as any, yet died at home, whose posterity inherits that which he, by himself, and this noble gentleman the eldest brother (the great Francis), was hardly, yet worthily gotten."

"After the death of King Henry," continues Camden, "he (the father) got a place among the seamen in the king's navy, to read prayers to them; and soon after he was ordained deacon, and made vicar of the church of Upnor upon the river Medway, the road where the fleet usually anchoreth. But by reason of his poverty he put his son to the master of a bark, his neighbour, who used to coast along the shore, and sometimes to carry merchandise into Zealand and France."

Mr. Barrow has remarked, that there is not now, nor ever was, either church or chapel at Upnor, but that a small castle was built there by Queen Elizabeth to protect the anchorage. Yet, no doubt, there was a small chapel in that castle, and in this the father of the great Drake may have been chaplain. Or he may have been vicar of Hoo Church, which stands on the hill just behind Upnor, and which still serves as a parish church to that village. There may be a trifling slip as to a name, but there can be no doubt of Camden's correctness as to the fact that Drake's father held some church preferment in this immediate neighbourhood. He was no doubt a man of considerable acquirements, and one that took pains with the education of his sons. The great Drake, though sent so early to sea, was very far from being an illiterate man. In all times the coasting trade has been considered an admirable school for seamen. This was the training of Drake, as afterwards of Captain Cook. According to Fuller, his first master "held Drake hard to his business; and pains with patience in his youth knit the joints of his soul, and made them more solid and compacted." But, if a hard master in the beginning, the old skipper became very fond of his apprentice. "The youth," says Camden, "being painful and diligent, so pleased the old man by his industry, that, being a bachelor, he at his death bequeathed his bark unto him by will and testament." As master of this craft Drake continued his active and thriving way of life. He had gotten together some little money. At this time Captain Hawkins (afterwards Sir John) another Devonshire man, a bold sailor and a skilful navigator, was fitting out at Plymouth an expedition for the new world. Such expeditions presented irresistible attraction to adventurous seamen, and to many adventurers that were no seamen. There was no conceivable limit to the riches and beauty of the American continent; every man hoped to obtain a fortune by going thither and hitting upon some gold mine. Hawkins had made one or two voyages to the new world before. Drake, who appears to have been previously acquainted with him, resolved to accompany him in his present expedition; so selling his bark, and taking with him all the money and goods he had in the world, he hastened away to Plymouth and joined Hawkins. Queen Elizabeth had lent one of her ships royal to the general (or admiral, as we should now say). The rest of the squadron, furnished by private speculators, consisted of four ships and two very small vessels. One of these ships, named the Judith, was intrusted to the command of Francis Drake, whose skill must have been known and prized by Hawkins, as he was but a young man at the time. The expedition sailed from Plymouth in October, 1567. Its main scope appears to have been to purchase negroes on the coast of Africa, to carry these unfortunate creatures to the West Indies, and there sell them to the Spanish planters. But Hawkins's good fortune forsook him in this his last great adventure. Everything went wrong. First there was a storm off Cape Finisterre,

which lasted four days, and greatly damaged the general's ship. Then there was some hard fighting near Cape de Verd, where the negroes would not submit to be made slaves and carried off. Seven or eight men were wounded and died of lock-jaw. "I myself," says the devout Hawkins, "had one of the greatest wounds, yet, thanks be to God, escaped." Farther down the coast, at St. Jorge da Mina, where Hawkins joined a negro king who was making war on a neighbouring black potentate, he had six slain and forty wounded. And (what Hawkins appears to have considered as a still greater misfortune), he was duped and tricked by his ally the negro king, who, after promising him all the prisoners that should be taken, marched off with six hundred of them, and left our Christian general only some two hundred and fifty "men, women, and children." "But," says Hawkins, with virtuous indignation, "in the negro nation is seldom or never found truth." Having chained and embarked all the negroes they could get, our adventurers, who were half slave-dealers and half buccaneers, quitted the coast of Guinea and made for the West Indies. At some islands the Spaniards trafficked with them, giving them gold and silver for their black people; but in other islands they would not engage in this traffic. For this conduct Hawkins determined to punish them. Having landed two hundred of his men he stormed and took the town of Rio da Hacha, with the loss of two men only. At the port of San Juan d'Ulloa, in the bay of Mexico, they were not quite so fortunate. Hawkins had evidently been joined by a number of buccaneer ships who were practising in those waters without any commission, either from the Queen of England (who was not then at war with Spain) or from any other sovereign or state. He confesses himself that he was more than half inclined to attack a Spanish fleet which came into the bay with specie and bullion on board, to the value of nearly two millions sterling. After he had been for some time in port, he says the English were taken by surprise, and the Spaniards, most perfidiously falling upon them, killed a great number of their men, seized, plundered, and burned three of their ships, making the crews prisoners, and obliged the remainder in the smaller ships to retreat, without provisions or water, and in a most miserable plight. But, according to the relation which Hawkins himself gave to that excellent collector and compiler old Hakluyt, the English did not retreat until they had sunk, or were supposed to have sunk, the Spanish admiral, burned the vice-admiral, and sent another of their chief ships to the bottom—as was believed. Hawkins, however, was obliged to abandon his own ship, the 'Jesus,' of Lubeck, which Queen Elizabeth had lent him; which was of seven hundred tons' burthen, and the only vessel deserving to be called a ship in his squadron; and only the 'Minion' and the 'Judith,' Drake's bark of fifty tons, got safely out of this unlucky bay and most desperate fight. In this disastrous expedition Drake lost all the money he had in the world, and brought a stain upon his reputation which would have been fatal to him if he had lived in more modern times. For he shamefully disobeyed orders, and deserted Hawkins, his superior and his friend, in the hour of need and danger. As we have Hawkins's own solemn and uncontradicted statement to this effect, and as Drake suffered imprisonment for his misconduct, it seems rather strange that Mr. Barrow should suppress the fact and say, that "it is somewhat remarkable that the name of Drake never once occurs in any of the accounts of this very uninteresting and unfortunate voyage." In the very chapter in which this passage occurs Mr. Barrow himself quotes more than one account of the voyage, in which the name of Drake and the name of his vessel are mentioned, and Hawkins's account must have come under his eye in Hakluyt's book, of which he has made so much use. Southey, who understood his business better than to attempt enhancing the fame of his hero by suppressing or slurring over the truth, has given the facts in a foot note.^[17] Hawkins complained of Drake's "forsaking him in his great misery, and shifting for himself." Herrera, who wrote with the prejudice of a Spaniard against a man who became one of the most formidable enemies Spain ever knew, says that Drake, instead of obeying Hawkins's orders, and waiting for him when he was in his great peril, fled with all the prize-money that had been made, and reaching England reported that Hawkins was lost, and that he had distributed the money among his men, although in reality he (Drake) had kept it all himself. "This," adds Herrera, "was his beginning; and, though the queen kept him three months in prison, she pardoned him upon intercession, and so the matter rested."^[18] This story about the money is probably entirely false; but Drake merited his imprisonment, and something worse, for his disobeying orders and abandoning his friend and superior officer, who, together with his people, suffered incredible hardships before he could get to England. Camden does not mention the imprisonment; but he says that Drake hardly escaped with the loss of all that he had. He, however, showed skilful seamanship, and brought the little 'Judith' safely home; and in those days craft and skill could be pleaded in extenuation of almost every offence falling short of high treason. A chaplain belonging to the queen's fleet comforted Drake with the assurance that, as he had been treacherously used by the Spaniards in the Gulf of Mexico, he might lawfully recover in value upon the King of Spain, and repair his losses upon him whenever and wherever he could. Fuller says, "The case was clear in sea-divinity; and few are such infidels as not to believe doctrines which make for their own profit. Whereupon Drake, though a poor private man, undertook to revenge himself on so mighty a monarch, who, not contented that the sun riseth and setteth in his dominions, may seem to desire to make all his own where he shineth." It entered largely into the policy of the virgin-queen to wink at this right of private war, or to encourage her subjects in their private attacks upon the navy and colonies of Spain. Fuller, though a divine, and writing not during her reign, but during the Commonwealth and under Charles II., could not

discover anything much amiss in this system, for he looked upon the Spaniards only as Papists, and as such the natural enemies of all good Protestants. "Let us see," he exclaims, "let us now see how a dwarf, standing on the mount of God's providence, may prove an overmatch for a giant!" Being readily joined by a number of sea-adventurers, who mustered among them money enough to fit out a vessel, Drake made two or three voyages to the West Indies, to gain intelligence and learn the navigation of those parts; but Camden adds, that he also got some store of money there "by playing the seaman and the pirate."

In 1570 he obtained a regular commission from Queen Elizabeth, and cruised to still better purpose among the Spanish West India Islands. In 1572—apparently with the same roving commission from the queen, and with the determination of attacking the Spaniards wherever it could be done with hope of success and plunder, albeit there was still no declared war between England and Spain—he sailed again for the Spanish main with the 'Pasha' of Plymouth of 70 tons, and the 'Swan' of the same port, of 25 tons, of which his brother John Drake was captain. The united crews of these two small craft amounted, in men and boys, to seventy-three; "all voluntarily assembled, of which the eldest man was fifty, all the rest under thirty; and so divided that there were forty-seven in one ship, and twenty-six in the other, both richly furnished with victuals and apparel for a whole year, and no less heedfully provided of all manner of munition, artillery, stuff and tools, that were requisite for such a man-of-war, in such an attempt, but especially having three dainty pinnaces made in Plymouth, taken asunder all in pieces, and stowed aboard, to be set up as occasion served."^[19] At Port Pheasant, an uninhabited place on the South American coast, Drake landed, built a fort or stockade by felling trees, and began to put his two pinnaces together. The day after his arrival he was joined by a bark from the Isle of Wight, belonging to Sir Edward Horsey, wherein James Rouse was captain, and John Overy master, with thirty men, of which some had been with our captain (Drake) in the same place the year before. Master Rouse brought in with him a Spanish carvello of Seville, which he had taken the day before, and a shallop with oars, which he had taken at Cape Blanche. "This Captain Rouse, understanding our captain's purpose, was desirous to join in consort with him, and was received on conditions agreed upon between them."^[20] With this insignificant force Drake took and plundered the town of Nombre de Dios, and made great spoils among the Spanish shipping. In leading them to the attack of the king's treasure-house, Drake told his people, "That he had now brought them to the mouth of the Treasury of the World; which if they did not gain, none but themselves were to be blamed." He received a dangerous wound; but this he concealed for a long time, "knowing, if the general's heart stoops, the men's will fail; and that if a bright opportunity once setteth, it seldom riseth again."^[21] To an hidalgo who had a parley with him after the fight, Drake frankly said—"That he wanted only some of that excellent commodity, gold and silver, which that country yielded, for himself and his company, and that he was resolved, by the help of God, to reap some of the golden harvest, which they (the Spaniards) had got out of the earth, and then sent into Spain to trouble the earth."^[22] After this exploit he proceeded to Carthagená, and there took two Spanish ships, one of which was of two hundred and forty tons, having previously despatched his brother and one Ellis Hixon to examine the river Chagre, which traverses part of the isthmus of Darien, where he had been the year before. After taking other prizes, and sinking the 'Swan' in order to strengthen the crews in the pinnaces, Drake landed, and partially crossing the isthmus of Darien, obtained a view of the great Pacific, an ocean as yet closed to English enterprise, and with his eyes longingly fixed upon its waters, he prayed God to grant him "life and leave once to sail an English ship in those seas." He also implored the Divine assistance to be enabled to make a perfect discovery of the same. "Hereunto," says Camden, "he bound himself with a vow; and from that time forward his mind was pricked on continually night and day to perform his vow." Sir William Davenant, in a whimsical drama, produced and played in the time of Charles II., commemorated these events.

Drake, jun. No English keel hath yet that ocean plowed.

Pedro. If prophecy from me may be allowed,
Renown'd Drake, Heaven does decree
That happy enterprise to thee,
For thou of all the Britons art the first
That boldly durst
This Western World invade;
And as thou now art made
The first to whom that ocean will be shown,
So to thy Isle thou first shall make it known.^[23]

The adventures which followed were extraordinary and very hazardous. John Drake was killed, being mortally wounded in the belly while attempting to board a Spanish frigate from the pinnaces, and another young man called Richard Allen was slain with him. Six of the company fell sick and died within two or three days, and thirty at a time were very sick of a calenture. "Among the rest, Joseph Drake, another of our captain's brothers, died in our captain's arms of the same disease."^[24] At last Drake shaped his course for England, with his frail barks absolutely loaded and crammed with treasure and plundered merchandise; and on the 9th of August, 1573, he anchored at Plymouth. It was a Sunday, and the townsfolk were at church; but when the news spread thither that Drake was come, "there remained few or no people with the preacher; all running out to witness the blessing of God upon the dangerous adventures and enterprises of the captain, who had spent one year, two months, and some odd days, in this voyage."^[25] Or, in the words of one who couples loyalty with religion, "all hastening to see the evidence of God's love and blessing towards our gracious queen and country, by the fruit of our captain's labour and success. SOLI DEO GLORIA."^[26]

Drake, being employed in the interval in the service of the queen in Ireland, was forestalled in the honour of being the first Englishman to sail on the Pacific by one John Oxenham of Plymouth, who had served under him as a common sailor and cook; but as this man merely floated a "pinnacle" on the South Sea in 1575, and was taken by the Spaniards and hanged (together with forty of his comrades) as a pirate at Lima, "being unable to produce any power or commission from the queen," he could scarcely be an object of envy to the "dragon Drake."^[27]

In 1577, under the secret sanction of Elizabeth, Drake departed from Plymouth on another marauding expedition to the Spanish main. Owing to foul weather and other delays he did not fairly quit England until the very end of the year. This time his squadron consisted of five vessels, the largest of which, the 'Pelican' was of a hundred tons, the smallest, the 'Christopher' pinnacle, of only fifteen tons. The united crews amounted to a hundred and sixty-four men, *gentlemen* and sailors. Among the *gentlemen* were some young men of noble families, who (not to mention the plunder anticipated) went out to learn the art of navigation. Our old dramatists were only dealing with facts when they represented the court gallants or men of pleasure and dissipation about town looking to a cruise on the Spanish main as a good and honourable means of recruiting their wasted finances.

After many adventures along the coasts of the South American continents, where some of his attacks and surprises were completely successful, Drake and his choice comrades came to Port Julian, on the coast of Patagonia, near the Straits of Magelhaens, where they were much comforted by finding a gibbet standing—a proof that Christian people had been there before them. Drake, during his stay in Port Julian, put to death "Master Doughtie," a gentleman of birth and education, and next in authority or in consideration to the general. This dark story is still involved in much mystery, notwithstanding the laudable endeavours of Southey to rescue the fame of one of our greatest naval heroes from the suspicion of a most foul murder. Mr. Barrow, Drake's latest biographer, has thrown no new light upon the subject. Camden relates the sad story thus:—In this very place John Doughtie, an industrious and stout man, and the next unto Drake, was called to his trial for raising a mutiny in the fleet, found guilty by twelve men, after the English manner, and condemned to death, which he suffered undauntedly, being beheaded, having first received the holy communion with Drake. And, indeed, the most impartial persons in the fleet were of opinion that he had acted seditiously; and that Drake cut him off as an emulator of his glory, and one that regarded not so much who he himself excelled in commendations for sea matters, as who he thought might equal him. Yet wanted there not some, who, pretending to understand things better than others, gave out that Drake had in charge from Leicester to take off Doughtie, upon any pretence whatsoever, because he had reported abroad that the Earl of Essex^[28] was made away by the cunning practices of Leicester.

A story told by Drake's nephew and namesake about a plan entertained by Doughtie to create a mutiny and murder the general or admiral has been rejected with the contempt it merits, for it injures the case by attempting to prove too much, and it contains some things which are altogether incredible. Mr. Francis Fletcher, "preacher and pastor of the fleet at that time" (even the Buccaneers were a God-fearing race, and liked always to have a chaplain or two with them), has left a written account of "this bloody tragedy," as he himself calls it. The chaplain speaks very cautiously; but he does not appear to have believed in any great guilt in Doughtie. He says that the origin of the dislike against him was in the outward voyage, upon occasion of taking a Portuguese prize (the sort of subject upon which these adventurers were continually quarrelling), but that "now more dangerous matter and of greater weight is laid to his charge, and that by the same persons, namely, for words spoken by him to them, being in England, in the general's garden in Plymouth, long before our departure thence, which had been their parts and duties to have discovered them at that time, and not to have concealed them for a time and place not so fitting; but how true it was wherewith they charged him upon their oaths, I know not; but he utterly denied it, upon his salvation, at the hour of communicating the sacrament of the body and blood

of Christ, at the hour and moment of his death, affirming that he was innocent of such things whereof he was accused, judged, and suffered death for. Of whom I must needs testify the truth for the good things of God I found in him, in the time we were conversant, and especially in the time of his afflictions and trouble, till he yielded up the spirit to God; I doubt not to immortality. He feared God, he loved his word, and was always desirous to edify others, and conform himself to the faith of Christ." Fletcher goes on to describe Doughtie as a very accomplished person. "For his qualities, in a man of his time, they were rare, and his gifts very excellent for his age: a sweet orator, a pregnant philosopher, a good gift for the Greek tongue, and a reasonable taste of Hebrew; a sufficient secretary to a noble personage of great place, and in Zealand an approved soldier; and not behind many in the study of the law for his time."^[29] We leave the story in the same obscurity in which we found it.

On the 20th of August 1578, Drake reached Cape Virgenes, and began to sail through the Strait of Magelhaens, being the third navigator who performed that most difficult passage. On the 6th of September he cleared the Strait and entered the Pacific, which he found rough and turbulent above measure. A tempest, which for fifty days never ceased, drove our daring navigator far to the south and to the extremity of the land which has since been named "Cape Horn." Thus he was enabled to displace the old terra incognita from a considerable portion of the space which it had previously occupied in maps and charts. "We altered the name," says Fletcher the chaplain, "to *Terra nunc bene cognita* (or land now well known)." Drake went ashore, and leaning over the face of a jutting promontory, as far as he could, he came back and told his sailors that now he had been farther south than any man living. On the 30th of October the wind fell fair and moderate; and our adventurers sailed towards the north-west, running pleasantly along the shores of the South American continent, and keeping a good look-out for prizes, whether on sea or on land. Having obtained an immense booty by plundering the Spanish towns on the coasts of Chili and Peru, and by taking, among many other vessels, a royal galleon called the 'Cacafuego,' richly laden with plate, he sailed to the north in the hope of finding a passage back to the Atlantic a little above California. He, in short, went in quest of the north-east passage. He reached latitude 48° N.; but there the extreme severity of the cold discouraged his men, and so putting back 10° he took shelter in Port San Francisco. After staying five weeks in this port Drake boldly determined to follow the example of Magelhaens, and steer across the Pacific for the Moluccas. He had gone through the winding and, in many places, narrow and most difficult Strait of Magelhaens without any chart or guide whatsoever; but he was so fortunate as to obtain from the master of a trading ship, from Panama to the Philippine islands, a sea-card which showed him the track across the Pacific. He made Ternate, one of the Moluccas, and the capital of that group, in safety, and thence set his course for Java. His sea-card had now long ceased to be of any use; yet he steered through unknown seas, through an intricate navigation among rocks and islands and without a pilot. Among the Celebes his ship struck upon the point of one of those coral reefs which so abound in those seas; but at the ebb of tide she fell over on one side, slipped off from the ledge, and floated into deep water. From Java Drake sailed right across the Indian Ocean to the Cape of Good Hope, which he doubled without accident, or, in the words of an original narrator in Hakluyt—"We ran hard aboard the Cape, finding the report of the Portingals (Portuguese) most false, who affirmed that it is the most dangerous cape in the world, never without intolerable storms and present danger to travellers which come near the same." He put into Sierra Leone, and stayed there two days taking in water and procuring oysters and fruit. He arrived at Plymouth on the 26th of September 1580, after an absence of two years, ten months, and some odd days, during which he had circumnavigated the globe, and spent many months on the almost unknown south-western coasts of America. Of his five ships he had brought back with him only one; but Captain John Winter, who had deserted him, had arrived with his vessel long before, causing it to be believed by the good people of Plymouth that Drake had perished at sea or in some heavy fight with the Spaniards. Of the adventurers who had quitted Plymouth with him, many besides Doughtie had found a grave on the solitary shore or in the deep sea; but such as returned with him spoke favourably of the attention he had bestowed upon their health and comfort. On first getting within the tropical regions he had bled all the people with his own hand. Francis Fletcher the chaplain much applauds "the great experience of our general, who had often himself proved the force of the burning zone, and whose advice always prevailed much to the preserving of a moderate temper in our constitutions."

The Devonshire circumnavigator and hero was received with transports of joy by the people of Plymouth. The day of his arrival was spent in feasting and rejoicing, with bell-ringing from morning till night. The very next day he made a happy pilgrimage to the poor cottage near Tavistock, in which he was born, and in which his father had suffered religious persecution as well as poverty. Drake was now rich—his ship was filled with gold, silver, silk, pearls, and precious stones. "The news," says honest Stow, "of this his great wealth so far fetched was miraculous strange, and of all men held impossible and incredible; but both proving true, it fortuneed that many misliked it and reproached him: besides all this there were others that devised and divulged all possible disgraces against Drake and his followers, deeming him the master-thief of the unknown world; yet nevertheless, the people generally, with exceeding admiration, applauded his

wonderful long adventures and rich prize."

After letting a few months pass that appearances might be preserved, and that her people might have time to declare their own feelings and opinions, and make them known to the world, the queen summoned the circumnavigator to London. Drake was most graciously received at court, and Elizabeth now asserted more firmly her right of navigating the ocean in all its parts, and denied the exclusive right which the Spaniards claimed over the seas and lands of the new world. From this time she herself aspired to

"The large command of waters and of isles."^[30]

And though the queen yielded so far as to pay a considerable sum out of the treasure Drake had brought home to the procurator of certain foreign merchants who urged (and not without reason) that they had been unjustly robbed, enough was left to make it a profitable adventure for the privateers. At her orders Drake's ship was drawn up in a little creek near Deptford, there to be preserved as a monument of the most memorable voyage that the English had ever yet performed. On the 4th of April 1581, "Her Majesty dining at Deptford, after dinner entered the ship which Captain Drake had so happily guided round about the world, and being there, a bridge which her Majesty had passed over, brake, being upon the same more than two hundred persons, and no man hurt by the fall; and there she did make Captain Drake Knight, in the same ship, for reward of his services. The arms given him were a ship on the world."^[31] For many a year Sir Francis Drake's ship at Deptford was an object of curiosity and admiration. It became the great resort of holiday people, the cabin being converted into a sort of tavern well furnished with "full cups and banquets."^[32] When the rot had consumed her, some of the sound wood was converted into a chair, which was presented to the university of Oxford, with a short copy of verses written by Cowley. None of these ten lines are very good, nor can we much admire the point of the concluding four:—

"Drake and his ship could not have wish'd from fate
An happier station or more blessed estate.
For lo! a seat of endless rest is given—
To her in Oxford, and to him in Heaven."

The circumnavigator had brought back with him, from St. Augustine's, in Florida, a Spaniard named Pedro Morales, and a Frenchman named Nicholas Bourguignon; and from these two individuals, who had been six years in the country, Hakluyt obtained in 1586 some information "touching the state of those parts." Their account was well calculated to send more adventurous Englishmen into Spanish America.

During part of the year 1585, and the whole of 1586, Sir Francis Drake was actively and profitably employed against Philip II. on the coasts of Spain and Portugal, in the Canaries, the Cape de Verdes, the West India islands, and on the coast of South America, where Carthagena and other towns were taken and plundered. These operations bear a close family resemblance to those of Morgan, Mansvelt, Peche, Lasound, and the other "brethren of the coast," or buccaneers, who so plundered the Spanish main in the following century. The booty which was brought home, or which was reported to government by Drake, must have been considered but as a poor compensation for the toils that were endured and the losses that were sustained. It was valued only at 60,000*l.*, over and above 200 pieces of brass and 40 pieces of iron cannon. This had cost the lives of about 750 men, who, for the most part, died of calenture. The poor soldiers and sailors got only 20,000*l.* to divide among them. In the course of this expedition Drake visited the English colony in Virginia, which had been recently planted by Sir Walter Raleigh, and finding the colonists in extreme distress, he took them on board and brought them home with him. It is said that tobacco was first brought into England by the men who returned from Virginia with Drake. The name of the weed was obtained from the island on which it was first found growing—Tobago. "These men who were thus brought back," says Camden, "were the first that I know of, that brought into England that Indian plant which they call Tabacca and Nicotia, or Tobacco, which they used against crudities, being taught it by the Indians. Certainly from that time forward it began to grow into great request, and to be sold at an high rate, which, in a short time, many men everywhere, some for wantonness, some for health's sake, with insatiable desire and greediness, sucked in the stinking smoke thereof through an earthen pipe, which presently they blew out again at their nostrils: insomuch that tobacco-shops are now as ordinary in most towns as tap-houses and taverns."

In 1587, when formidable preparations were making in the ports of Spain and Portugal for the grand Armada and the invasion of England, Elizabeth appointed Drake to the command of a fleet equipped for the purpose of destroying the enemy's ships in their own harbours. This force did not exceed thirty sail, and only four were of the navy royal; the rest,

with the exception of two yachts belonging to the queen, being furnished by merchant-adventurers. Drake sailed from Plymouth on the 2nd of April. On the 16th of that month he fell in with two ships of Middleburgh, which had come from Cadiz, and by the captains of which he was informed that there was great store of warlike provision at Cadiz, where the Spaniards were busily employed in shipping it for Lisbon, the grand depôt for the Armada. On the 19th of April, between night and morning, "the dragon Drake," whose very name now spread terror, dashed into Cadiz Bay. Besides galleys there were sixty ships, and many vessels of inferior size, all protected by land-batteries. When over against Cadiz town he was smartly assailed by five galleys; but he soon drove them under the guns of the castle. A great Ragusan ship of 1000 tons, richly laden, and furnished with forty pieces of brass, was presently sunk. "There came," says one of the sailors engaged, "two galleys more from St. Mary's port and two from Port Real, which shot freely at us, but altogether in vain; for they went away with our blows, well beaten for their pains."^[33] Drake burned, sunk, or took from thirty-five to forty ships, some of which were of the largest size, and it appears he might have done much more mischief but for the necessity he was under of securing as much booty, in goods, as he could, for the benefit of the merchant-adventurers, who had lent their ships, and provided crews and equipments in the hope of some profitable return. These goods were removed by the English sailors from the captured ships, close under a tremendous fire of land-batteries. The mariner from whom we have already quoted says, "We found little ease during our abode here, by reason of their continual shooting from the galleys, the fortresses, and from the shore; where continually, at places convenient, they planted new ordnance to offend us with: besides the inconvenience which we suffered from their ships, which, when they could defend no longer, they set on fire to come among us. Whereupon, when the flood of tide came we were not a little troubled to defend us from their terrible fire, which, nevertheless was a pleasant sight for us to behold, because we were thereby eased of a great labour, which lay upon us day and night, in discharging the victuals and other provisions of the enemy. Thus, to the great astonishment of the King of Spain, this strange and happy enterprise was achieved in one day and two nights; which bred such a corrosion in the heart of the Marquis of Santa Cruz, high admiral of Spain, that he never enjoyed a good day after, but within few months (as may justly be supposed) died of extreme grief and sorrow..... And so, having performed this notable service, we came out of the road of Cadiz on Friday morning, the 21st of the said month of April, with very small loss not worth the mentioning."^[34] They carried away four large Spanish ships laden with provisions; and the stores and other goods they otherwise obtained must have been immense. "Thus," says our sailor, "being victualled with bread and wine at the enemy's cost, for divers months, our general despatched Captain Crosse into England with his letters.... After whose departure we shaped our course towards Cape Sacre, taking sundry ships, destroying fishing-boats, and the profitable fisheries, but dealing favourably with the men and sending them ashore."^[35] It appears that between Cadiz and Cape St. Vincent nearly 100 vessels of all sorts were taken or burned, and that four castles or forts were destroyed on shore; the English occasionally landed and attacked the fortifications—"the better to enjoy the benefit of the place, and to ride in harbour at their pleasure." Drake, who was a humourist, called this "singeing the King of Spain's beard." "And thence," continues our sailor, "we came before the haven of Lisbon, anchoring near unto Cascaes, where the Marquis Santa Cruz was with his galleys, who, seeing us chase his ships ashore, and take and carry away his barks and caravels, was content to suffer us there quietly to tarry, and likewise to depart, and never charged us with one cannon-shot. And when our general sent him word that he was ready to exchange certain bullets with him, the marquis refused his challenge, sending him word that he was not then ready for him, nor had any such commission from his king."^[36]

"So there being nothing more to be done or gotten in this quarter, away we go for the Azores." Within twenty or thirty leagues of St. Michael they fell in with the huge Portuguese galleon or carrack, called the 'St. Philip.' "This carrack, without any great resistance, we took, bestowing the people thereof in certain vessels well furnished with victuals, and sending them courteously home into their country. And this was the first carrack that ever was taken coming from the East Indies; which the Portingals took for an evil sign, because the ship bore the king's own name!.... And here by the way is to be noted that the taking of this carrack wrought two extraordinary effects in England: first, in teaching others that carracks were no such bugs but that they might be taken (as since, indeed, it hath fallen out in the taking of the Madre de Dios, and firing and sinking of others); and secondly, in acquainting the English nation more generally with the particularities of the exceeding riches and wealth of the East Indies; whereby themselves and their neighbours of Holland have been encouraged, being men as skilful in navigation, and of no less courage than the Portingals, to share with them in the East Indies, where their strength is nothing so great as heretofore hath been supposed."^[37] According to our hearty sailor, another conviction, derived from Drake's experience of galley-fighting, was this—"That four English men-of-war would always be a match for twenty Spanish galleys." Before the summer was over Drake returned triumphantly to Plymouth with a whole fleet and an amazingly rich booty. He generously spent a considerable part of his own prize-money in supplying the town of Plymouth with good fresh water, for hitherto there was none, except what the

inhabitants fetched from a place a mile distant. The head of the spring, from which it was now to be brought, was between seven and eight miles distant in a direct line; but by indentings and circlings it was to be conveyed twenty-four miles, through valleys, wastes, and bogs, and through a mighty rock, thought to be impenetrable. But Drake gave his money freely, and animated the engineers and workmen with some of his own resolute and persevering spirit. The work was soon finished; and the first flowing of the blessed stream into the town of Plymouth (which it has ever since supplied) was celebrated with a procession and festival at which the hero was present. "Perhaps," says Southey, "the day of that peaceful triumph was the happiest of Drake's public life." He also erected at his own expense various mills on the stream for the use of the town, vesting the property in the mayor and commonalty, and their successors for ever.

Whether his "singeing" did or did not cause the death of the Marquis of Santa Cruz, who was reputed the best naval commander of Spain, and whose loss is said to have been fatally felt in the management of the grand Armada, it is quite certain that his operations delayed the sailing of that armament more than a year, and gave Elizabeth that time to prepare for her defence.

Drake's next service at sea was as vice-admiral in the fleet under Charles Lord Howard of Effingham, lord-high-admiral of England, which, with the assistance of the elements, and the many blunders committed by the Spaniards, scattered and destroyed the "Invincible Armada." The admirable seamanship of Drake, Hawkins, and Frobisher, contributed largely to the happy result. On the last day of July, when the fighting in the channel was over, and the shattered Spaniards in full retreat, "Drake wrote to Secretary Walsingham—"There never was anything pleased me better than the seeing the enemy flying with a southerly wind to the northward. We have the Spaniards before us, and mind, with the grace of God, to wrestle another pull with them!..... With the grace of God, if we live, I doubt it not but ere it be long so to handle the matter with the Duke of Sidonia, as he shall wish himself at Saint Mary's port among his vine-trees." If Drake's advice had been taken, and if the English ships had been properly provided with ammunition, instead of being obliged to wait in order to receive it from shore, it is probable that neither the Duke of Sidonia nor any other officer of the Armada would have got back to Spain to relate the frightful discomfiture they had sustained.

In the following year (1589) Drake was employed as admiral in an expedition sent to Portugal, in the hope of expelling the Spaniards, who had taken possession of that kingdom, by establishing the claims of Antonio, a pretender, around whom the English expected the Portuguese would rally. The pretender Antonio also expected assistance from Muley Hamet, king or emperor of Morocco; and the Dutch furnished some ships and companies of soldiers. The whole expedition was badly planned, most miserably supplied with money and the other means of war, and but lamely executed after the landing of the troops. It was also disgraced by cruelties unusual even in that age, and inexcusable, notwithstanding the provocation which the English had so recently received on their own shores. Southey, with proper feeling, stigmatizes the barbarities committed. Mr. Barrow only praises the ability and bravery displayed by the English. The expedition had cost England the loss of six thousand men.

In 1595 Drake and Sir John Hawkins, "who had good experience in these parts," represented to Elizabeth that the best place for striking a blow at the gigantic power of Spain was in the West Indies. An armament was therefore prepared, and Drake was associated in the command with old Hawkins, to whom more than a quarter of a century before he had given cause for such serious discontent. They sailed together with six of the queen's ships and twenty-one other ships and barks, on board of which was embarked a land force under the orders of Sir Thomas Baskerville and Sir Nicholas Clifford. According to Hakluyt the whole expedition numbered 2500 men and boys. There were too many in command, and the usual bad consequences ensued. Nothing is so bad in war as councils of war. After losing time and temper in debate they were obliged to give up an attempt on the Canaries with some loss. When they got among the West India Islands Drake and Hawkins not only quarrelled but separated for some time, and before reaching the east end of Puerto Rico old Hawkins died, his death being generally attributed to the agitation of his mind. One of Drake's smallest vessels was captured by the Spaniards, who, by putting the crew of it to the torture, extracted information respecting the plans of the expedition. When Drake attacked the town of San Juan de Puerto Rico he found that place fully warned and prepared, as were all other places in that neighbourhood. One great Spanish shot struck the admiral's ship through the mizen, another striking through her quarter into the steerage where the general was sitting at supper, drove his stool from under him, but hurt him not; but it wounded Sir Nicholas Clifford, Master Browne, Captain Stratford, with one or two more who were sitting at the same table. Sir Nicholas and Browne died of their hurts. In the end Drake was driven from San Juan with a loss of about 100 men in killed and wounded. Sailing away he took and burned Rio de la Hacha, Rancheria, Santa Martha, and Nombre de Dios; getting no greater spoil than twenty tons of silver and two bars of gold. Drake remained in the harbour of Nombre de Dios, a most unhealthy place, while Sir Thomas Baskerville, with a part of the

land forces, made a vain and ruinous attempt to cross the isthmus of Darien, in order to plunder and destroy the city of Panama and some other places on the Pacific. Baskerville's force consisted of 750 soldiers. They found that the Spaniards were on the alert, and that a new fort had been erected for defending a narrow pass through which they must go. They were also told that there were two more forts beyond this one. "They had so much of this breakfast," says Fuller, "that they thought they should surfeit with a dinner and supper of the same."^[38] Accordingly they returned towards Nombre de Dios sorely harassed and half starved. Baskerville lost in this expedition eighty or ninety men and officers. In the year 1680 the English Buccaneers under Coxon, Sawkins, and Peter Harris (though scarcely more than 300 strong), traversed the isthmus and plundered and took or burned all the shipping in Panama harbour; but they were assisted by 300 Mosquito Indians, and the secret of their coming was not known to the Spaniards.

A fatal disease now broke out among soldiers and sailors in the fleet, and soon deprived them of the important services of their chief surgeon. When many of his men and three of his captains had died, the hardy Drake himself fell sick, and after struggling some twenty days with his malady, and the grief occasioned by his failures, he expired at an early hour of the morning of the 28th of January, 1596. On the same day the fleet anchored in Puerto Bello, and, in sight of that place by the capture and plunder of which he had first established his great reputation, his body received a sailor's funeral.

"The waves became his winding-sheet,
The waters were his tomb;
But for his fame, the ocean sea
Was not sufficient room."

So sang one of his admiring contemporaries.^[39] Sir Thomas Baskerville took the command of the fleet, and immediately led it back for England. Sixty Spanish ships were at sea to intercept him. He fell in with twenty sail of them off Cuba, but he fought his way gallantly through, causing the destruction of a great Spanish ship; and he arrived at Plymouth early in May 1596, though with very little booty.

According to Stow's dates Drake was fifty-five years old when he died; but the question of his age cannot be settled, as it is not known when he was born.

During a part of his life Sir Francis was an active member of the Lower House. He twice represented Bossiney or Tintagal, in Cornwall. In the parliament of 1592-3 he sat for Plymouth, and his name appeared upon most of the committees. He recommended energetic and extensive measures both by sea and land, and spoke for a grant of three subsidies to the queen to enable her to prosecute the war with Spain. Though his reputation as a skilful seaman and a bold commander was deservedly great, still, unless we judge him by the circumstances and the moral standard of his own times, he must appear, in many of his exploits, in no other light than that of a daring and fortunate buccaneer. "He was more skilful," says Stow, "in all points of navigation than any that ever was before his time, in his time, or since his death. He was also of a perfect memory, great observation, eloquent by nature, skilful in artillery, expert and apt to let blood, and give physic unto his people according to the climate. He was low of stature, of strong limbs, broad-breasted, round-headed, brown-haired, full bearded, his eyes round, large, and clear, well-favoured, fair, and of a cheerful countenance. His name was a terror to the French, Spaniards, Portingals, and Indians. Many princes of Italy, Germany, and others, as well enemies as friends, in his lifetime desired his picture. He was the second^[40] that ever went through the Straits of Magelhaens, and the first that ever went round about the world. He was lawfully married unto two wives, both young, yet he himself and ten of his brethren died without issue: he made his youngest brother, Thomas, his heir, who was with him in the most and chiefest of his employments. In brief, he was as famous in Europe and America as Tamerlane in Asia and Africa."^[41] Honest Stow, however, admits that the great man had his faults. He enumerates among his imperfections, that he was over-ambitious of honour, inconstant in friendship, and too greatly affected to popularity. Fuller adds to Drake's high qualities, that he was a very religious man towards God and his houses, chaste in his life, just in his dealings, true to his word, merciful to those that were under him, hating nothing so much as idleness, and seeing to all things himself, "never wont to rely on other men's care, how trusty or skilful soever they might seem to be, but always contemning danger, and refusing no trial."^[42] According to some less favourable accounts he was ostentatious, vain-glorious, and much given to boasting. Perhaps the highest compliments to his skill and indomitable courage are to be found in the characters drawn of him by his mortal enemies, who, indeed, "honoured his memory in the bitterness of their enmity towards him."^[43] At Panama two days' holidays were kept to rejoice at his death as a foe and at his damnation as a heretic. The most popular of the Spanish poets of the day composed an epic poem to revile him; and the Spaniards long excused their own humiliating defeats by representing Drake as having been a magician, and in very

close alliance with the devil.

But even in his native county of Devonshire Drake was long held to have been a magician, though one only practising in the *Magia Alba*, or white and innocent magic.

The abundant property which he left was much diminished by a prosecution instituted by the crown against his youngest brother, heir, and executor, Thomas Drake. It is said that this process rested solely upon "a pretended debt;" and this will be easily credited by those who best know the ungenerous, grasping spirit which prevailed at court, and among public men, during the last clouded years of Queen Elizabeth, and during the whole reign of James I. The estate which remained, however, placed Thomas's son Francis in such a station that he was created a baronet by James I., and returned as a member for his county.

FOOTNOTES:

Annals.

John Barrow, Esq., *Life, Voyages, and Exploits of Admiral Sir Francis Drake*, &c. London, 1843.

Southey, *Lives of the British Admirals*.

Lives of the British Admirals, &c., vol. iii. p. 100, edition of 1834.

Historia General de los Hechos de los Castellanos en las Islas y Tierra Firme del Mar Oceano.

Sloane MS., British Museum.

Drake Revived.

Id. Hakluyt gives another and very different account of this affair at Nombre de Dios, written by one Lopez Vaz, a Portuguese. According to this relation, Drake was repulsed at the town, and afterwards plundered a caravan of mules that were bringing gold and silver from Panama. It is very probable that Drake made two attacks on the town, and that he suppressed mention of the first.

Drake Revived.

The history of Sir Francis Drake, expressed by instrumental and vocal music, and by art of perspective in scenes, &c.—*Sir William Davenant's Works*.

Sloane MS.

Drake Revived.

Sloane MS.

Hakluyt.

This Earl of Essex was Walter Devereux, father of Elizabeth's last favourite, Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, beheaded and attainted in 1600. Earl Walter undertook to subdue and colonize the turbulent Irish district of Clannaboy: he went to Ireland in 1573, met with little success, was badly seconded or was thwarted by the jealous court of England, where the Earl of Leicester was then paramount; and he died at Dublin in 1576, suspecting himself that he was poisoned. Southey says that it is as certain as any such fact can be, at such a distance of time, that Essex was not poisoned. Camden does not say that he was: that great and judicious writer only says that "He was made away by the cunning practices of Leicester;" and leaving the poisoning altogether out of the question, there is pretty good evidence to show that Essex was ruined by the jealous, intriguing, and malignant favourite.

Certified copy of Fletcher's MS. in the Sloane MSS. in British Museum.

Ben Jonson—*Neptune's Triumph*.

Stow.

Eastward Hoe. This old play was the joint production of Ben Jonson, Chapman, and Marston; and, according to a well-known story, the cause of much trouble to all three.

Narrative of expedition in Hakluyt. This worthy compiler and preacher of the gospel much cultivated the acquaintance of seamen and adventurers, and obtained from them many professional and most spirited accounts of the expeditions in which they were engaged.

Narrative in Hakluyt. This thoroughly sailor-like account of the doings in Cadiz Bay agrees closely with the relation written by Drake himself to Secretary Walsingham on the 27th of April. Drake's letter, which is in the State Paper Office, is printed at full length by Mr. Barrow in '*Life of Admiral Sir Francis Drake*,' &c.

Id.

Hakluyt.

Hakluyt.

Worthies.

Prince, 'Worthies of Devon.' This quaint and amusing writer gives other laudatory verses. The following were written in lieu of an epitaph:—

"Where Drake first found there last he lost his name,
And for a tomb left nothing but his fame.
His body's buried under some great wave;
The sea, that was his glory, is his grave.
On whom an epitaph none can truly make,
For who can say, *Here* lies Sir Francis Drake?"

This is a mistake. Drake was the third, and not the second navigator that went through that difficult strait. It was discovered by Fernando Magelhaens in 1520. In 1558-9 Juan Ladrilleros went through the strait; and Drake, apparently without any knowledge of his track, followed it twenty years afterwards.

Chronicle.

Holy State.

Southey.



LORD BURGHLEY

The life of Lord Burghley, if it were to be written with all the fulness of which the subject admits, would be the history of England, and in some measure of Europe, for the latter half of the sixteenth century. Even the materials that exist in print would, if they were collected, fill many large volumes. They have enabled Dr. Nares, Lord Burghley's biographer of the greatest pretension, to extend his narrative to three ponderous quartos.

In the space to which we are limited we must confine ourselves, as far as possible, to the man himself, to the incidents and circumstances of his career that are most of a personal nature and that most mark and illustrate his character. Of matter of this description there is also no scarcity. In particular, much that is very curious and interesting has been supplied by a person of Lord Burghley's establishment, "one who lived in the house with him during the last twenty-five years of his life," in a sketch which he has himself entitled 'The Complete Statesman,' but which is commonly referred to as the *Diary of a Domestic*. It was first published by Peck in the first volume of his *Desiderata Curiosa*, 4to. Lond. 1732, and again 1779; and we shall use his edition as the most convenient. Burghley's own letters, many of which have been published in the Forbes, Haynes, Murdin, and other collections, will also supply us with some particulars for our purpose.

William Cecil, afterwards ennobled by the title of Lord Burghley, was the descendant of a family which appears to have been originally English or Norman, but which had been seated in Wales, and possessed of lands in the principality and the neighbouring counties of Hereford and Gloucester, ever since the reign of William Rufus. The name in the oldest form that is recorded was Sitsilt, whence it was worn down in the popular speech, and in the spelling which accommodated itself to that, into the successive shapes of Sicelt, Seycil, Cycyl, till at last the process of curtailment or alteration was arrested about the beginning of the reign of Henry VIII., and the pronunciation and orthography settled in the form Cecil. This deduction sufficiently demolishes the fancy of Verstegan, the antiquary, in his 'Restoration of Decayed Intelligence,' that the Cecils were a branch of the old Roman Cecillii, who had settled in Britain when this island was a colony of the empire. Lord Burghley's father was Richard Cecil, Esq., master, or rather first yeoman, of the robes to King Henry VIII.; his mother was Jane, daughter and heiress of William Hickington, of Bourne, in Lincolnshire, and it was through her that the manor of Burghley came into the family. William, their only son, was born at Bourne, or Burn, probably in the house of his maternal grandfather, after whom he appears to have been named, on the 13th of September, 1520, as the date is given in a *Diary* in his own handwriting (his *Domestic* says 1521). At this time Henry VIII. had sat only twelve years on the throne, Wolsey was in the height of his greatness, and the authority of the Roman pontiff was still entire in England, nor yet formally renounced in any part of western Christendom; the Diet of Worms, whose proceedings made the breach between Luther and the Church irreparable, was held in 1521; and the same year King Henry published his book against that reformer, which procured him from the pope his title of Defender of the Faith.

Cecil, therefore, was born and bred a Roman Catholic, in the religion of his father and mother, and of every body else of that day. The yeoman of the robes, we may here mention, who retained his office through Henry's reign, and was continued in it under Edward VI., died in 1552; his widow survived till the year 1587, when she died at the age of four-score and seven, after having seen her son raised to the highest honours of the state—an instance to be added to those three memorable ones of Mrs. Scott, Mrs. Copley, and Mrs. Brougham, in our own day. Besides this only son, she bore her husband three daughters: Margaret, who married first Roger Cave, of Stamford, Esq., and after his death Ambrose Smith, of Bosworth, Esq.; Elizabeth, married first to Robert Wingfield, of Upton, Esq., secondly to Hugh Allington, Esq.; and Anne, who became the wife of Thomas Whyte, of Tucksford, Esq.

Cecil, after having been put to school first at Grantham and afterwards at Stamford, was in 1535 sent to Cambridge, and entered of St. John's College. At the university, we are told by his *Domestic*, his diligence was so great that he hired the bell-ringer to call him up at four o'clock every morning; till at last, with early rising and late watching and continual sitting, he brought a flow of humours into his legs, which was with difficulty cured, and was supposed to be one of the original causes of the gout that used to attack him in after years. At the unusually early age of seventeen he read what was called the Sophistry lecture, and before he was twenty the Greek lecture, although that language was not yet generally studied at Cambridge. And "his diligent study," adds this admiring chronicler, "was also such, as, besides his exquisite knowledge in the Greek, he was not meanly seen in all other manner of learning; able, likewise, judicially and learnedly, to maintain an argument with the best learned of treble his standings, in any manner of learning or science, with extraordinary applause of his audience; no less admiring his great learning for so little time than the excellency of his wit

and temper of speech. So that he was then as famous for a scholar in Cambridge as he was afterwards all over Europe for a grave and great counsellor."

Having remained at the university till he took his degree of Master of Arts, in May 1541 he entered himself of Gray's Inn, and removed to London. A story told by the Domestic in this part of his narrative is characteristic both of the man and of the time. At Gray's Inn "he profited," says his historian, "as before at Cambridge; but, as his years and company required, he would many times be merry among young gentlemen, who were most desirous of his company for his witty mirth and merry temper. Among the rest, I heard him tell this merriment of himself. That a mad companion of his, whilst he was thus at Gray's Inn, enticed him to play; whereupon in a short time he lost all his money, bedding, and books to his companion, having never used play before. And, being afterwards among his other company, he told them how such a one had misled him, saying he would presently have a device to be even with him. And he was as good as his word; for with a long trunk [or tube] he made a hole in the wall near his play-fellow's bed's head, and in a fearful voice spake thus through the trunk:—'O, mortal man, repent! repent of thy horrible time consumed in play, cozenage, and such lewdness as thou hast committed, or else thou art damned and canst not be saved!' Which being spoken at midnight, when he was all alone, so amazed him as drove him into a sweat for fear. Most penitent and heavy, the next day, in presence of the youths, he told with trembling what a fearful voice spake to him at midnight, vowing never to play again; and, calling for Mr. Cecil, asked him forgiveness on his knees, and restored all his money, bedding, and books. So two gamesters were both reclaimed with this merry device, and never played more." "The boy is father of the man," and this stratagem of the hole in the wall of his fellow student's chamber in Gray's Inn may be compared with sundry equally ingenious and successful devices employed by the great statesman of after years, or imputed to him, for turning the tables upon his opponents; it may in particular remind some readers of the letters of Mary Stuart to Babington, which are said to have been found in a hole in the wall of the castle of Chartley, in the year 1586, and out of which was extracted the principal evidence by means of which she was got rid of, and the kingdom released from constant fear and disquiet, the year following. And the difference between that simple-minded time and our own may be felt if we will ask ourselves what chance a man would now have of getting back the money he had lost at play from a student of Gray's Inn by the plan Lord Burghley took.

It is a remarkable circumstance in the history of a person who was all his life so prudent and considerate, and so little apt to act from impulse or with any kind of precipitation or impatience, and who, besides, from the above anecdote, appears to have been as yet so much of a boy in some respects, and so imperfectly able to take care of himself, that he should have been in such a hurry to take a wife. According to his own Diary, he came up to Gray's Inn on the 6th of May, being then twenty-one years old; and on the 8th of August thereafter, he was married at Cambridge to Mary, the sister of Mr. (afterwards Sir John) Cheke. It is like the similar solitary exception in the late Lord Eldon's life to his habitual caution and deliberation. It is not recorded, however, that Lord Burghley's was a love match, and the connexion was perhaps thought to be one likely to promote his success in the world. The lady, however, having borne him a son on the 6th of May, 1542, died on the 22nd of February in the year following.

Whether it had really been intended by his father that the young man should follow the profession of the law, does not appear; but, at any rate, before he had been called to the bar, one of those accidents which he always knew so well how to turn to account, opened to him a surer way to fortune and eminence. One day, towards the close of the reign of Henry VIII., he had come to the court to see his father, when he chanced, as he stood in the presence-chamber, to fall into talk with two priests, chaplains to the Irish chieftain O'Neil, who was then at court. Cecil had by this time adopted the new views of religion, at least to the extent to which they were countenanced by the royal authority, and he and the priests soon got upon one or more of the points on which their notions were altogether opposed to his. The dispute was carried on in the Latin language, and was conducted on Cecil's part with so much both of learning and wit, that he soon, in the words of the Domestic, "proved the poor priests to have neither, who were so put down that they had not a word to say, but flung away in a chafe, no less discontented than ashamed to be foiled in such a place by so young a beardless youth." A report of their discomfiture was presently carried to the king, who thereupon commanded young Cecil to be brought to him. The result of the interview was that Henry desired the chief yeoman of the robes to think of a suit for his son; upon which he asked for the reversion of the office of *Custos Brevium* in the Court of Common Pleas. This his majesty at once granted, and Cecil appears to have come into possession of the place about the beginning of the reign of Edward VI. It brought him about 240*l.* a year, then a very considerable income. Before this he had taken to himself a second wife, Mildred, the eldest of the four famous learned daughters of Sir Anthony Cooke. He married her on the 21st of December, 1545; he being then in his twenty-fifth, she in her twenty-second year.

It is said to have been through Sir John Cheke that he was first made known to the Earl of Hertford, before the death of

Henry VIII. When the earl, after the accession of his nephew, became Duke of Somerset and Protector, he set up a new office, that of Master of Requests, and gave it to Cecil: the duty attached to it was to receive the numerous suits which were addressed to the duke. And this same year, 1547, according to his Domestic, "he went with the duke to Musselburgh field, where he was like to have been slain, but was miraculously saved by one that, putting forth his arm to thrust Mr. Cecil out of the level of the cannon, had his arm stricken off." It is rather strange, however, that he should make no mention of this escape in his own Diary, in which, indeed, he does not even state that he was present at the battle of Musselburgh, or Pinkie: that battle was fought on the 10th of September, and all that he says is, that he was in Scotland in the summer of this year. Yet other notices speak of him as having accompanied the army, and having been joined in the office of judge-marshal with William Patten, who published the next year an account of the expedition, for which Walpole, in his 'Royal and Noble Authors,' says Cecil furnished materials. "It is on this account, I suppose," adds Walpole, "that his lordship is reckoned by Holingshed among the English historians."

In September of the next year, 1548, we find him noting in his Diary that he was appointed to the office of secretary; and it has been supposed by some that he was at this time made secretary of state. But it seems more probable that his office was that of private secretary to the Protector. When Somerset was for the first time sent to the Tower, in October, 1549, Cecil was also taken into custody; he has himself noted that he was in the Tower in the month of November of this year; and his Domestic says that he remained there three months. He was probably let out when Somerset himself was set at liberty in the beginning of February, 1550. The late Protector gradually regained some measure of his former influence; and the Domestic affirms that it was he who, "perceiving the king's great liking of Mr. Cecil," now preferred him to be secretary of state. He probably used his interest to get him the place—to which he was appointed on the 6th of September, on the resignation of Mr. Wotton. At this time there appear to have been two principal secretaries of state. He was probably at the same time sworn of the privy council. This same year, moreover, he obtained a grant of the reversion for sixty years of the rectory of Wimbledon, in Surrey (according to a practice which prevailed both in England and Scotland, in the infancy of the Protestant church, of giving such ecclesiastical preferments to laymen); and he soon after went to reside on the living, for we find him noting in his Diary that in May, 1551, he was ill of a fever there to the danger of his life.

His ability and assiduity were now sure to make him of more consequence every day. Wherever head-work was wanted he was the man to do it. When the Lady Mary (afterwards queen) was waited upon at Copthall, in Essex, in August, 1551, by a deputation from the council, who brought her what professed to be a letter from her brother, requiring her to introduce the new church-service in her family, she received the letter, Burnet tells us, from the hands of the Lord Chancellor on her knees, saying, however, that she paid that respect to the king's hand, and not to the matter of the letter, which she knew proceeded from the council; and when she had read it, she said, "Ah! Mr. Cecil took much pains here." Cecil's Protestantism, now mature and complete, as well as unrestrained in its expression, must have helped much to establish him in the favour of King Edward.

From his original patron, Somerset, in his changed fortunes and dubious position, he appears to have kept much aloof. Under date of 14th October, 1551, we find the following entry in the king's journal: "The duke sent for the secretary, Cecil, to tell him he suspected some ill. Mr. Cecil answered, That if he were not guilty he might be of good courage; if he were, he had nothing to say but to lament him." On the afternoon of the next day the ex-Protector was arrested and once more committed to the Tower; on the 1st of December he was brought to trial in Westminster Hall, and condemned to die; and on the 22nd of January, 1552, as his royal nephew has set it down, he "had his head struck off upon Tower Hill, between eight and nine o'clock in the morning." On the 11th of October, 1551, four days before he had had the interview above-mentioned with Somerset, most probably the last time they ever met in private, Cecil had been knighted along with Cheke, at the same time that the Earl of Warwick, Somerset's successful rival, and now the all-powerful head of the government, was raised to the dignity of Duke of Northumberland, and others of his creatures had various titular honours conferred upon them. The Domestic writes: "During all their power in that reign the two Dukes of Northumberland and Somerset strived each to win the secretary sure to him, both using him exceeding kindly and tempting him with great offers and gifts. He showed duty to both, but would take gifts of neither; and so, though with difficulty, he carried himself even to both all King Edward's time." On the 12th of April, 1553, he was made chancellor of the order of the Garter. At this time he must have been living in considerable state, if we may judge from an entry in his Diary recording a payment to an embroiderer for no fewer than thirty-six scutcheons for his servants' coats. They cost him two shillings a-piece. "It was the custom then, it seems," Peck remarks, "for all servants and retainers of any great man to wear badges, generally representing his crest or device, which badges were wrought some on satin, some on velvet, and some on cloth of silver and gold itself, according to the rank of the servants, or the quality of any other

retainers, who were to wear them."

Although, however, he kept on terms with Northumberland so long as it seemed safe to go along with him, Cecil was too cautious a man to engage with any zeal, or involve himself farther than he could not help doing, in the last all-or-nothing scheme of that daring political gambler. In the perilous time of the king's last sickness, in the early part of the month of June, 1553, when Northumberland was extorting from the dying boy the bequest of the crown to his son's wife, the Lady Jane Grey, Cecil fell opportunely sick, and left the task of writing down the royal instructions to one of his fellow-secretaries, Petre (there were now three); nor would he afterwards, as he himself asserts, even at Edward's earnest request, do more than append his name to the instrument as a witness to the king's signature. Nevertheless, it appears, from a paper which Burnet has published in his Supplementary Collection of Records, that he was afterwards prevailed upon to subscribe along with the rest of the council another paper, headed with the royal signature, in which they all declared that, having many times heard the king's earnest desire and express commandment touching the limitation of the succession, and "having seen his majesty's own device touching the said succession, first wholly written with his most gracious hand, and after copied out in his majesty's presence, by his most high commandment, and confirmed with the subscription of his majesty's own hand, and by his highness delivered to certain judges, and other learned men, to be written in full order," they, by his Majesty's special and absolute commandment, promised, by their oaths and honours, fully to observe, conform, and keep "all and every article, clause, branch, and matter contained in the said writing delivered to the judges and others, and superscribed with his majesty's hand in six several places; and all such other matter as his majesty, by his last will, shall approve, declare, or command touching or concerning the limitation of the succession." Further, they promised, again by his majesty's commandment, never to vary or swerve during their lives from the said limitation; but the same always to the uttermost of their powers to defend and maintain. "And," concluded the paper, "if any of us, or any other, shall at any time hereafter (which God forbid) vary from this agreement, or any part thereof, we, and every of us, do assent to take, use, and repute him for a breaker of the common concord, peace, and unity of this realm, and to do our uttermost to see him, or them, so varying or swerving, punished with most sharp punishments, according to their deserts." Edward's death took place at Greenwich on the evening of the 6th of July; and the next day we find Cecil congratulating himself in his Diary with much apparent cordiality on his escape from office: "Libertatem adeptus sum, morte regis; et, ex misero aulico, factus sum liber, et mei juris" (I have obtained my liberty by the death of the king; and, from a miserable functionary of the court; am become a freeman, and my own master). As is customary, however, he continued to perform the duties of his place till there should be a new appointment; and his name was attached with those of the other members of the council (twenty-one in all) to the answer despatched to Mary on the 9th informing her that Queen Jane was now their sovereign, according to the ancient laws of the land and the late king's letters patent, and requiring her to abandon her pretensions and not to disturb the government. But he excused himself from drawing up the order for proclaiming Queen Jane, on the plea that that duty belonged to the law officers; and, as soon as Northumberland, who kept them all in a sort of imprisonment in the Tower, was got rid of by being persuaded to go and place himself at the head of the military force by which Mary was to be met, he seized the opportunity of withdrawing. He does not appear to have been present at the meeting of the majority of his colleagues at Baynard's Castle on the 19th, when it was resolved to proclaim Queen Mary; nor did he instantly take his course; but, the Earl of Arundel and Lord Paget having gone off to Mary that night, he followed them the next day. He was, we are told, very graciously received, notwithstanding all that had passed.

His Domestic says, "When Queen Mary came in, she granted Sir William Cecil a general pardon. And, in choosing her counsellors, she had also so good liking of him, as, if he would change his religion, he should be her secretary and counsellor. And, to that purpose, some wise men were underhand set to allure him and discover his disposition. But, like himself, he wisely and christianly answered, he was taught and bound to serve God first, and next the queen; and, if her service should put him out of God's service, he hoped her majesty would give him leave to choose an everlasting rather than a momentary service. And, as for the queen, she had been his so gracious lady, as he would ever serve, and pray for her in his heart, and with his body and goods be as ready to serve in her defence as any of her most loyal subjects, so she would please to grant him leave to use his conscience to himself, and serve her at large as a private man, rather than to be her greatest counsellor. Here was no turn-coat, nor seller of his soul, nor renouncer of his faith, for ambition of a counsellor's place, as many would do upon so fair an offer. But, where the foundation is surely laid, the house is hardly [with difficulty] shaken. And, God laying the first stone, the building must needs prosper. As was verified in him; to whom God gave the fruits of his faith, and the reward of a good steward." Cecil probably had no desire for office at this particular time; and he might consider himself very well off with his general pardon for the present; but the fact is that, like many other persons who had been very good Protestants during all the preceding reign (Elizabeth herself among the number), he did now conform to the re-established Roman faith. Dr. Nares has printed a record, in the handwriting of

William Haddon his steward, preserved in the State Paper Office, attesting that during the reign of Mary he kept a priest in his house at Wimbledon, and that himself, his wife, and his eldest son all both confessed and went to mass.

The Domestic himself informs us that, although he was not continued in his secretaryship, he enjoyed great favour with the queen, and was sent by her in the second year of her reign to Brussels, along with Lord Paget, to bring back Cardinal Pole, who had recently been appointed legate by the pope, and whose attainder had just been repealed by parliament. From Cecil's own Diary it appears that they set out upon this mission on the 6th of November, 1554; that they reached Brussels on the 11th; and that they returned to Westminster with the cardinal on the 23rd. But he was also sent again beyond seas the next year, with the cardinal, the Lord Chancellor (Gardiner), the Earl of Arundel, and Lord Paget, all devoted Roman Catholics, to endeavour to negotiate a peace with the emperor and the French king. They sailed for Calais on the 18th of May; on the 3rd of June they proceeded thence to a village called Mark, between Gravelines and Ardres, where the conferences were held, which, notwithstanding Pole's best exertions, ended in nothing, and they got back to England on the 26th of June.

After his return home from this mission, Cecil was elected one of the knights of the shire for the county of Lincoln, and he took his place in the House of Commons which met on the 21st of October. He says himself that he was returned to parliament against his will, and that the post was one of some danger; nevertheless, he adds, he spoke his mind freely, although he thereby incurred some displeasure; but it was better to obey God than man. Burnet's account is, that the temper of parliament was now much changed from what it had been in the beginning of the reign; "men's minds were much alienated from the clergy, and also from the queen, who minded nothing else but to raise them to great wealth and power again;" and great heats were occasioned, first by a subsidy moved for in the Commons on the 28th of October, and afterwards by a bill brought in on the 23rd of November for suppressing the first-fruits and tenths, and giving back all impropriations that were yet in the queen's gift to the church, which was particularly committed for examination to Cecil and others, and was only carried in the end by a majority of 193 against 126. The truth is, that universal alarm had been excited by a design understood to be entertained by the court of recovering for the church all the property of every description that had been taken from it in the last two reigns, into whatever hands it might have passed. "Certain it is," says Heylin, "that many who were cordially affected to the queen's religion were very much startled at the noise of this restitution, insomuch that some of them are said to have clapped their hands upon their swords, affirming, not without some oaths, that they would never part with their abbey lands as long as they were able to wear a sword by their sides." Cecil, on this occasion, as an individual, fought, if not *pro aris*, at least *pro focis*—for his fireside, if not for his faith;—his comfortable rectory of Wimbledon was in jeopardy. No doubt, too, he discerned the signs of the times, and how fast Mary was losing ground. His Domestic relates that one day after he had made a very effective speech in opposition to the court, Sir Anthony Kingston, Sir William Courtenay, Sir John Pollard, and others, mostly west-country men, who were of the same way of thinking, came to him when the House rose, and said they would dine with him that day. "He answered, they should be welcome, so they did not speak of any matters of parliament, which they promised. Yet some began to break promise, for which he challenged them. This meeting and speech was known to the council; and all the knights and gentlemen were sent for and committed. Sir William Cecil was also sent for to my Lord Paget and Sir William Petre. When he was brought before them, he desired they would not do by him as by the rest, which he thought somewhat hard,—that was to commit them first, and to hear them after; but prayed them first to hear him, and then to commit him if he were guilty. 'You speak like a man of experience,' quoth my Lord Paget. And upon their hearing the circumstances he cleared himself, and so at once escaped both imprisonment and disgrace." Burnet only mentions that Kingston was sent to the Tower the day after the parliament was dissolved; he "had been," he says, "a main stickler in it, and had one day taken the keys of the House from the serjeant, which, it seems, was not displeasing to the major part of the House, since they did nothing upon it." He lay in the Tower from the 10th till the 23rd of December, when, having submitted and asked pardon, he was discharged. But the following year he was taken up on a charge of having carried his practical way of going to work somewhat farther than taking possession of the keys of the House of Commons; he was accused of having engaged in a design with a number of other persons to rob the exchequer. Eight of the others were tried and executed; he died on his way to London. Burnet does not affirm that they were unjustly condemned; all he says is, "What evidence was brought against them I do not know." There is no doubt about the reality of the conspiracy, most of the persons engaged in which made their escape to France. Their object was to get up an insurrection with the money; and the evidence went a great way to implicate Elizabeth herself. Among the persons executed were two of her officers, who, it was said, had made use of her name without her authority.

Very little is known of what Cecil was about in the two or three last years of the reign of Mary. In Haynes's Collection are a few short letters addressed to him in 1556 and 1557 by his father-in-law Sir Anthony Cooke, the Earl of Bedford,

and others; but scarcely anything is to be got out of them. One from Sir Thomas Cornwallis, dated Calais, 5th March, 1556, is addressed to him at Cannon Row in Westminster, and speaks of his attending in Westminster Hall, and taking part in a certain cause heard in one of the courts there—but the meaning probably is that he only gave his evidence as a witness. He was returned again for Lincolnshire to the next parliament, the last of Mary's reign, which met on the 20th of January, 1558. The second session, which commenced on the 5th of November, was abruptly terminated by the death of the queen on the 17th.

There is no doubt that for some time before this event Cecil had been Elizabeth's chief adviser. His Domestic would make it appear that he was in her confidence and service from the beginning of the reign of Mary, and that the latter overlooked that circumstance, though well aware of it; but this account is far from probable. There is no reason for supposing that he began to turn from Mary to her sister before the latter part of the year 1555 at the earliest, when the temper both of the parliament and of the nation had undergone an ominous change, and it had besides become clear that there was no chance of any issue of the reigning queen cutting out Elizabeth from the succession.

Elizabeth made him her prime minister at once. He was, his Domestic tells us, "first sworn of any counsellor she had, at Hatfield, where she lay at her first coming to the crown." He was re-appointed to his former office of principal secretary of state; and the other members of the council, or, as we should now say, of the cabinet, or the administration, are understood to have been selected by his advice. They consisted of thirteen of the ministers of the late queen, of course all Roman Catholics, and of seven other new men and Protestants, in addition to Cecil himself.

From this time to the end of his life the biography of this celebrated minister becomes identical with the history of his country. Elizabeth and he were nearly of accord upon the grand political questions of the time; with many points of difference, there were some leading respects in which they resembled each other in temper and character; and, while they had both passed through the same previous condition of things, and much in the same manner, he was just so much the older of the two as it became the man to be than the woman, and the counsellor than the queen. In particular they were very nearly of one mind and disposition in reference to what was then the question of questions even in regard to this world, the question of religion. Cecil was perhaps rather the better Protestant, but he was far from being extreme in his views any more than her majesty, and, especially at first, he would probably have been very well satisfied to set up a mixture of the two religions if the Romish party would have accepted such a compromise. As things were arranged, he took care that the new church should not depart farther from the old model than the case absolutely required. He gave no countenance to the principle that deviation should be sought after for its own sake. Whatever was merely disorganizing in the spirit of the Reformation he firmly set his face against. The system which he laboured all his life to maintain was one including only so much of Protestantism as could be adopted with safety to all the old foundations of the English social and political system. For instance, there was nothing more of democracy or republicanism in his Protestant church of England than there had been in the Romish church that preceded it. Both were equally monarchical and aristocratic both in their spirit and in their form. At any rate, such as it is, the existing church establishment is mainly his work. And so was the system generally both of domestic and foreign policy upon which the country acted throughout the reign of Elizabeth, and by which it has to a considerable extent been governed ever since. The principle of the system at least has continued to operate, whatever changes may have been brought about in the mode of its operation. That principle may be defined to be the championship of the cause of regulated freedom and temperate reform throughout Europe. In the reign of Elizabeth reform and resistance, progress and stagnation, going forward and going back, liberty and absolutism, were represented almost universally by Protestantism and Romanism: with her and her minister, accordingly, the support of Protestantism at home and abroad was everywhere the first object. It was this that directed the aid she gave to the Huguenots in France and the insurgents in Holland, the part she took in the affairs of Scotland, the course she followed in the government of Ireland. The very tenure by which she occupied the throne, indeed, was the support of Protestantism. Let her have given up that, and Mary Stuart would have been Queen of England.

One of the first matters to which Cecil directed his attention after the settlement of religion, was the reformation of the coin. The amount of what was done, however, in restoring the ancient standard, has been exaggerated in the common accounts; at least expressions are used which would convey the notion that the reform was much greater than it really was. The fact is, that, after the quantity of alloy in the silver coinage had been carried to the monstrous extent of nine ounces in the pound troy (or three-fourths of the whole compound), it had been reduced by Edward VI. in 1552 to nineteen pennyweights, or to within one pennyweight of the ancient legal quantity; and Queen Mary had only added one pennyweight more. All that was now done was to reduce the twenty pennyweights of alloy to eighteen. The debased money of preceding reigns, however, was called in; and this may be considered as having been the most important as

well as the most formidable part of Cecil's undertaking. The nominal value of the old coin received at the mint was between six and seven hundred thousand pounds, its real value being only between two and three hundred thousand. Cecil was quite alive to the connection between national prosperity and a right condition of everything relating to money and commerce. One of his maxims, we are told by his Domestic, was, that that realm cannot be rich whose coin is poor or base. But the evil really lies not so much in the absolute quantity of alloy in the coin (which, even if carried too far, would be a mere inconvenience), as in what is properly called its debasement, namely, the increase of the alloy without any corresponding diminution of the legal value. Another principle of Cecil's, it seems, was, that a realm must needs be poor that does not export more than it imports. So that he held what has been called the Mercantile, or Balance of Trade theory, now generally abandoned, though whether he carried it out to its logical conclusion of regarding gold and silver, or money, as the only true riches, does not appear. This view, however, leading him, as it would, to the promotion of domestic industry and manufactures, was not at that time calculated to do much harm. It becomes practically pernicious chiefly when it produces or is employed to defend exclusions and restrictions in favour of home manufactures either sufficiently established or not worth establishing.

In June, 1560, Cecil again visited Scotland, this time in a character no doubt more to his taste than that which he had borne on his last visit thirteen years before. He was sent down at the head of a commission to conclude a peace with the French and Scots; and the result was the Treaty of Leith, by which that town was surrendered to the Lords of the Congregation, or leaders of the Protestant party, and all the French forces were withdrawn from Scotland. This was a great triumph both for the Scottish Protestants and for the English interest; and to Cecil, who both upon principle and from disposition was emphatically a peace minister, the arrangement he had succeeded in effecting must have been peculiarly gratifying.

In the beginning of the following year, 1561, he received from his royal mistress the valuable place of master of the wards, on the death of Sir Thomas Parry. The high favour in which he stood, we are told, however, exposed him to a great deal not only of envy but of danger; plots were laid to bring about his disgrace, and attempts were even made to take his life. His unceasing toils also "caused all his friends," says his domestic historian, "to pity him, and his very servants to admire him. And myself, as an eye-witness, can testify that I never saw him half an hour idle in four and twenty years together. For, if there were cause of business, he was occupied till that was done, which commonly was not long in hand. If he had no business, which was very seldom, he was reading or collecting. If he rid abroad he heard suitors; when he came in he despatched them. When he went to bed and slept not, he was either meditating or reading. And I have heard him say, he did penetrate further into the depths of causes, and found out more resolutions of dubious points, in his bed, than when he was up. Indeed, he left himself scarce time for sleep or meals, or leisure to go to bed." This writer also celebrates the ability which he showed as a speaker, both in parliament and in the star-chamber, where the lords of the council were then accustomed to sit and administer justice. In the House of Commons, it appears, his practice was generally to speak last, and wind up the debate, when, we are told, he seemed to all who heard him far to exceed in gravity, wisdom, and eloquence all who had previously spoken, perfectly concluding all things, and clearing up whatever they had left dark or doubtful. "And yet," it is added, "which was observed as a strange thing in him, for all his long and public speeches, he was never seen to study a quarter of an hour, or to take notes, or turn books for any of his speeches. His long experience and practice made him need no helps. And it was noted, that, wheresoever he sate in the place of justice, there wanted not numbers that came only to hear him speak." Other accounts also attest the great excellence of his speaking; it was not, of course, either vehement and impassioned, or brilliant with wit and fancy; but in that sort of eloquence which addresses itself to the head rather than to the imagination or the heart—which consists in clear exposition and weighty and convincing enforcement—Cecil and Sir Nicholas Bacon (the father of the chancellor) are said to have excelled all the other orators of their time.

In February, 1571, Cecil was raised to the peerage by the title of Baron of Burghley; in June, 1572, he was made a knight of the Garter; and in September of the same year, upon the death of the Marquess of Winchester, he was promoted to the office of lord high treasurer. This change of position, however, probably, did not make him more first or leading minister than he had been from the first. Throughout all the time he continued in office every department of the public service was more or less immediately under his superintendence; he was not more occupied with the public revenue, for instance, than he was with foreign affairs. This sufficiently appears from his correspondence, large portions of which have been published.

There is a series of Burghley's letters (when he was Sir William Cecil and Secretary of State) published in the collection called *The Cabala*, which illustrates both the multifarious nature of his duties, and the character of the man,

perhaps, as strongly as any others that have been printed. They are addressed to Sir Henry Norris, the Queen's ambassador in France, and extend from February, 1567, to September, 1570. In one of the earliest, dated Westminster, 20th February, 1567, occurs the following curious paragraph:—"The queen's majesty would fain have a tailor that hath skill to make her apparel, both after the French and Italian manner; and she thinketh that you might use some mean to obtain some one such there [in France] as serveth that [the French] queen, without mentioning any manner of request in the queen's majesty's name. First, to cause my lady your wife to use some such means to get one, as thereof knowledge might not come to the queen mother's ears, of whom the queen's majesty thinketh thus, that, if she did understand that it were a matter wherein her majesty might be pleased, she would offer to send one to the queen's majesty. Nevertheless, if it cannot be so obtained by this indirect means, then her majesty would have you devise some other good means to obtain one that were skilful." It may be presumed that a prime minister in the present day is no longer burthened with matters of state of this description. One or two other passages exhibit a prominent part of this minister's character—his careful economy. On the 19th of August, 1567, he writes from the manor of Guilford:—"I most heartily pray you to bear with my advice, that in your expenses you have consideration not to expend so much as by your bills brought to me by your servant Cartwright it seemeth you do; for truly I have no warrant to allow such several fees as be therein contained, neither did I know any of the like allowed to any of your predecessors. And, in the paying for your intelligences, if you be not well ware, you shall for the most part have counterfeited ware for good money. In matters of importance, or when you are precisely commanded to prosecute matters of weight, it is reason your extraordinary charges be borne; but, as to the common advices of occurrents abroad, they are to be commonly had for small value, and many times as news for news; for at this day the common advices from Venice, Rome, Spain, Constantinople, Vienna, Geneva, Naples, yea, and from Paris, are made so current, as every merchant hath them with their letters from their factors." This last sentence is interesting in reference to the history of newspapers, or, at least, the manner in which intelligence was formerly published and circulated. Lord Burghley used to have the credit of having been himself the inventor of the modern newspaper, at least in England. It was pretended that in the year of the Spanish Armada, 1588, he had caused a species of Gazette to be printed and dispersed from time to time, containing accounts of the movements of the enemy, and other matters of general interest; and copies of several numbers of this publication were believed to be preserved in the British Museum. A few years ago, however, the sagacity of one of the officers of that establishment made the discovery that these 'English Mercuries,' as they are entitled, are forgeries of the last century; and so much, therefore, of Lord Burghley's fame is at an end. He goes on in his letter to Norris:—"If I did not know your good nature, I would not thus plainly write; and yet, if I should not hereof warn you, your expences might increase, and I know not how to procure your payment. And yet hereby [herein?] I mean to do my best at all times to help you to allowance for all necessary expenses." There is the same reasonable and considerate tone in a subsequent letter, in which he replies to a remonstrance which it appears Sir Henry had made. Writing from Windsor on the 2nd of October, he says:—"And where it seemeth you think some hardness, in not allowance of your expences expressed in sundry your bills, surely it is not lack of my good will that stayeth me, but power; for truly I never subscribed so many extraordinary bills for any as I have done for you; and, as I understand by your servant Cartwright, I have subscribed more in some of them than will be as yet paid. Generally, I will subscribe all charges reasonable for carriage of letters; but concerning entertainment of men to continue at the court, or for rewards given extraordinarily, I never did nor could allow them; and yet I wish them paid, being laid out in the service of her majesty. And in this manner I heartily pray you to interpret my good will to the best; for surely, if you were either my brother or son, I have no more power to shew you and yours good will than I do."^[44] Elizabeth was herself, in fact, still more economically inclined than her minister, nor would she have borne with his permission of any unnecessary charges. No other virtue could have recommended Burghley so effectually to her regard as this his care of the public money.

The most interesting part of the history written by his Domestic is that in which an account is given of his personal habits and private life. He kept two principal establishments, we are told, one at London, the other at Theobald's; though he also was at some charge both at Burghley and at the court, and thus might be said to maintain four houses in all. At his house in London his household usually consisted of four-score persons, besides himself and those who attended him at court; and the ordinary expenditure was thirty pounds a week, which was increased by ten or twelve pounds when he himself lodged in the house. At Theobald's his household amounted to from twenty-six to thirty persons; and the establishment, in his absence, was maintained at a cost of twelve pounds weekly. Twenty or thirty poor people were also daily relieved at the gate; and twenty shillings besides was given weekly to the poor in money. "His whole household expenses," continues the account, "both at Theobald's and London, being both summed together, his yearly charge was two thousand seven hundred and four pounds, when his lordship was continually at court. But his charge, you may imagine, much increased at his lordship's coming home. For I have heard his officers affirm that at his lordship's

being at Theobald's it hath cost him four score pounds in a week; that is, fifty and eight pounds a week more, over and above the former twenty and two. The charge of his stable, not here mentioned, was nearly a thousand marks at the least. Besides which certain charge, he bought great quantities of corn in times of dearth to furnish markets about his house at under-prices, to pull down the price to relieve the poor. He gave also for releasing of prisoners, in many of his latter years, forty and fifty pounds in a term. And, for twenty years together, he gave yearly in beef, bread, and money, at Christmas, to the poor of Westminster, St. Martin's, St. Clement's, and Theobald's, thirty-five, and sometimes forty, pounds *per annum*. He gave also yearly to twenty poor men lodging in the Savoy twenty suits of apparel. He gave also for three years before he died to poor prisoners and poor parishes, in money weekly, forty and five shillings. So as his certain alms, besides extraordinaries, was cast up to be five hundred pounds yearly, one year with another." We have afterwards a description of the order and government of his house:—"After performance of business (as few men about him were idle), there were prayers every day said in his chapel at eleven of the clock, where his lordship and all his servants were present; for he seldom or never went to dinner without prayers. And so likewise at six of the clock, before supper. Which course was observed by his steward in his lordship's absence. When his lordship was able to sit abroad, he kept an honourable table for noblemen and others to resort to; but when age and infirmities grew on him he was forced to keep his chamber, where he was void neither of company nor meat; having as many of his friends and children to dine with and keep him company there as before he had strangers in his parlour; his diet being then as chargeable weekly as when he came abroad. His lordship's hall was ever well furnished with men, and as well served with meat and kept in good order. For his steward kept a standing table for gentlemen; besides two other long tables (many times twice set), one for the clerk of the kitchen, the other for yeomen. And, whether his lordship were absent or present, all men, both retainers and others, resorted continually to meat and meal at their pleasures. Which I have seldom seen in any house; especially any house having so many retainers resorting continually, either for suits or private business. His lordship was himself served with men of quality and ability; for most of the principal gentlemen in England sought to prefer their sons and heirs to his service. Insomuch as I have numbered in his house, attending on the table, twenty gentlemen of his retainers of a thousand pounds per annum a piece, in possession and reversion; and of his ordinary men as many, some worth a thousand pounds, some worth three, five, ten, yea twenty thousand pounds, daily attending his lordship's service." These details give us as complete a picture of the housekeeping of our old nobility as is perhaps any where to be found. And in how strong a light do they bring before us the difference in all things between the time to which they relate and our own! Lord Burghley maintains, at a cost of about four thousand a year, a style of living which forty thousand a year certainly could not now match; we may say, therefore, that money was in those days of at least ten times the value that it is now: what should we think then of gentlemen of ten thousand a year giving attendance as servants at a nobleman's table, or of persons worth two hundred thousand pounds officiating in the same capacity? The space through which society has moved in the three centuries shows much greater measured by indications of this kind than even when we look back to the dinners of our ancestors at noon, and their suppers at seven in the evening—with prayers every day before both.

Lord Burghley's three houses, that at London, Burghley House, near Stamford, and Theobald's, at Waltham, in Hertfordshire, were all wholly or chiefly built by himself, and were all mansions of great magnificence. Burghley is still the seat of his descendant, the Marquess of Exeter. Theobald's, which became the property of his second son Robert, was exchanged by him with James I. for Hatfield, in the same county, now the splendid residence of his descendant the Marquess of Salisbury. Theobald's was afterwards destroyed by the republican soldiers in the time of the civil wars. The London House stood on the site now occupied by Exeter Hall: it had been partly erected by Sir Thomas Palmer, in the reign of Edward VI., but the greater part was added by Burghley, from whom it took the name, first of Cecil House, and then of Burghley House, which was changed into that of Exeter House, when his eldest son, into whose possession it came, was made Earl of Exeter soon after the accession of James I. About the end of the seventeenth century it was converted into the late Exeter Change; but it had for many years previous ceased to be occupied as a dwelling-house. The erection and maintenance of these three palaces would alone redeem Burghley from the imputation of having been a small-souled man; besides the love of architectural splendour which it indicated, it shows that he was not afraid to come forward with his wealth into the light of day, and before the popular eye; for there is no other way in which wealth can make itself so conspicuous as by this. The mere purchase of land, the adding of field to field, is hoarding and concealment compared with this visible, perpetuating, monumental expenditure, which, besides, goes to make the wealth and state of the individual the ornament of the country, and in some sort the property of the whole community. Of Burghley's three lordly mansions, the two noble families of which he is the founder have, as we have seen, each found one burthen enough, and the third has long passed out of their hands. From the names of Cecil Street and Salisbury Street on the other side of the Strand, it may be seen that the gardens or grounds of Cecil House originally extended across that

now great thoroughfare, and down to the river. The Strand, however, was an open street or road then as now, and must have divided the gardens from the house. Burghley, we are told by his Domestic, "greatly delighted in making gardens, fountains, and walks, which at Theobald's were perfected most costly, beautifully, and pleasantly, where one might walk two miles in the walks before he came to their ends." This house of Theobald's, "at the first," says the Domestic, "he meant but for a little pile, as I heard him say; but, after he came to entertain the queen so often there, he was forced to enlarge it, rather for the queen and her great train, and to set the poor on work, than for pomp or glory; for he ever said, it would be too big for the small living he could leave his son..... His lordship's extraordinary charge in entertainment of the queen was greater to him than to any of her subjects. For he entertained her at his house twelve several times, which cost him two or three thousand pounds every time, the queen lying there at his lordship's charge sometimes three weeks or a month, yea six weeks together..... Her majesty sometimes had also strangers and ambassadors came to her at Theobald's, where she hath been seen in as great royalty, and served as bountifully and magnificently, as at any other time or place, all at his lordship's charge; with rich shows, pleasant devices, and all manner of sports that could be devised, to the great delight of her majesty and her whole train, with great thanks of all who partook of it, and as great commendation from all that heard of it abroad." Yet Burghley was by no means a man of overgrown possessions. At his death the rental of his land did not exceed four thousand a year; and he left only about eleven thousand pounds in money, and to the value of about fourteen or fifteen thousand in plate, of which a great part was bequeathed in legacies. "And this," observes his Domestic, "was all the great wealth of so great a counsellor, living forty years together in his prince's favour, in so great reputation, so great offices, and so peaceable a time, as, if his mind had sorted to his power, he might have gathered in that time ten times the value." No; his nature, though cold, was not mean or sordid, nor his heart narrow or selfish. Neither, with all his firmness, which some might call sternness, was his temper unkind or his manner harsh, but the contrary. "In thirty years together," writes his Domestic, "he was seldom seen angry; or moved with joy in prosperity, or sorrow in adversity. Thus his even temper was ever noted as one of his greatest virtues, until within three or four years before his death, when age (the mother of morosity), and continuance of sickness, altered even the course of his nature, with pains in his body, griefs and cares in his mind, crosses in council, and oppression with multitude of business;.... which, not succeeding nor sorting to his desires, so distempered his mind, as bereaved him of his wonted mildness, altered his natural disposition, and gave way to age's imperfections. But his anger was never fondly passionate nor furious. His words were but wind; no sooner spoken than forgotten. For he would presently speak fair again. As for instance, if he had angrily spoken to one of his servants, he would almost immediately speak fair, and as it were seek to be friends with him. And commonly he would soonest do for such as he had fallen out with. Here was a noble nature, by whose anger many found more good than by others' fair flattering speeches." Other traits of his character and habits that speak well for him are afterwards mentioned. "His kindness, as nature ever leads all men, was most expressed to his children, to whom there was never man more loving nor tender-hearted.... And, which is ever a note of good nature, if he could get his table set round with his young little children, he was then in his kingdom; and it was an exceeding pleasure to hear what sport he would make with them, and how aptly and merrily he would talk with them; with such pretty questions and witty allurements, as much delighted himself, the children, and the hearers.... He had his own children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren ordinarily at his table, sitting about him like olive branches..... If he might ride privately in his garden upon his little mule, or lie a day or two at his little lodge at Theobald's, retired from business or too much company, he thought it his greatest greatness and only happiness.... Or, if he could get any of his old acquaintance who could discourse of their youth, or of things passed in old time, it was notable to hear what merry stories he would tell.... He was of a spare and temperate diet, and the finest feeder of any man that ever I saw; eating never but of two or three dishes; drinking never above thrice at a meal, and very seldom wine. And he would many times forbear suppers, if he found his stomach offended. And, above all things, what business soever was in his head, it was never perceived at his table, where he would be so merry, as one would imagine he had nothing else to do; directing his speech to all men according to their qualities and capacities, so as he raised mirth out of all men's speeches, augmenting it with his own, whereby he wanted no company, so long as he was able to keep company.... His recreation was chiefly in his books, wherewith if he had time he was more delighted than others with play at cards." Burghley's favourite book is said to have been Cicero's Offices: it is affirmed that to his dying day he always carried it about with him, either in his bosom or his pocket. Perhaps every man would find the profit as well as the pleasure of making some one book thus, as it were, a part of himself. The great statesman had his favourite study too, and a singular one it may seem to many persons; it was genealogy—not one of the fashionable *logies* of the present day, but yet having an interest of its own, as well as fish-logy or shell-logy, and at any rate not ill fitted to occupy and amuse the leisure of a busy life in that age, when it was much more connected with prevailing habits of thought than now. A number of pedigrees drawn out by Lord Burghley are still preserved in the archbishop's library at Lambeth. "Books," continues the affectionate chronicler from whose interesting recollections we have borrowed so largely, "were so pleasing to him, as, when he got liberty from the

queen to go unto his country house to take the air, if he found but a book worth the opening, he would rather lose his riding than his reading. And yet riding in his garden and walks, upon his little mule, was his greatest disport. But, so soon as he came in, he fell to his reading again, or else to despatching of business.... He seldom or never played at any game, for he could play at none. Yet he would sometimes look on a while on shooters or bowlers, as he rid abroad." In another place we are told that his reading was for the most part in Latin, French, or Italian, and that he very seldom read any English books. This may serve in part to account for the treatment Spenser is said to have had to complain of, when the queen's bounty to the poet was attempted to be checked by her grave-browed minister; he probably despised the Fairy Queen, and concluded that it could not be worth the reading, as being written in the vulgar tongue.

But we must draw to a close. Burghley, as well as her other ministers, sometimes experienced a little of the effects of Elizabeth's caprice and occasional violence of temper, but he was never to any serious extent, or for any considerable space of time, out of favour. If, also, he thought he had on some occasions reason to complain of not being sufficiently supported, or of his advice being disregarded, because some temporary favourite had possession of the royal ear, such was scarcely ever the case on any great emergency; the giving the command of the forces in Holland to Leicester was almost the only very important step which Elizabeth is known to have taken in opposition to Burghley's advice. Nor, with whatever sharpness she may have sometimes turned upon him in her fits of ill humour, did she ever suffer any one to backbite or try to undermine him in her favour; her conviction of his integrity and his value was too firm and deep-seated to be for a moment shaken in that way. And, besides, being human, it was impossible that she should not have had a genuine regard for one who had served her so long and so faithfully; they had passed together from youth to old age—out of one generation of men into a second and a third; had it been only an oak of the forest under which she had been all that while accustomed to find familiar shade and shelter, it must have become dear to her. Throughout forty years of a happy and glorious reign, he had been the main stay of her throne; she used herself to call him her spirit, and their union indeed was more like that of the soul and the body than anything else. At the least one thinks of Burghley and Elizabeth almost as of husband and wife. Such a husband was the only sort of one suitable for the Man-Queen.

Burghley's spreading branches flourished green for a long while; but decay must needs overtake at last whatever is earthly. The first stroke, long deferred, that fell upon him was the death of his venerable mother in March, 1587; next, in April, 1589, he lost his wife. He continued, however, to discharge all his public duties for some years after this; taking a leading part in the debates of the House of Lords when parliament was sitting, as well as overlooking and directing the general course of public affairs both at home and abroad as diligently as ever with his politic head and unwearied pen. A report is preserved of an elaborate speech made by him in the parliament which met in February, 1593 (the last which sat during his time); several of the state papers drawn up by him that have been published are of still later date; and of those addressed to him some are dated several years after this. In one of his letters, however, written in May, 1593, we find him speaking in strong terms of his sufferings from broken health. The letter is to his son Robert, and, having finished the business part of it, he adds in a postscript, "If I may not have some leisure to cure my head, I shall shortly ease it in my grave." His thread of life, however, was spun out for a considerable space longer; his death did not take place till the 4th of August, 1598; "wherein," says his domestic biographer, in concluding a detailed account of his last hours, which, like all his life, were radiant with piety, "one thing was observed as most strange, namely, that, though many watched to see when he should die, he lay looking so sweetly, and went away so mildly, as in a sleep, that it could scarce be perceived when the breath went out of his body."

Besides his two sons, Thomas by his first wife, who was in 1605 created Earl of Exeter, and was the ancestor of the present Marquess of Exeter, and Robert, by his second wife, created Baron Cecil, in 1603, and Earl of Salisbury, in 1605, the ancestor of the present Marquess of Salisbury, Lord Burghley had by his second wife two daughters, Anne, married (unhappily) to Edward Earl of Oxford, and Elizabeth, married to William Wentworth, Esq., son and heir of the Lord Wentworth, whom, however, he predeceased. He had also two other sons and a daughter, who all died in infancy.

FOOTNOTES:

Perhaps he wrote, or intended to write, "no power to show you and yours more good will."



EDMUND SPENSER

It took about two centuries to weld into a common tongue the two perfectly distinct languages spoken in England from the time of the Norman Conquest; about two more to shape that common tongue into the general form of what is now called English; a third space of the same length to bring the compound thus produced to the state in all essential respects in which it has remained ever since, and will no doubt remain while it continues to subsist. In other words, for the first two hundred years the Saxon and Norman were still two separate languages, whose streams were distinguishable even while flowing in the same channel; in the second period the two mingled elements were in a state of effervescence, or of something like contention; in the third, they were perfectly interfused and united, but still in a state of transition, and only advancing to maturity. By the middle of the twelfth century, Saxon and Norman had run together into one body; by the middle of the fourteenth that body had acquired a perfect unity of spirit, character, and tendency; by the middle of the sixteenth it had achieved its full growth and ultimate form and condition.

The completion of the first of these three periods produced nothing which has lived in or can be said to belong to our literature. What was then accomplished, indeed, was rather the destruction of the two old tongues than the creation of a new one. But the termination of the second period produced the poetry of Chaucer; the termination of the third, the poetry of Spenser. While Chaucer, however, is one of the greatest writers of our own or any other country, his poetry is hidden or obscured to the popular eye under the disguise of a language that has become to a great extent dead or obsolete—that is not, either in its vocables or its grammatical forms, the English that we now speak, but requires to be in great part translated, like a foreign tongue, in order to be made generally intelligible. Spenser has the advantage of having written after the language had become substantially what it still remains, and of being, with the exception of a word here and there, as universally and readily intelligible as any poet of our own day. While Chaucer, therefore, has been properly called the morning star of our poetry, Spenser is its morning sun. The daylight of our literature begins with him.

As for the intervening time between Chaucer and Spenser, it was the era only of imitatorship and abortive effort. The greater part of the poetry of that grey of the morning is a mere reflection of Chaucer; what of it aims at being anything more is still only either a feeble or a lurid light even when it is most original. Lydgate may serve for an exemplification of its more common character; Surrey, Wyatt, and Gascoigne, of that of it which, aiming at a note of its own, was still as it were too timid to raise its voice properly; Skelton and Buckhurst, of what of it evinced most of force and daring, though as yet rather in contest than in conquest. The first voice of song heard in this new era that was really full and free was that of Spenser.

Edmund Spenser was certainly a native of London. This he has told us himself in the plainest words in one of his poems—his Prothalamion, or spousal verse, on the marriages of the Ladies Elizabeth and Katherine Somerset—in which his words are,—

"—— merry London, my most kindly nurse,
That to me gave this life's first native source."

The tradition is, that he drew his first breath in the district of East Smithfield, near the Tower. But no record of his birth has been discovered. The former inscription on his monument in Westminster Abbey, which was put up many years after his death, in stating him to have been born in the year 1510, undoubtedly exhibited an entirely inadmissible date; but there are some difficulties attendant upon the account commonly given which makes him not to have come into the world till 1552 or 1553. That date has been deduced from what he says in one of his sonnets (the 60th), in which, writing in 1593 or 1594, he speaks or seems to speak of having then lived forty and one years, or, as he puts it, one year during which the planet of Love had shone clear to him, and forty which he had wasted "in long languishment," or without that consolation. But perhaps we ought to add some space in which he could not well be said to be either a languishing or a prosperous lover. Yet that again would carry back the time of his birth rather too far for the known dates of some of the events of his life. No very certain conclusion, however, it must be confessed, can be grounded on the evidence of the sonnet, the meaning of which is extremely obscure and disputable.

In his printed works Spenser repeatedly claims kindred with the chief family of his name, the Spensers, or Spencers, of Althorpe, from whom both the Earls Spencer and the Dukes of Marlborough are sprung. In the Prothalamion, already cited, while he intimates that London was his birth-place, he adds,—

"Though from another place I take my name,

An house of ancient fame."

By taking his name he must be supposed to mean taking it by descent or connexion; the mere identity of surname would not have been worth mentioning. But there is abundant evidence that the relationship was admitted by the Spensers of Althorpe, as well as claimed by the poet. The daughters of Sir John Spenser of Althorpe, the head of the family, were the principal persons, after the queen, the protection of whose names he was wont to seek, as was the fashion of that age, for his published works. He has three dedications addressed to as many of these ladies. In that prefixed to his 'Mother Hubbard's Tale,' which is addressed to the Lady Compton and Monteagle, Sir John's fifth daughter, Anne, he observes that he has often sought opportunity by some good means to make known to her ladyship the humble affection and faithful duty which he has always professed and is bound to bear to that house from which she springs, and he beseeches her to accept the present poem as a pledge of the profession he thus makes, until with some other more worthy labour he may redeem it out of her hands, and discharge his utmost duty. The peculiar connexion which this language implies is indicated with more distinctness in the dedication of his 'Muiopotmos' to Lady Carey, Sir John Spenser's second daughter, Elizabeth, in which he describes himself as glorying to advance her ladyship's excellent parts and noble virtues, and to spend himself in honouring her; "not so much," he adds, "for your great bounty [which may mean merely what we should now call goodness, or kindness, in a general sense] to myself, which yet may not be unminded; *nor for name or kindred's sake by you vouchsafed*, being also regardable; as for that honourable name which ye have by your brave deserts purchased to yourself, and spread in the mouths of all men." Still more explicitly, in the dedication of his 'Tears of the Muses' to the Lady Strange, Sir John's youngest daughter, Alice, he says, "The causes for which ye have thus deserved of me to be honoured (if honour it be at all) are both your particular bounties *and also some private bands of affinity, which it hath pleased your ladyship to acknowledge*." These three poems were all published in 1591. And there can be no doubt that it is to the same ladies he alludes in his 'Colin Clout's Come Home Again,' where he says,—

"Ne less praiseworthy are the sisters three,
The honour of the noble family
Of which I meanest boast myself to be,
And most that unto them I am so nigh."

It is only within these few years, however, that any clue has been discovered to the particular branch of the Spensers to which the poet belonged. The discovery was made by a living descendant of the same stock, Mr. F. C. Spenser, of Halifax, and was communicated by him to the public in a communication which appeared in the 'Gentleman's Magazine' for August, 1842. The evidence produced in this paper may be considered to make it nearly certain that Spenser's immediate progenitors were the owners of a small property still known by the name of *Spensers*, lying about two miles to the north-west of Burnley, in the eastern part of Lancashire. Edmund is far from being one of the most common of English Christian names; nor is it found to prevail in the pedigree of any other branch of the Spensers, as far as is known. If it were only that among the old Lancashire Spensers there appeared to have been several who bore this name of Edmund, even that would afford some presumption that the family of the poet was to be sought for in that quarter. But it chances that, besides Edmund, we have another not very common name in the poet's family. Not only the poet himself, but both his grandson and his great-great-grandson, by his eldest son, bore the name of Edmund; and it appears that another of his sons bore the equally far from common name of Lawrence. Now it turns out that both Edmund and Lawrence, comparatively rare as they are in general, were the most usual of all Christian names among the Spensers formerly seated in the neighbourhood of Burnley. In the various parish registers of the district Mr. F. C. Spenser found, from about the middle of the sixteenth to the end of the seventeenth century, above forty entries containing the names of either Edmund or Lawrence Spenser. The probability thus arising that the names of Edmund and Lawrence in the family of the poet were derived from this quarter will be admitted to be very strong. It appears also that the head of these Lancashire Spensers in the time of Elizabeth was an Edmund Spenser of Worsthorne: Worsthorne is a village about two miles east of Burnley, and this Edmund Spenser was the successor of an Adam le Spenser, who had held the same lands by military tenure in the early part of the reign of Edward II. It is further stated by Mr. F. C. Spenser that a communication he has had from John Travers, Esq., of Birch-hill, Cork, who is descended from a sister of the poet, confirms his opinion that the family were from Lancashire; and he afterwards speaks of having *ascertained* that they were from that particular county, on the authority of Mr. Travers.

It has always, indeed, been believed that Spenser had relations in the north of England, and we shall presently find that he certainly spent a part of his early life there. Mr. F. C. Spenser conceives his grandfather to have been a Lawrence Spenser, whose burial is recorded in the register of the New Church in Pendle, the parish in which Spensers is situated,

to have taken place in 1584. Spenser's father had probably emigrated from his native district to the south, and at last settled in London. Mr. Collier, in his 'Life of Shakespeare,' has lately noticed the existence of an Edmund Spenser at Kingsbury, in Warwickshire, in 1569, and has hazarded a conjecture that this may have been the father of the poet.

This year, 1569, it so happens, is the next after that of his birth in which we have any certain mention of the poet; but the same year is also curiously abundant in notices, whether of him or of some other person or persons of the same names is doubtful. In the first place, as we have just seen, there is the Edmund Spenser registered as then resident in Warwickshire; it is not impossible that this may have been the poet himself. Then, we have an Edmund Spenser who is recorded in the Books of the Treasurer of the Queen's Chamber to have that year brought despatches to her Majesty from Sir Henry Norris, ambassador in France: Mr. Peter Cunningham, to whom we are indebted for the discovery of this entry, and for its announcement in his 'Extracts from the Accounts of the Revels at Court,' published in 1842 by the Shakespeare Society, is inclined to believe that it refers to the poet. Again, we find George Turberville, who had recently gone out to Russia as secretary to the English ambassador, addressing an epistle in verse from that country in 1569 to a friend whom he calls Spenser, and who is stated by Anthony Wood to have been Edmund Spenser the poet; the epistle is printed along with Turberville's 'Tragical Tales,' and also in the first volume of Hakluyt's Voyages, both of which works appeared in Spenser's lifetime, and when he was the only person to whom the name used as it is in this instance could well be understood to apply. Yet, if he be really the person referred to in all or any of these cases, it is difficult to believe that he could have been at this time no older than sixteen or seventeen. Even nineteen, which he would be if we carry back his birth to 1550, seems too early an age either for the intimate friend of Turberville, who was then a man of about thirty, or for one already employed as an ambassador's courier. A fourth fact of the same date is still more difficult to reconcile than any thing that has yet been mentioned with the common supposition that Spenser was born in 1552 or 1553. In a work called Vander Noodt's Theatre of Worldlings, which was printed at London in this year, 1569, are found translations in rhyme of six sonnets of Petrarch's, which twelve years afterwards were reprinted as Spenser's in a collection of his minor poems, under the title of 'The Visions of Petrarch formerly translated.' Were these translations, then, which have besides all the characteristics of his style and manner, produced by him when he was only a boy of sixteen or seventeen? We can only say that they were certainly composed in or before the year 1569. And so were translations in blank verse, also found in Vander Noodt's book, of eleven sonnets of the French poet Du Bellay, which in like manner were reprinted as Spenser's in the same collection of 1591, with only such alterations as were required to convert them into rhyme. There can hardly be a doubt that Spenser was really the author of both these sets of translations, and also of those of a seventh sonnet of Petrarch and four others of Du Bellay, which likewise appeared in the Theatre of Worldlings in 1569, but were not reprinted.

Upon the whole, of the four notices that have been mentioned, both the first, that of the Edmund Spenser of Warwickshire, and the second, that of the government courier, may be considered as most probably referring to some other person than the poet. The former may have been the poet's father, as Mr. Collier suggests: the latter seems most likely to have been the same Mr. Spenser who is mentioned by James VI. of Scotland in a letter to Queen Elizabeth, dated at St. Andrew's, 2nd July, 1583, as having been detained by him that he might carry the letter to England; and also perhaps with a Mr. Spenser who appears to have been repeatedly deputed from the Irish government to England about or before the year 1580, and who is spoken of in a letter of that date from Sir William Pelham, then at the head of the administration of affairs in Ireland, as "now growing into years, and having many ways deserved some consideration from her Majesty." But the Spenser to whom Turberville in 1569 addressed his epistle from Russia, and also the person who translated the sonnets which appeared the same year in Vander Noodt's Theatre of Worldlings, we believe to have been no other than the afterwards celebrated poet.

The one thing, however, which is certain is that it was in this year 1569 that Spenser went to the university. He was admitted of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, on the 20th of May; and it may be inferred that his nearest relations were in rather humble circumstances from his having been entered as a sizar, or a student of the lowest rank. All that is further known of his academic course is that he took his degree of B.A. in 1573 and that of M.A. in 1576. We have both direct testimony, and, what is still more satisfactory, the abundant evidence of his writings, to the fact that he was one of the most learned scholars of his time; yet it does not appear that he ever obtained any other university honour except his degrees. There may be some foundation for the tradition preserved by Aubrey, and derived by him from Dryden, that he failed in a competition for a fellowship of his college, although it was not, as Aubrey's story makes it to have been, the one which Bishop Andrews got. There are traces of his having met with some disappointment, or mortification, at the hands of the authorities of Pembroke Hall, his connexion with which is nowhere alluded to in his poetry, although he has several times commemorated Cambridge as his *Alma Mater*. While resident at Cambridge he contracted an intimate

friendship with Gabriel Harvey, who was first of Christ's Church and afterwards of Trinity Hall, and who became one of the most distinguished scholars and writing men of his time, but is most famous as the antagonist and butt of Nash and Greene and the other wits of that knot. Harvey, who became a Doctor of Laws in 1585, survived till 1630; and he and Spenser would appear to have been of about the same age, so that the latter cannot well be supposed to have been born much before the date commonly assigned.

Upon leaving the University, which he did probably in 1576 or 1577, Spenser is stated to have gone to reside with some relations that he had in the north of England. This account of all the biographers remarkably accords with and confirms the recent discovery of his family having been originally from Lancashire. That he did about this time reside for a space in the north country we have the express testimony of the author (whoever he may have been) of the gloss or commentary published by Spenser himself with his *Shepherd's Calendar* in 1580. He is spoken of, too, as having been "master of our northern dialect" by Dryden, who appears to have taken a great interest in Spenser's history, and who had, as we shall find immediately, peculiar opportunities of obtaining information respecting him.

It was during this residence in the north that Spenser fell in love with the lady whom he has celebrated in his *Shepherd's Calendar* under the name of Rosalind. This is clear from the Sixth Eclogue of that work, which is a lamentation over his ill success in his suit, and in which his friend Harvey, there called Hobinol, is made to entreat him to forsake the soil by which he is so bewitched, and

Those hills where harborough^[45] nis^[46] to see,
Nor holly bush, nor brere,^[47] nor winding ditch,
And to the dales resort, where shepherds rich,
And fruitful flocks, been^[48] every where to see.

"This is no poetical fiction," says the author of the Gloss, "but unfeignedly spoken of the poet self, who for special occasion of private affairs (as I have been partly of himself informed), and for his more preferment, removed out of the North parts, and came into the South, as Hobinol, indeed, advised him privately." "Rosalind," the commentator further informs us, in a note upon the First Eclogue, "is also a feigned name, which, being well ordered, will bewray the very name of his love and mistress, whom by that name he coloureth." Again in his Gloss on the Fourth Eclogue, where Harvey, or Hobinol, speaks of his friend, under the name of Colin, as wooing "the widow's daughter of the glen," the annotator writes:—"He calleth Rosalind the widow's daughter of the glen, that is, of a country hamlet or borough, which I think is rather said to colour and conceal the person, than simply [that is, plainly or truly] spoken. For it is well known, even in spite of Colin and Hobinol, that she is a gentlewoman of no mean house, nor endued with any vulgar or common gifts both of nature and manners; but such, indeed, as need neither Colin be ashamed to have her made known by his verses, nor Hobinol be grieved that so she should be commended to immortality for her rare and singular virtues." There is a notice of Rosalind in a printed letter of Harvey's, which confirms this account, implying, as it does, that she was not only a gentlewoman, but quite capable of appreciating her scholarly and gifted lover: he speaks of her as "gentle Mistress Rosalind," who had once declared Spenser "to have all the intelligences at command, and another time christened him Signior Pegaso." Aubrey reports, on the authority of Dryden, that Rosalind was a kinswoman of the lady of Sir Erasmus Dryden, that poet's grandfather. But Spenser is believed to have delineated this his first lady-love and her history at full length in the Seventh and Eighth Cantos of the Sixth Book of his *Fairy Queen*, where, having been introduced "riding upon an ass, led by a carle and fool," she is thus farther described:—

She was a lady of great dignity,
And lifted up to honourable place,
Famous through all the Land of Faîry,
Though of mean parentage and kindred base;
Yet decked with wondrous gifts of nature's grace,
That all men did her person much admire
And praise the feature of her goodly face;
The beams whereof did kindle lovely fire
In the hearts of many a knight and many a gentle squire.

But she thereof grew proud and insolent,
That none she worthy thought to be her fere,^[49]

But scorned them all that love unto her meant;
Yet was she loved of many a worthy peer;
Unworthy she to be beloved so dear,
That could not weigh of worthiness aright;
For beauty is more glorious, bright, and clear,
The more it is admired of many a wight,
And noblest she that served is of noblest knight.

But this coy damsel thought, contrariwise,
That such proud looks would make her praised more,
And that, the more she did all love despise,
The more would wretched lovers her adore.
What cared she who sighed for her sore,
Or who did wail or watch the weary night?
Let them that list their luckless lot deplore;
She was born free, not bound to any wight,
And so would ever live, and love her own delight.

Through such her stubborn stiffness and hard heart
Many a wretch for want of remedy
Did languish long in life-consuming smart,
And at the last through dreary dolour die;
Whilst she, the lady of her liberty,
Did boast her beauty had such sovereign might,
That with the only twinkle of her eye
She could or save or spill whom she could hight.^[50]
What could the Gods do more, but do it more aright?

The notice of the powers above, however, is at last attracted to such arrogance and selfishness; and Mirabella, being arraigned at the bar of Cupid's court, is adjudged by the God to wander the world on an ass, led by the hideous giant Disdain, and driven on its way by the scourge of the fool Scorn, till she shall have saved as many lovers as she had destroyed.

So now she had been wandering two whole years
Throughout the world in this uncomely case,
Wasting her goodly hue in heavy tears,
And her good days in dolorous disgrace;
Yet had she not in all these two years' space
Saved but two; yet in two years before,
Through her despiteous pride, whilst love lacked place,
She had destroyed two and twenty more.
Aye me, how could her love make half amends therefore!

She is represented as carrying toilsomely a bottle before her, and a wallet on her back; and the following is the account she gives of this part of her penance:—

"Here in this bottle," said the sorry maid,
"I put the tears of my contrition,
Till to the brim I have it full defrayed;^[51]
And in this bag, which I behind me don,
I put repentance for things past and gone.
Yet is the bottle leak,^[52] and bag so torn,
That all which I put in falls out anon,
And is behind me trodden down of Scorn,

Who mocketh all my pain, and laughs the more I mourn."

If the supposition that Mirabella represents Rosalind be well founded, some light perhaps might be got for the discovery of the lady's real name from the family history of the Drydens. The circumstance that, although of elevated station and also of cultivated mind, she was of humble origin is, if true, a distinctive mark by which there might be a hope of identifying her.

Dryden farther told Aubrey that Spenser was an acquaintance of his grandfather, Sir Erasmus, and a frequent guest at his house, which was at Canons Ashby, in Northamptonshire. "The chamber there at Sir Erasmus's," adds Aubrey, "is still called Mr. Spenser's chamber." It was probably here that the poet met with Rosalind—unless we are to suppose that it was his acquaintance with her that introduced him to the Dryden family.

At all events he appears to have been still entangled in this unprosperous attachment, when, by the advice of his friend Harvey, as it would seem, he was induced to leave the north in 1578 or 1579. He is stated, as we have seen, to have transferred himself to the south "for special occasion of private affairs," as well as "for his more preferment;" and his connexion with London as his birth-place, and probably also the residence of his father or of some of his nearest relations, may have had a share in bringing him thither. He now became known to Mr. (afterwards Sir Philip) Sidney, in what way is variously related. The following is Aubrey's version of the story, in his Life, or short biographical notice, of Sidney:—"Among others, Mr. Edmund Spenser made his address to him, and brought his Fairy Queen. Sir Philip was busy at his study, and his servant delivered Mr. Spenser's book to his master, who laid it by, thinking it might be such kind of stuff as he was frequently troubled with. Mr. Spenser staid so long that his patience was wearied, and went his way discontented, and never intended to come again. When Sir Philip perused it, he was so exceedingly delighted with it, that he was extremely sorry he was gone, and where to send for him he knew not. After much inquiry he learned his lodging, and sent for him, and ordered his servant to give him —— pounds in gold. His servant said that that was too much. 'No,' said Sir Philip, 'he is ----,' and ordered an addition. From this time there was a great friendship between them to his dying day." This is evidently a blundering account; for, instead of the Fairy Queen, or even the first part of the poem, having been finished at this time, as seems to have been imagined, it may be reasonably questioned if any portion of the poem, in the form in which we have it, was yet written,—although another of Aubrey's anecdotes of Spenser is, that "lately at the college (meaning, apparently, Pembroke Hall, Cambridge), taking down the wainscot of his chamber, they found an abundance of cards with stanzas of the Fairy Queen written on them." The story, however, in a later edition has been improved into the following form as it stands in the Life of Spenser prefixed to the Fairy Queen in 1758 by Church, who says that he sets it down as he finds it related, not knowing how far it may appear worthy of credit:—"It is said he was a stranger to Mr. Sidney (afterwards Sir Philip) when he had begun to write his Fairy Queen, and that he took occasion to go to Leicester House, and to introduce himself by sending in to Mr. Sidney a copy of the Ninth Canto of the First Book of that poem. Mr. Sidney was much surprised with the description of Despair in that canto, and is said to have shown an unusual kind of transport on the discovery of so new and uncommon a genius. After he had read some stanzas, he turned to his steward, and bid him give the person that brought those verses fifty pounds; but upon reading the next stanza he ordered the sum to be doubled. The steward was no less surprised than his master, and thought it his duty to make some delay in executing so sudden and lavish a bounty; but, upon reading one stanza more, Mr. Sidney raised his gratuity to two hundred pounds, and commanded the steward to give it immediately, lest, as he read further, he might be tempted to give away his whole estate." This is a very good story; but how much of it may be true is another question. It may possibly enough have grown out of nothing more than the simple fact that the canto in question was a favourite with Sidney, and that when he first read it, perhaps long after this time, he expressed his admiration in some enthusiastic fashion. It is most probable that Spenser was introduced to Sidney by Harvey, by whose advice, as we have seen, he appears to have come to the south. The most obvious and natural interpretation of various passages in the Shepherd's Calendar is, that Harvey was desirous of bringing his friend to participate in advantages and enjoyments of which he was himself already in possession. This is the only consistent meaning that can be given to the dialogue represented as taking place between them in the Sixth Eclogue. We find Harvey spoken of by Spenser in 1579 as familiarly known to Sidney and his associates at least by reputation; and there is no reason for supposing that they were personally strangers.

Sidney, as the best service he could do his new friend, made him known to his uncle the Earl of Leicester, the powerful royal favourite; and Spenser appears to have resided sometimes at Leicester House, the Earl's town mansion, sometimes at Penshurst, the seat of the Sidneys in Kent. He writes to Harvey in 1579 and 1580 from the former, and his Shepherd's Calendar is believed to have been, partly at least, written at the latter. In the Fourth Eclogue he calls himself Colin "the Southern Shepherd's boy;" upon which the Gloss has this explanation:—

"Seemeth hereby that Colin pertaineth to some southern nobleman, and perhaps in Surrey or Kent, the rather because he so often nameth the Kentish Downs, and before *As lithe as lass of Kent*." So again, in one of the annotations upon the Sixth Eclogue, the fruitful dales for which Hobinol, or Harvey, invites him to forsake the rugged and barren north, are described as "the south parts where he now abideth; which, though they be full of hills and woods (for Kent is very hilly and woody, and therefore so called, for *Kantsh* in the Saxons' tongue signifieth *woody*), yet in respect of the north parts they be called dales: for indeed the north is counted the higher country."

Spenser employed part of his time, when he first became acquainted with Sidney, unprofitably enough, in the practice of a new species of writing with which he found Sidney and several of his friends at the moment greatly occupied and enamoured—an attempt to subjugate English verse to the laws of the ancient Greek and Latin prosody. Of this absurd novelty, which went by the name of English versifying, Harvey claimed the honour of being the inventor; and that circumstance affords a further presumption in favour of the belief that he and Sidney were acquainted. Spenser went so far into the folly as to perpetuate some uncommonly bad hexameters, pentameters, and trimeter iambics, which have been preserved; but it may be doubted if he ever was serious in his professions of adherence to the new system, and at any rate he very soon abandoned it. But besides what he did in this style, much of which is no doubt lost (if that can be called a loss), he must have already produced a great quantity of verse before he came to London, or had been long there.

From some letters which passed between him and Harvey in 1579 and 1580, and which were immediately afterwards published by Harvey, from the commentary on the Shepherd's Calendar, and other sources, there have been collected the following titles of works which were either finished or in progress before the end of the last-mentioned year:—"The Fairy Queen," begun, though whether the same poem with that not published till ten years after this time may be doubted; 'Nine Comedies,' a poem, or collection of poems, entitled 'Dreams,' 'The Dying Pelican,' 'Slumber,' otherwise called 'A Sen-night's Slumber,' 'The Court of Cupid,' a collection of 'Legends,' another of 'Pageants,' another of 'Sonnets,' a poem in *English versifying*, entitled 'Epithalamion Thamesis,' probably little more than projected; a poetical 'Translation of Moschus's Idyllion of Wandering Love,' a prose treatise entitled 'The English Poet,' a work in Latin, probably a poem, on the history of the family of the Earl of Leicester, entitled 'Stemmata Dudleiana,' and 'The Shepherd's Calendar.'

All these works, except the last-named, and so much, if any, as may remain of the original 'Fairy Queen' in the existing poem so called, are lost; as are also translations of 'Ecclesiastes,' and of 'The Song of Solomon,' 'The Seven [Penitential] Psalms,' 'The Hours of the Lord,' 'The Sacrifice of a Sinner,' 'The Hell of Lovers,' 'Purgatory,' and other pieces, even the titles of which have not been preserved, that are mentioned as having been written by him without their dates being stated. We only know that they had all been produced before the year 1591.

The first work which Spenser sent to the press (unless we are to reckon the translations published in Vander Noodt's book ten years before) was his collection of pastorals, one for every month of the year, entitled 'The Shepherd's Calendar,' which appeared in the end of the year 1579. Even that did not carry his name; it is only introduced by a short dedication in verse to Sidney, having attached to it the signature *Immerito*, the same which the author assumes in his correspondence with Harvey. The Shepherd's Calendar, though unequally executed, may be pronounced to have evinced the highest poetical genius that had appeared in England since Chaucer, and to be the earliest poem of equal merit on the whole in the existing form of the language. Nothing that had been produced either by Surrey or Buckhurst had shown anything like the same all-informing poetic light and life. If parts of it, too, have now lost much of their interest, those were the very parts that would most take the largest class of readers in that age. It is to a great extent a theological and even puritanical poem: following the steps of Chaucer and the author of the Visions of Pierce Ploughman, who had both inveighed against the abuses of the church, Spenser was naturally led to take up the character of an ecclesiastical reformer; and, besides, his connexion with Leicester, who courted the Puritans, impelled him in the same direction. Probably the work was indebted for a good deal of its popularity to the spirit which it thus breathed, and which would enlist in its favour the most excited, energetic, and growing party in the country. Accordingly it was reprinted no fewer than four times in the author's lifetime: in 1581, 1586, 1591, and 1597. All these early editions, however, are without the name of the author; and the Shepherd's Calendar appears not to have been generally known to be the composition of Spenser for several years after its first publication.

Spenser, when he threw himself upon London, probably looked to living by his pen: he had, for some reason or other, adopted no profession, at least as far as is known, and his natural resource was literature, which already in London afforded to a considerable number of adventurers such a support as a spar sometimes is to a man struggling in the water. The Shepherd's Calendar was probably sold to a bookseller; it seems at least to have been early regarded as a property, having between the first and second editions been assigned by the original owner to a new publisher. In one of Harvey's

letters, written in 1580, he rallies his friend on the prospect of "living by *Dying Pelicans*, and purchasing great lands and lordships with the money which his *Calendar* and *Dreams* have [afforded] and will afford him." Spenser, however, soon began to look to other patronage than that of the booksellers. In his first letter to Harvey, written from Leicester House in October, 1579, we find him alluding, apparently, to some design which had been entertained of having him introduced at court: "Your desire," he says, "to hear of my late being with her majesty must die in itself." From the sequel of the same letter, and from a long valedictory effusion of Latin verse inserted in it, we learn that he was then preparing to set out immediately for the continent on some mission from Leicester. "I beseech you," he writes, "by all your courtesies and graces, let me be answered ere I go; which will be (I hope, I fear, I think) the next week, if I can be dispatched of my lord. I go thither as sent by him, and maintained most-what of him; and there am to employ my time, my body, my mind, to his honour's service." There is no reason, however, for believing that he did actually go abroad at this time. At any rate, if he did, he was not long away. If he was not in London when his *Shepherd's Calendar* was entered in the register of the Stationers' Company on the 5th of December of this same year, he certainly was in April of the year following; for he dates his next letter to Harvey from Westminster on the 10th of that month. Nor does he in that letter make any allusion to his having been abroad. Very soon after this, however, he received an appointment which carried him out of England. In the beginning of August of this year, 1580, Arthur Lord Grey of Wilton was sent over to Ireland as Lord Deputy, and Spenser accompanied him as his private secretary. They arrived in Dublin on the 12th of August, and the Lord Deputy was sworn in on the 7th of September. Grey was related to Leicester and the Sidneys, and there can be little doubt that Spenser was indebted for his secretaryship to their recommendation. He evidently, however, soon came to feel much more than a mere official attachment to the Lord Deputy. Grey, whose government was signalised by some military proceedings against the insurgent natives of great vigour, and which exposed him to much animadversion, figures as one of the most lauded heroes of the *Fairy Queen*, and both in that poem, and, without the disguise of allegory, in his prose 'View of the State of Ireland,' Spenser has eulogised and defended his administration without reserve and with extraordinary ardour. His zeal did not go unrewarded. On the 22nd of March, 1581, he received the additional appointment of Clerk of the Decrees and Recognizances of Chancery; and the same year he obtained by royal grant a lease at an annual rent of 300*l.* of the Abbey of Enniscorthy, with the attached castle and manor, in the county of Wexford, which he conveyed on the 9th of December, no doubt for a valuable consideration, to another person, from whom it was afterwards purchased by Sir Henry Wallop, the ancestor of the Earls of Portsmouth, in whose family the property still remains. It now yields an annual rental of many thousand pounds. Grey was recalled from his government in the end of August, 1582, and Spenser is supposed to have returned with him to England; but he appears to have nevertheless retained his office of Clerk in the Irish Court of Chancery, nor did he quit it till the 22nd of June, 1588, when he exchanged it for that of Clerk of the Council of Munster. Meanwhile, on the 27th of June, 1586, as is commonly stated, he had obtained from the queen a grant of 3028 acres of land, consisting of the manor and castle of Kilcolman, in the barony of Fermoy, and county of Cork, being a portion of the immense forfeited estates of the Earl of Desmond, the final suppression of whose rebellion had been Lord Grey's capital achievement. A late writer, however, Mr. Hardiman, to a long note in the first volume of whose 'Irish Minstrelsy,' published in 1831, we have been indebted for several new facts, makes the date of this grant to be, on the authority of the original *fiat* in the Rolls Office, Dublin, the 26th of October, 1591. The common account of the latter portion of Spenser's life is wrong throughout, if he was not seated at Kilcolman before this. It may be a mistake, indeed, to suppose that he returned to England with Lord Grey in 1582, or that he ever was out of Ireland from 1580 to 1590; but if we are to suppose that he had not acquired possession of Kilcolman before the latter year, how are we to interpret his own relation in his 'Colin Clout's Come Home Again,' where he represents Raleigh, under the name of the Shepherd of the Ocean, as having come to him at Kilcolman, and taken him with him to England, where he was introduced at court, and bountifully rewarded for his minstrelsy by Elizabeth, whom he calls Cynthia, and of his obligations to whom and to Raleigh the poem is in fact mainly a celebration? This visit to England must, apparently, have been that which he made for the purpose of sending to press the first part of his *Fairy Queen*, which was entered in the Stationers' Register on the 1st of December, 1589, and published in 1590.

The *Fairy Queen*, as yet consisting only of the three first books, was dedicated in a short inscription to Elizabeth; and in February, 1591, her majesty conferred upon Spenser a pension of fifty pounds a year. His new work, the first in which his name was given to the world, had now raised him to the highest reputation and popularity. In this same year, 1591, his bookseller, William Ponsonby, published, in a small quarto volume, a collection of all his other pieces which he could procure, under the title of 'Complaints; containing sundry small Poems of the World's Vanity;' with an Address to "The Gentle Reader," in which he says, "Since my late setting forth of the *Fairy Queen*, finding that it hath found a favourable passage amongst you, I have sithence endeavoured, by all good means, for the better increase and

accomplishment of your delights, to get into my hands such small poems of the same author's, as I heard were dispersed abroad in sundry hands, and not easy to be come by by himself; some of them having been diversely embezzled and purloined from him since his departure over sea." The pieces of which this collection consists are, *The Ruins of Time* (an elegy on Sir Philip Sidney, and therefore written since 1586); *'The Tears of the Muses'* (a lamentation over the decay of poetry and learning); and a paraphrastic translation of *'Virgil's Gnat,'* described as having been "long since dedicated to the most noble and excellent lord, the Earl of Leicester, late deceased;" *'Mother Hubbard's Tale,'* stated in the Dedication to the Lady Compton and Monteagle to have been long since composed in the raw conceit of youth; *'The Ruins of Rome,'* translated from the French of Bellay; *'Muipotmos, or the Tale of the Butterfly'* (apparently an allegory, and dated 1590); Twelve Sonnets, entitled *'Visions of the World's Vanity,'* Fifteen, entitled *'The Visions of Bellay'* (eleven of them being rhyming versions of so many of those of which translations into blank verse had appeared twenty-one years before in Vander Noodt's *'Theatre of Worlddlins,'* with four not inserted in that work); and Seven, entitled *'The Visions of Petrarch, formerly translated'* (being the six printed by Vander Noodt with one additional).

It has been commonly assumed that Spenser had returned to Ireland before this collection appeared, from Ponsonby's expression, "since his departure over sea." But these words seem rather to refer to his original removal to Ireland in 1580. At all events, he was in London on the 1st of January, 1592, as appears from the date of his dedication to the Marchioness of Northampton of his next publication, his *'Daphnaida,'* an elegy on Douglas Howard, daughter of Lord Howard, and wife of Arthur Gorges, Esq. It is not probable that he made two visits to England within so brief a space. He seems, however, to have returned to Ireland some time in 1592, and to have resided at Kilcolman for the next three or four years. Meanwhile, according to a document quoted by Mr. Hardiman, he had assigned, no doubt for a pecuniary consideration, his office of clerk of the council of Munster to another person. In 1595 appeared his *'Colin Clout's Come Home Again,'* accompanied by his *'Astrophel,'* and his *'Mourning Muse of Thestylis,'* both commemorative of Sir Philip Sidney. The same year he published, in another volume, his *'Amoretti,'* or series of eighty-eight sonnets relating the progress of his courtship with another love, who had at length supplanted Rosalind, together with his splendid *'Epithalamion'* written in celebration of his marriage. The marriage is spoken of as having taken place on St. Barnabas's day, or the 11th of June; the year was most probably 1594; the ceremony seems to have been performed in the town of Cork; of the bride nothing is known except that she was of obscure parentage, and that her name was Elizabeth—which was also, Spenser intimates, that of his mother.

He again visited England in 1596, and brought out at London the second edition of his *'Fairy Queen,'* now extended to six books. This was followed, the same year, first by a volume containing a reprint of the *'Daphnaida,'* together with his *'Prothalamion'* or spousal song on the marriages of the Ladies Elizabeth and Katherine Somerset, daughters of the Earl of Worcester; and afterwards by another containing his *'Four Hymns on Love and Beauty.'* The dedication of these *'Hymns'* to the Countesses of Cumberland and Warwick is dated at Greenwich, the 1st of September, 1596. Although the two first are stated by him to have been composed in the greener times of his youth, they were the last of his productions which Spenser sent to the press. He probably returned to Ireland early in 1597; in September of the next year he was recommended by the queen to the Irish government to be sheriff of Cork; but soon after the breaking out of Tyrone's rebellion in October, 1598, his house was attacked and burnt to the ground by a party of the insurgents, and he with difficulty made his escape with his wife and, it is commonly said, two sons, a third, if we may credit what Ben Jonson told Drummond of Hawthornden, having perished in the flames. But, according to another account, Spenser left four children, three sons and a daughter, who all grew up to be married; so that it may be hoped the story of the fifth child, in so short a space of time, and its calamitous fate, is fabulous. He came over with his family to London; and, after an illness of some weeks, died at an inn in King Street, Westminster, on the 16th of January, 1599.

We have mentioned all his known poetical productions, excepting only three or four complimentary Sonnets which have been collected from the publications of other writers, a few very short pieces, not amounting to a hundred lines in all, and the two additional Cantos of the *Fairy Queen*, with the fragment of a third, supposed to have been intended for some subsequent Book of which the subject should be the Legend of Constancy, which were first published, along with a new edition of the rest of the poem, in 1609. The poem entitled *'Britain's Ida,'* published as his in 1628, is undoubtedly spurious. Spenser's only prose work that has come down to us is his *'View of the State of Ireland,'* written dialogue-wise between Eudoxus and Irenaeus, which was first published by Sir James Ware in 1633. It appears to have been finished in 1596; and is supposed to have been presented by Spenser to Queen Elizabeth on his visit to England in that year. Among his lost works, however, besides the prose treatise entitled *'The English Poet'* already noticed, mention is made of a translation of a Greek dialogue, entitled *'Axiochus,'* on the shortness and uncertainty of life, the composition of Æschines Socraticus, but designated Plato's in this translation, which is said to have been printed in Scotland in 1592,

although no copy is now known to exist. Of others of his compositions, both in prose and verse, probably the very titles have perished.

As the author of the Fairy Queen Spenser takes his place in the front rank of the poets of his language, with only Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Milton by his side. The high qualities of his poetry are affluence of invention, picturesque splendour, and sweetness of flow. No other English poetry has so much of the qualities of painting and of music. But the Fairy Queen is far from being all grace, brilliance, and melody: it is throughout as much the inspiration of philosophy as of fancy, and is full of wise and noble thoughts as well as of all other beautiful things.

Spenser is described by Aubrey on the information of Mr. Beeston as having been a little man, with every thing about his person on an economical scale—wearing short hair, little bands, and little cuffs. Perhaps he was not of quite so amiable or unworldly a character as might be inferred from his poetry. His face, in the most authentic representation of it—in which, however, by the bye, the ruff, contrary to Mr. Beeston's account, is of sufficiently ample dimensions—has by no means a wrapt look. And even the naked outline of his history that has come down to us does not indicate a person inattentive to his own interests. Some evidence that has been produced by Mr. Hardiman goes to show that in the exercise of his rights of property in Ireland he was disposed to go to the very limits, if not beyond the limits, of the law; and there is reason indeed for suspecting that he had provoked the popular vengeance which at last fell upon him by some harshness in his dealings both with the peasantry and with some of the neighbouring proprietors. It is said that his name is still in bad odour in that part of the country. That he may have given some cause for the hatred of the natives and of the Roman Catholic party will surprise no one who has read his View of the State of Ireland, the tone of which throughout is singularly firm and uncompromising in its inculcation of both an Anti-Romish and Anti-Hibernian policy. But indeed there is much of the same stern spirit even in his poetry, wherever the subject is such as to call it forth.

Spenser had descendants at least to the fourth generation through his eldest son Sylvanus, who married Ellen, daughter of David Nagle, Esq., of Moneamey in the county of Cork. The grandson of Sylvanus, who died in 1734, left three sons, the eldest of whom, Edmund, is known to have been married; besides a daughter. The poet's second son appears to have been named Lawrence, and to have died in 1654 without issue. His third and youngest son Peregrine left a son Hugolin, who was restored after the Restoration to some lands in the county of Cork, but was outlawed after the Revolution for having taken part with James II. It is said that some of Spenser's descendants were still remaining in the county of Cork about the middle of last century; and it has been asserted that they are not yet extinct. There are undoubted descendants of a sister of the poet, who married a gentleman of the name of Travers, still existing in that county. It appears that after the poet's death his widow married one Roger Seckerstone, and quarrelled with her children by her first husband.

FOOTNOTES:

- Harbour, habitation.
- Is not.
- Briar.
- Be, are.
- Companion, mate.
- Name.
- Filled.
- Leaky.

THE END OF VOL. IV.

LONDON: WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, STAMFORD STREET.

Transcriber's Note

Punctuation errors have been corrected.

The following suspected printer's error has been addressed.

Page 28. burse changed to bourse.

Changed in two places towards the end of the paragraph
which ends in footnote [7]

