

sion of him. When the Armada came, as come it would, he should meet his enemy at last! He could wait now patiently: if—and he shuddered at himself, as he found himself in the very act of breathing a prayer that Don Guzman might not die before that meeting.

In the meanwhile, rumor flew thousand-tongued through the length and breadth of the land; of vast preparations going on in Spain and Italy; of timber felled long before for some such purpose, brought down to the sea, and sawn out for shipbuilding; of casting of cannon, and drilling of soldiers; of ships in hundreds collecting at Lisbon; of a crusade preached by Pope Sixtus the Fifth, who had bestowed the kingdom of England on the Spaniard, to be enjoyed by him as vassal tributary to Rome; of a million of gold to be paid by the pope, one-half down at once, the other half when London was taken; of Cardinal Allen writing and printing busily in the Netherlands, calling on all good Englishmen to carry out, by rebelling against Elizabeth, the Bull of Sixtus the Fifth, said (I blush to repeat it) to have been dictated by the Holy Ghost; of Inquisitors getting ready fetters and devil's engines of all sorts; of princes and noblemen, flocking from all quarters, gentlemen selling their private estates to fit out ships; how the Prince of Melito, the Marquess of Burgrave, Vespasian Gonzaga, John Medicis, Amadas of Savoy, in short, the illegitimate sons of all the southern princes, having no lands of their own, were coming to find that necessary of life in this pleasant little wheat-garden. Nay, the Duke of Medina Sidonia had already engaged Mount-Edgcombe for himself, as the fairest jewel of the south; which when good old Sir Richard Edgcombe heard, he observed quietly, that in 1555 he had the pleasure of receiving at his table at one time the admirals of England, Spain, and the Netherlands, and therefore had experience in entertaining Dons; and made preparations for the visit by filling his cellars with gunpowder, with a view to a house-warming and feu-de-joie on the occasion. But as old Fuller says, "The bear was not yet killed, and Medina Sidonia might have caught a great cold, had he no other clothes to wear than the skin thereof."

So flew rumor, false and true, till poor John Bull's wits were well-nigh turned: but to the very last, after his lazy fashion, he persuaded himself that it would all come right somehow; that it was too great news to be true; that if

it was true, the expedition was only meant for the Netherlands; and, in short, sat quietly over his beef and beer for many a day after the French king had sent him fair warning, and the queen, the ministry, and the admirals had been assuring him again and again that he, and not the Dutchman, was the destined prey of this great flight of ravenous birds.

At last the Spaniard, in order that there should be no mistake about the matter, kindly printed a complete bill of the play, to be seen still in Van Meteran, for the comfort of all true Catholics, and confusion of all pestilent heretics; which document, of course, the seminary priests used to enforce the duty of helping the invaders, and the certainty of their success; and from their hands it soon passed into those of the devout ladies, who were not very likely to keep it to themselves; till John Bull himself found his daughters buzzing over it with very pale faces (as young ladies well might who had no wish to follow the fate of the damsels of Antwerp), and condescending to run his eye through it, discovered, what all the rest of Europe had known for months past, that he was in a very great scrape.

Well it was for England then, that her Tudor sovereigns had compelled every man (though they kept up no standing army) to be a trained soldier. Well it was that Elizabeth, even in those dangerous days of intrigue and rebellion, had trusted her people enough, not only to leave them their weapons, but (what we forsooth, in these more "free" and "liberal" days dare not do) to teach them how to use them. Well it was, that by careful legislation for the comfort and employment of "the masses" (term then, thank God, unknown), she had both won their hearts, and kept their bodies in fighting order. Well it was that, acting as fully as Napoleon did on "la carrière ouverte aux talents," she had raised to the highest post in her councils, her army, and her navy, men of business, who had not been ashamed to buy and sell as merchants and adventurers. Well for England, in a word, that Elizabeth had pursued for thirty years a very different course from that which we have been pursuing for the last thirty, with one exception, namely the leaving as much as possible to private enterprise.

There we have copied her: would to Heaven that we had in some other matters! It is the fashion now to call her a despot: but unless every monarch is to be branded

with that epithet whose power is not as circumscribed as Queen Victoria's is now, we ought rather to call her the most popular sovereign, obeyed of their own free will by the freest subjects which England has ever seen; confess the Armada fight to have been as great a moral triumph as it was a political one; and (now that our late boasting is a little silenced by Crimean disasters) inquire whether we have not something to learn from those old Tudor times, as to how to choose officials, how to train a people, and how to defend a country.

To return to the thread of my story.

January 1587-8 had well-nigh run through, before Sir Richard Grenville made his appearance on the streets of Bideford. He had been appointed in November one of the council of war for providing for the safety of the nation, and the West Country had seen nothing of him since. But one morning, just before Christmas, his stately figure darkened the old bay-window at Burrough, and Amyas rushed out to meet him, and bring him in, and ask what news from Court.

"All good news, dear lad, and dearer Madam. The Queen shows the spirit of a very Boadicea or Semiramis; ay, a very Scythian Tomyris, and if she had the Spaniard before her now, would verily, for aught I know, feast him as the Scythian queen did Cyrus, with 'Satia te sanguine, quod sitisti.'"

"I trust her most merciful spirit is not so changed already," said Mrs. Leigh.

"Well, if she would not do it, I would, and ask pardon afterwards, as Raleigh did about the rascals at Smerwick, whom Amyas knows of. Mrs. Leigh, these are times in which mercy is cruelty. Not England alone, but the world, the Bible, the Gospel itself, is at stake; and we must do terrible things, lest we suffer more terrible ones."

"God will take care of world and Bible better than any cruelty of ours, dear Sir Richard."

"Nay, but, Mrs. Leigh, we must help Him to take care of them! If those Smerwick Spaniards had not been——"

"The Spaniard would not have been exasperated into invading us."

"And we should not have had this chance of crushing him once and for all: but the quarrel is of older standing, Madam, eh, Amyas? Amyas, has Raleigh written to you of late?"

"Not a word, and I wonder why."

"Well; no wonder at that, if you knew how he has been laboring. The wonder is, whence he got the knowledge wherewith to labor; for he never saw sea-work to my remembrance."

"Never saw a shot fired by sea, except ours at Smerwick, and that brush with the Spaniards in 1579, when he sailed for Virginia with Sir Humphrey; and he was a mere crack then."

"So you consider him as your pupil, eh? But he learnt enough in the Netherland wars, and in Ireland too, if not of the strength of ships, yet still of the weakness of land forces; and would you believe it, the man has twisted the whole council round his finger, and made them give up the land defences to the naval ones."

"Quite right he, and wooden walls against stone ones forever! But as for twisting, he would persuade Satan, if he got him alone for half an hour."

"I wish he would sail for Spain then, just now, and try the powers of his tongue," said Mrs. Leigh.

"But are we to have the honor, really?"

"We are, lad. There were many in the council who were for disputing the landing on shore, and said—which I do not deny—that the 'prentice boys of London could face the bluest blood in Spain. But Raleigh argued (following my Lord Burleigh in that) that we differed from the Low Countries, and all other lands, in that we had not a castle or town throughout, which would stand a ten days' siege, and that our ramparts, as he well said, were, after all, only a body of men. So, he argued, as long as the enemy has power to land where he will, prevention, rather than cure, is our only hope; and that belongs to the office, not of an army, but of a fleet. So the fleet was agreed on, and a fleet we shall have."

"Then here is his health, the health of a true friend to all bold mariners, and myself in particular! But where is he now?"

"Coming here tomorrow, as I hope—for he left London with me, and so down by us into Cornwall, to drill the train-bands, as he is bound to do, being Seneschal of the Duchies and Lieutenant-General of the count—"

"Besides Lord Warden of the Stanneries! How the man thrives!" said Mrs. Leigh.

"How the man deserves to thrive!" said Amyas; "but what are we to do?"

"That is the rub. I would fain stay and fight the Spaniards."

"So would I; and will."

"But he has other plans in his head for us."

"We can make our own plans without his help."

"Heyday, Amyas! How long? When did he ask you to do a thing yet and you refuse him?"

"Not often, certainly: but Spaniards I must fight."

"Well, so must I, boy: but I have given a sort of promise to him, nevertheless."

"Not for me too, I hope?"

"No: he will extract that himself when he comes: you must come and sup tomorrow, and talk it over."

"Be talked over, rather. What chestnut does the cat want us monkeys to pull out of the fire for him now, I wonder?"

"Sir Richard Grenville is hardly accustomed to be called a monkey," said Mrs. Leigh.

"I meant no harm; and his worship knows it, none better; but where is Raleigh going to send us, with a murrain?"

"To Virginia. The settlers must have help: and as I trust in God, we shall be back again long before this armament can bestir itself."

So Raleigh came, saw, and conquered. Mrs. Leigh consented to Amyas' going (for his twelvemonth would be over ere the fleet could start) upon so peaceful and useful an errand; and the next five months were spent in continual labor on the part of Amyas and Grenville, till seven ships were all but ready in Bideford river, the admiral whereof was Amyas Leigh.

But that fleet was not destined ever to see the shores of the New World: it had nobler work to do (if Americans will forgive the speech) than even settling the United States.

It was in the long June evenings, in the year 1588; Mrs. Leigh sat in the open window, busy at her needle-work; Ayacanora sat opposite to her, on the seat of the bay, trying diligently to read "The History of the Nine Worthies," and stealing a glance every now and then towards the garden, where Amyas stalked up and down as he had used to do in happier days gone by. But his

brow was contracted now, his eyes fixed on the ground, as he plodded backwards and forwards, his hands behind his back, and a huge cigar in his mouth, the wonder of the little boys of Northam, who peeped in stealthily as they passed the iron-work gates, to see the back of the famous fire-breathing captain who had sailed round the world and been in the country of headless men and flying dragons, and then popped back their heads suddenly as he turned toward them in his walk. And Ayacanora looked, and looked with no less admiration than the urchins at the gate; but she got no more of an answering look from Amyas than they did; for his head was full of calculations of tonnage and stowage, of salt pork and ale-barrels, and the packing of tools and seeds; for he had promised Raleigh to do his best for the new colony, and he was doing it with all his might; so Ayacanora looked back again to her book, and heaved a deep sigh. It was answered by one from Mrs. Leigh.

"We are a melancholy pair, sweet chuck," said the fair widow. "What is my maid sighing about, there?"

"Because I cannot make out the long words," said Ayacanora, telling a very white fib.

"Is that all? Come to me, and I will tell you."

Ayacanora moved over to her, and sat down at her feet.

"H—e, he, r—o, ro, i—c—a—l, heroical," said Mrs. Leigh.

"But what does that mean?"

"Grand, good and brave, like—"

Mrs. Leigh was about to have said the name of one who was lost to her on earth. His fair angelic face hung opposite upon the wall. She paused unable to pronounce his name; and lifted up her eyes, and gazed on the portrait, and breathed a prayer between closed lips, and drooped her head again.

Her pupil caught at the pause, and filled it up for herself—

"Like him?" and she turned her head quickly toward the window.

"Yes, like him, too," said Mrs. Leigh, with a half-smile at the gesture. "Now mind your book. Maidens must not look out of the window in school hours."

"Shall I ever be an English girl?" asked Ayacanora.

"You are one now, sweet; your father was an English gentleman."

Amyas looked in and saw the two sitting together.

"You seem quite merry there," said he.

"Come in, then, and be merry with us."

He entered, and sat down; while Ayacanora fixed her eyes most steadfastly on her book.

"Well, how goes on the reading?" said he; and then without waiting for an answer—"We shall be ready to clear out this day week, mother, I do believe; that is, if the hatchets are made in time to pack them."

"I hope they will be better than the last," said Mrs. Leigh. "It seems to me a shameful sin to palm off on poor ignorant savages goods which we should consider worthless for ourselves."

"Well, its not over fair: but still, they are a sight better than they ever had before. An old hoop is better than a deer's bone, as Ayacanora knows,—eh?"

"I don't know anything about it," said she, who was always nettled at the least allusion to her past wild life. "I am an English girl now, and all that is gone—I forget it."

"Forget it?" said he, teasing her for want of something better to do. "Should not you like to sail with us, now, and see the Indians in the forests once again?"

"Sail with you?" and she looked up eagerly.

"There! I knew it! She would not be four-and-twenty hours ashore, but she would be off into the woods again, bow in hand, like any runaway nymph, and we should never see her more."

"It is false, bad man!" and she burst into violent tears, and hid her face in Mrs. Leigh's lap.

"Amyas, Amyas, why do you tease the poor fatherless thing?"

"I was only jesting, I'm sure," said Amyas, like a repentant schoolboy. "Don't cry now, don't cry, my child, see here," and he began fumbling in his pockets; "see what I bought of a chapman in town today for you, my maid, indeed, I did."

And out he pulled some smart kerchief or other, which had taken his sailor's fancy.

"Look at it now, blue, and crimson, and green, like any parrot!" and he held it out.

She looked round sharply, snatched it out of his hand, and tore it to shreds.

"I hate it, and I hate you!" and she sprang up and darted out of the room.

"Oh, boy, boy!" said Mrs. Leigh, "will you kill that poor child? It matters little for an old heart like mine, which has but one or two chords left whole, how soon it be broken altogether; but a young heart is one of God's precious treasures, Amyas, and suffers many a long pang in the breaking; and woe to them who despise Christ's little ones!"

"Break your heart, mother?"

"Never mind my heart, dear son; yet how can you break it more surely than by tormenting one whom I love, because she loves you?"

"Tut! play, mother, and maids' tempers. But how can I break your heart? What have I done? Have I not given up going again to the West Indies for your sake? Have I not given up going to Virginia, and now again settled to go after all, just because you commanded? Was it not your will? Have I not obeyed you, mother, mother? I will stay at home now, if you will. I would rather rust here on land, I vow I would, than grieve you—" and he threw himself at his mother's knees.

"Have I asked you not to go to Virginia? No, dear boy, though every thought of a fresh parting seems to crack some new fibre within me, you must go! It is your calling. Yes; you were not sent into the world to amuse me, but to work. I have had pleasure enough of you, my darling, for many a year, and too much, perhaps; till I shrank from lending you to the Lord. But he must have you. . . . It is enough for the poor old widow to know that her boy is what he is, and to forget all her anguish day by day, for joy that a man is born into the world. But, Amyas, Amyas, are you so blind as not to see that Ayacanora—"

"Don't talk about her, poor child. Talk about yourself."

"How long have I been worth talking about? No, Amyas, you must see it; and if you will not see it now, you will see it one day in some sad and fearful prodigy; for she is not one to die tamely. She loves you, Amyas, as a woman only can love."

"Loves me? Well, of course. I found her, and brought her home; and I don't deny she may think that she owes me somewhat—though it was no more than a Christian man's duty. But as for her caring much for me, mother, you measure every one else's tenderness by your own."

"Think that she owes you somewhat? Silly boy, this is not gratitude, but a deeper affection, which may be more heavenly than gratitude, as it may, too, become a horrible cause of ruin. It rests with you, Amyas, which of the two it will be."

"You are in earnest?"

"Have I the heart or the time to jest?"

"No, no, of course not; but, mother, I thought it was not comely for women to fall in love with men?"

"Not comely, at least, to confess their love to men. But she has never done that, Amyas; not even by a look or a tone of voice, though I have watched her for months."

"To be sure, she is as demure as any cat when I am in the way. I only wonder how you found it out."

"Ah," said she, smiling sadly, "even in the saddest woman's soul there linger snatches of old music, odors of flowers long dead and turned to dust—pleasant ghosts, which still keep her mind attuned to that which may be in others, though in her never more; till she can hear her own wedding-hymn re-echoed in the tones of every girl who loves, and sees her own wedding-torch relighted in the eyes of every bride."

"You would not have me marry her?" asked blunt, practical Amyas.

"God knows what I would have—I know not; I see neither your path nor my own—no, not after weeks and months of prayer. All things beyond are wrapped in mist, and what will be, I know not, save that whatever else is wrong, mercy at least is right."

"I'd sail tomorrow, if I could. As for marrying her, mother—her birth, mind me—"

"Ah, boy, boy! Are you God, to visit the sins of the parents upon the children?"

"Not that. I don't mean that; but I mean this, that she is half a Spaniard, mother; and I cannot!—Her blood may be as blue as King Philip's own, but it is Spanish still! I cannot bear the thought that my children should have in their veins one drop of that poison."

"Amyas! Amyas!" interrupted she, "is this not, too, visiting the parents' sins on the children?"

"Not a whit; it is common sense,—she must have the taint of their bloodthirsty humor. She has it—I have seen it in her again and again. I have told you, have I not?"

Can I forget the look of her eyes as she stood over that galleon's captain, with the smoking knife in her hand?—Ugh! And she is not tamed yet, as you can see, and never will be,—not that I care, except for her own sake, poor thing!"

"Cruel boy! to impute as a blame to the poor child, not only the errors of her training, but the very madness of the love!"

"Of her love?"

"Of what else, blind buzzard? From the moment that you told me the story of that captain's death, I knew what was in her heart—and thus it is that you requite her for having saved your life!"

"Umph! that is one word too much, mother. If you don't want to send me crazy, don't put the thing on the score of gratitude or duty. As it is, I can hardly speak civilly to her (God forgive me) when I recollect that she belongs to the crew who murdered him," and he pointed to the picture, and Mrs. Leigh shuddered as he did so.

"You feel it! You know you feel it, tender-hearted, forgiving angel as you are; and what do you think I must feel?"

"Oh, my son, my son!" cried she wringing her hands, "if I be wretch enough to give place to the devil for a moment, does that give you a right to entertain and cherish him thus day by day?"

"I should cherish him with a vengeance, if I brought up a crew of children who could boast of a pedigree of idolaters and tyrants, hunters of Indians, and torturers of women! How pleasant to hear her telling Master Jack, 'Your illustrious grand-uncle the pope's legate, was the man who burned Rose Salterne at Carthage'; or Miss Grace, 'Your great grandfather of sixteen quarterings, the Marquis of this, son of the Grandquerry that, and husband of the Princess t'other, used to feed his bloodhounds, when beef was scarce, with Indians' babies!' Eh, mother? These things are true, and if you can forget them, I cannot. Is it not enough to have made me forego for awhile my purpose, my business, the one thing I live for, and that is, hunting down the Spaniards as I would adders or foxes, but you must ask me over and above to take one to my bosom?"

"Oh, my son, my son! I have not asked you to do that; I have only commanded you, in God's name, to be merciful,

if you wish to obtain mercy. Oh, if you will not pity this poor maiden, pity yourself; for God knows you stand in more need of it than she does!"

Amyas was silent for a minute or two; and then,—

"If it were not for you, mother, would God that the Armada would come!"

"What, and ruin England!"

"No! Curse them! Not a foot will they ever set on English soil, such a welcome would we give them. If I were but in the midst of that fleet, fighting like a man—to forget it all, with a galleon on board of me to larboard, and another to starboard—and then to put a linstock in the magazine, and go aloft in good company—I don't care how soon it comes, mother, if it were not for you."

"If I am in your way, Amyas, do not fear that I shall trouble you long."

"Oh, mother, mother, do not talk in that way! I am half-mad, I think, already, and don't know what I say. Yes, I am mad; mad at heart, though not at head. There's a fire burning me up, night and day, and nothing but Spanish blood will put it out."

"Or the grace of God, my poor wilful child! Who comes to the door?—so quickly, too!"

There was a loud hurried knocking, and in another minute a serving-man hurried in with a letter.

"This to Captain Amyas Leigh with haste, haste!"

It was Sir Richard's hand. Amyas tore it open; and "a loud laugh laughed he."

"The Armada is coming! My wish has come true, mother!"

"God help us, it has! Show me the letter."

It was a hurried scrawl.

"DR. GODSON,

"Walsingham sends word that the *Ada*, sailed from Lisbon to the Groyne the 18. of May. We know no more, but have commandment to stay the ships. Come down, dear lad, and give us counsel; and may the Lord help His Church in this great strait.

"Your loving godfather, R. G."

"Forgive me, mother, mother, once for all!" cried Amyas, throwing his arms round her neck.

"I have nothing to forgive, my son, my son! And shall I lose thee, also?"

"If I be killed, you will have two martyrs of your blood, mother!"

Mrs. Leigh bowed her head, and was silent. Amyas caught up his hat and sword, and darted forth toward Bideford.

Amyas literally danced into Sir Richard's hall, where he stood talking earnestly with various merchants and captains.

"Gloria, gloria! gentles all! The devil is broke loose at last; and now we know where to have him on the hip!"

"Why so merry, Captain Leigh, when all else are sad!" said a gentle voice by his side.

"Because I have been sad a long time, while all else were merry, dear lady. Is the hawk doleful when his hood is pulled off, and he sees the heron flapping right ahead of him?"

"You seem to forget the danger and the woe of us weak women, sir?"

"I don't forget the danger and the woe of one weak woman, Madam, and she the daughter of a man who once stood in this room," said Amyas, suddenly collecting himself, in a low stern voice. "And I don't forget the danger and the woe of one who was worth a thousand even of her. I don't forget anything, Madam."

"Nor forgive either, it seems."

"It will be the time to talk of forgiveness after the offender has repented and amended; and does the sailing of the Armada look like that?"

"Alas no! God help us!"

"He will help us, Madam," said Amyas.

"Admiral Leigh," said Sir Richard, "we need you now, if ever. Here are the queen's orders to furnish as many ships as we can; though from these gentlemen's spirit, I should say the orders were well-nigh needless."

"Not a doubt, sir; for my part, I will fit my ship at my own charges, and fight her too, as long as I have a leg or an arm left."

"Or a tongue to say, never surrender, I'll warrant!" said an old merchant. "You put life into us old fellows,

Admiral Leigh; but it will be a heavy matter for those poor fellows in Virginia, and for my daughter too, Madam Dare, with her young babe, as I hear, just born."

"And a very heavy matter," said some one else, "for those who have ventured their money in these cargoes,

which must lie idle, you see, now for a year maybe—and then all the cost of unlading again——”

“My good sir,” said Grenville, “what have private interests to do with this day? Let us thank God if He only please to leave us the bare fee-simple of this English soil, the honor of our wives and daughters, and bodies safe from rack and fagot, to wield the swords of freemen in defence of a free land, even though every town and homestead in England were wasted with fire, and we left to rebuild over again all which our ancestors have wrought for us in now six hundred years.”

“Right, sir!” said Amyas. “For my part, let my Virginian goods rot on the quay, if the worst comes to the worst. I begin unloading the Vengeance tomorrow; and to sea as soon as I can fill up my crew to a good fighting number.”

And so the talk ran on; and ere two days were passed, most of the neighboring gentlemen, summoned by Sir Richard, had come in, and great was the bidding against each other as to who should do most. Cary and Brimblecombe, with thirty tall Clovelly men, came across the bay, and without even asking leave of Amyas, took up their berths as a matter of course on board the Vengeance. In the meanwhile, the matter was taken up by families. The Fortescues (a numberless clan) offered to furnish a ship; the Chichesters another, the Stukelys a third; while the merchantmen were not backward. The Bucks, the Stranges, the Heardes, joyfully unloaded their Virginian goods, and replaced them with powder and shot; and in a week's time the whole seven were ready once more for sea, and dropped down into Appledore pool, with Amyas as their admiral for the time being (for Sir Richard had gone by land to Plymouth to join the deliberations there), and waited for the first favorable wind to start for the rendezvous in the Sound.

At last, upon the twenty-first of June, the clank of the capstans rang merrily across the flats, and amid prayers and blessings, forth sailed that gallant squadron over the bar, to play their part in Britain's Salamis; while Mrs. Leigh stood watching as she stood once before, beside the churchyard wall: but not alone this time; for Ayacanora stood by her side, and gazed and gazed, till her eyes seemed ready to burst from their sockets. At last she turned away with a sob,—

“And he never bade me good-bye, mother!”

“God forgive him! Come home and pray, my child; there is no other rest on earth than prayer for woman's heart!”

They were calling each other mother and daughter then? Yes. The sacred fire of sorrow was fast burning out all Ayacanora's fallen savageness; and, like a Phoenix, the true woman was rising from those ashes, fair, noble and all-enduring, as God had made her.

It was the spectacle which had attracted the noblest of Plymouth's best people, made upon the noble port of Plymouth, its vast harbor water spanning the Sound, its streets and docks its quays lined with gallant ships, and watched the great steamships turning their light bows to the eastward, or finishing the crowded decks with the last of the latest boats—what it was some might think the most beautiful scene, and all the magnificence of its wealth and its power, had vanished—as if by magic, before the scene which had found the fleet's chosen back there, mounted year after year into the pleasant summer days of 1787. Mount Edgcumbe is still there, beautiful as ever, for where are the docks, and where is Devonport? No more the dock roots rise at the water's edge. The great ships carry but a paltry battery, just taken by the men who made it better; Mount Wise is a lone gentleman's house among fields; the channel is a pop-gun for an atrocious class of men who shell into rubble for an atrocious amusement. And the shipping, where the ships of the floating castles of the Hanseatic have dwelt to a crawling limbo, and the Calcutta is packed not now with merchant craft, but with the ships who tomorrow begin the greatest seafight which the world has ever seen.

There they lie, a paltry squadron enough in modern eyes, the latest of them not equal in size to a six-and-thirty-gun frigate, carrying less weight of metal than one of our own gun-boats, and able to employ even that at but more than a hunter of our modern range. Would our modern gun-towers, that come down by rail in a few hours to the cavalry square, and return tomorrow in time for dinner