

43. At once on all her stately gates  
 Arose the answering fires ;  
 At once the wild alarum clashed  
 From all her reeling spires ;  
 From all the batteries of the Tower  
 Pealed loud the voice of fear ;  
 And all the thousand masts of Thames  
 Sent back a louder cheer :
44. And from the farthest wards was heard  
 The rush of hurrying feet,  
 And the broad streams of pikes and flags  
 Rushed down each roaring street ;  
 And broader still became the blaze,  
 And louder still the din,  
 As if from every village round  
 The horse came spurring in :
45. And eastward straight from wild Blackheath  
 The warlike errand went,  
 And roused in many an ancient hall  
 The gallant squires of Kent.  
 Southward from Surrey's pleasant hills  
 Flew those bright couriers forth ;  
 High on bleak Hampstead's swarthy moor  
 They started for the north ;
46. And on, and on, without a pause  
 Untired they bounded still ;  
 All night from tower to tower they sprang :  
 They sprang from hill to hill :  
 Till the proud peak unfurled the flag  
 O'er Darwin's rocky dales,  
 Till like volcanoes flared to heaven  
 The stormy hills of Wales ;

47. Till twelve fair counties saw the blaze  
 On Malvern's lonely height,  
 Till streamed in crimson on the wind  
 The Wrekin's crest of light,  
 Till broad and fierce the star came forth  
 On Ely's stately fane,  
 And tower and hamlet rose in arms  
 O'er all the boundless plain ;
48. Till Belvoir's lordly terraces  
 The sign to Lincoln sent,  
 And Lincoln sped the message on  
 O'er the wide vale of Trent ;  
 Till Skiddaw saw the fire that burned  
 On Gaunt's embattled pile,  
 And the red glare on Skiddaw rouse  
 The burghers of Carlisle.

## THE PRELIMINARY SKIRMISH.

49. It was on Saturday, July 20th, a dull, misty day, that the two great fleets, which represented the cause of freedom on the one side and the longing after universal empire on the other, came in sight of each other. The great Armada, with its huge galleons in battle array extending over a space of many miles, was suffered to sail up the Channel, past Plymouth Harbor, without molestation. This was in accordance with the general plan of attack which had been agreed upon.

50. The superior force of the Spaniards caused no fear, but rather a grim determination to overwhelm and destroy. The universal sentiment that seemed to prevail among all classes of Englishmen concerning their country finds fitting expression in the words which Shakespeare puts into the mouth of John of Gaunt :

“ This royal throne of kings, this sceptered isle,  
 This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,  
 This other Eden, demi-paradise;  
 This fortress, built by Nature for herself  
 Against infection and the hand of war;  
 This happy breed of men, this little world;  
 This precious stone set in the silver sea,  
 Which serves it in the office of a wall,  
 Or as a moat defensive to a house,  
 Against the envy of less happier lands;  
 This blessed spot, this earth, this realm, this England,  
 Dear for her reputation through the world.”

51. To guard this favored spot, and to protect its soil from the polluting footstep of the hated Spaniard, mariners went forth to do or die. It was now, in the moment of supreme peril, that the courage, hardihood, and skill of England's great navigators gained in battle with the elements in the unknown seas of the North and West, and in many a strife against fearful odds with their Spanish foes, were found to be equal to the occasion and sufficient to insure the safety of their country.

52. On Sunday morning, July 21st, the English ships commenced their attacks upon their unwieldy antagonists. “The Spanish ships,” says Motley, “seemed arrayed for a pageant in honor of a victory won. Arranged in the form of a crescent whose horns were seven miles asunder, those gilded towers and floating castles, with their brilliant standards and martial music, bore slowly up the Channel. The admiral, the ‘Golden Duke,’ stood in his private shot-proof tower, on the deck of his great galleon, the Saint Martin, surrounded by guards of infantry and captains of cavalry, no better acquainted than himself with naval tactics.

53. “And just as the gadfly hovers about and stings the horse, which is all unable to escape from its tiny ene-

my, so round the heavy galleons and unwieldy ships of Spain the light English vessels, commanded by able and experienced seamen, hovered with the utmost freedom. Their superior tactics soon obtained the advantage of the wind, enabling them at intervals to cannonade their enemies with great effect, while they themselves escaped out of range at pleasure, and easily avoided the tremendous discharge of the Spanish ordnance.

54. “In vain the Golden Duke attempted to bring on a general engagement. Howard and Drake were well aware that in a ship-to-ship fight the strongest would necessarily conquer, and that their only hope of success lay in keeping close upon the enemy's flanks, or following at his heels, cutting off a stray galleon, making a dash into his ill-managed squadrons, and so gradually but surely reducing his strength, until they could venture to give him battle on more equal terms.”

55. “The Armada,” Mr. Froude says, “made sail and attempted to close. To Medina Sidonia's extreme astonishment, it seemed at the pleasure of the English to leave him or allow him to approach them as they chose. The high-towered, broad-bowed galleons moved like Thames barges piled with hay, while the sharp, low English ships sailed at near two feet to the Spaniards' one and shot away, as if by magic, in the eye of the wind. It was as if a modern steam fleet was engaged with a squadron of the old-fashioned sailing-vessels, choosing their own distance, and fighting or not fighting, as suited their convenience.

56. “Astonished and confounded, as well by the manoeuvring as by the rapidity of the English fire, the Spanish officers could not refuse their admiration. They knew they were inferior at sea, but had not fully realized their inferiority, notwithstanding the lessons Drake, Hawkins,

Cavendish, and others had already taught them. But here were the English firing four shots to their one, while their ships were so nimble that, with a fresh breeze, even the swiftest of the Spanish ships could not touch them. Such splendid gunners and skillful seamen the Spaniards had never seen before, and were hardly able to believe in their existence."

57. The wind was from the west, so that the English fleet were able to keep to the windward, giving them an increased advantage over their antagonists. The Spanish gunners, drafted from the army, could not manage the naval ordnance, and their shots flew high and scarcely touched the English ships. On the other hand, the Spanish vessels were riddled with shot, and men fell killed and wounded on every side. But the ships were too strongly built to be easily destroyed, and so the monsters continued to receive fearful blows, and sailed wearily and helplessly on. Toward night, Medina Sidonia, finding it impossible to bring on a general engagement, signaled to make sail up the Channel, the rear to be covered by the squadron under his second in command, Don Martinez de Recaldi.

58. "The wind was now rising and promised a squally evening. The English ships withdrew for want of powder. An express was sent up to London for a fresh supply. A fast boat was dispatched to Lord Harry Seymour, who commanded a fleet of coasters farther up the Channel, with a letter reporting progress so far, and bidding him be on the alert. But the misfortunes of the Spaniards were not yet over. The Capitana, one of their largest galleons, fouled with another vessel and broke her bowsprit. She fell behind, and was left to her fate. In the morning Drake took possession of her, and found many casks of reals, and, what was of more importance, some

tons of gunpowder, with which the Roebuck, the swiftest traveler of the fleet, flew to the lord admiral.

59. "Shortly after dark another serious accident occurred. The officers of one of the great galleons, impatient and irritated at the results of the action, were quarreling with one another. The captain struck the master-gunner with a stick. The gunner, who was from Holland, went below in a rage, thrust a burning linstock, or long match, into a powder-barrel, and sprang through a port-hole into the sea. The deck was blown off from stem to stern. Two hundred seamen and soldiers were sent into the air: some fell into the water and were drowned; some, scorched or mutilated, dropped back into the wreck. The ship, which was one of the largest in the fleet, was built so strongly that she survived the shock, and at daylight the English took possession of her. At the bottom of the hold were many barrels of powder, which Lord Howard so sorely needed."

#### THE PROGRESS OF THE FIGHT.

60. On the morning of July 22d the Spanish admiral saw the remainder of the English fleet coming up from Plymouth Harbor, and he made all sail up the Channel. Owing to the want of powder, the attack of the English was less vigorous than on the day before, but still they dogged the Spaniards in the most persevering manner, and succeeded in inflicting serious damage upon many of the Spanish vessels. The breeze from the west still continued, but it was light, and the fleets made but little headway during the day.

61. On Tuesday, July 23d, a strong morning breeze sprang up from the east, and the Spaniards found themselves for the first time to the windward. Taking advan-

tage of the situation, they bore down upon the English fleet, and tried to bring on a general engagement. This challenge the English would not accept, and stood out to sea toward the west. The Spaniards thought they were retreating, and gave chase. All the galleons were bad sailers, but some were better than others, and soon the San Marcus outstripped her consorts. When several miles ahead of all her companions the wind shifted to the west, leaving the English to the windward. Lord Howard immediately bore down in his flag-ship, the Ark, and attacked the San Marcus, but she defended herself with great bravery, and for an hour and a half fought single-handed, delivering eighty shots and receiving five hundred. His powder again giving out, Lord Howard was obliged to withdraw. This action was fought off Plymouth Harbor, so that in the three days' fight the Armada had made no substantial progress toward its destination.

62. "By this time the news that the Armada was in the Channel had circulated throughout the length and breadth of England, and from every creek and port and harbor came accession of goodly ships, equipped at the cost of leading squires and nobles, and manned by her 'best blood.' From Lyme and Weymouth and Poole and the Isle of Wight, young lords and gentlemen came streaming out in every smack or sloop they could lay hold of, to snatch their share of danger and glory at Howard's side. The strength which they were able to add was little or nothing, but they brought enthusiasm; they brought to the half-starved crews the sense that the heart of all England was with them, and this assurance transformed every seaman into a hero.

63. "On Tuesday evening, after the fight, Medina Sidonia counted a hundred sail behind him, and he ob-

served, with some uneasiness, that the numbers were continually increasing. On Wednesday, July 24th, the weather was calm, and the English lay idle at a short distance from the Armada waiting for powder.

64. "Thursday, July 25th, was the feast-day of Spain's patron saint, St. Jago; of him who, mounted on a milk-white steed, had ridden in fore-front of battle in one of the Spanish encounters with the Moors, and had led them to victory. Should nothing on this holy day be done in his honor by those whom he had so greatly favored? It was decided to make an attack. The galleys led the way, and in their van rode three of the four great galliasses, thrashing the sea to foam with three hundred oars apiece. The English met them with such tremendous discharges of chain-shot that, had not the wind risen about noon, enabling the Spanish ships to come up to their assistance, the galleys would surely have been taken. When the lord admiral withdrew his ships, the Spaniards were so cowed that they made no attempt to pursue them."

65. "Thus," says Canon Kingsley, "the fight had thundered on the live-long afternoon, beneath the virgin cliffs of Freshwater, on the Isle of Wight, while myriad sea-fowl rose screaming from every ledge, and with their black wings spotted the snow-white walls of chalk; and the lone shepherd hurried down the slopes above to peer over the dizzy ledge, and forgot the wheat-ear fluttering in his snare, while, trembling, he gazes upon glimpses of tall masts and gorgeous flags, piercing at times the league-broad veil of sulphur-smoke which weltered far below."

#### BRIEF RESPITE FROM BATTLE.

66. Friday, July 26th, was a tranquil summer day. The wind died away, and the two fleets, but a few miles

apart, lay rocking on the waves. The Duke of Medina Sidonia took advantage of the pause and sent a swift messenger to the Prince of Parma, praying him to dispatch to his assistance forty small sailing-vessels, capable of contending with the light swift craft of the English. All the next day, July 27th, the two fleets sailed slowly up the Channel in hostile but silent companionship—the Spaniard convinced he could not meet the Englishman in open fight; the Englishman heedful that he should not be surrounded by a superior force. At night the battered and maltreated Armada took refuge in the harbor of Calais.

67. The same afternoon Lord Howard was joined by Sir Harry Seymour with his squadron of sixteen vessels, which had been keeping watch along the eastern ports, and the combined fleet dropped anchor to the eastward of Calais, and within a mile and a half of the French shore. "Never, since England was England," says Mr. Motley, "had such a sight been seen as now revealed itself in those narrow straits between Dover and Calais. Along that low, sandy shore, and quite within the range of the Calais fortifications, one hundred and thirty Spanish ships—the greater number of them the largest and most heavily armed in the world—lay face to face, and scarcely out of cannon-shot, with one hundred and fifty English sloops and frigates, the strongest and swiftest that the island could furnish, and commanded by men whose exploits had rung through the world.

68. "Farther along the coast, invisible but known to be performing a most perilous and vital service, was a squadron of Dutch vessels of all sizes lining both the outer and inner of the sand-banks of the Flemish coasts and swarming in all the estuaries and inlets of that intricate and dangerous cruising-ground between Dunkirk and

Texel. Those fleets of Holland and Zealand, numbering some one hundred and fifty galleons, sloops, and fly-boats, lay patiently blockading every possible egress from the ports in possession of the Duke of Parma, and longing to grapple with him as soon as his fleet of gunboats and hoys, packed with his Spanish and Italian veterans, should venture to set forth upon the sea for their long-meditated enterprise."

69. This friendly attitude of the Dutch to the English was due to a variety of causes. Both nations represented the new religion in its struggle against the established church. In consequence of the terrible atrocities of the Duke of Alva, the Dutch had an inextinguishable hatred for the Spaniards, and were ready to do anything to thwart their plans and diminish their power. Then, too, the Dutch remembered how the ships of Elizabeth, laden with provisions, had brought succor to their beleaguered cities and saved the lives of their famished people. So, animated by enmity on the one side and by gratitude on the other, the Dutch for a time forgot their struggle for maritime supremacy with the English, and brought all their force to bear to support the English cause in its hour of greatest need.

70. The Spaniards seem never to have anticipated this energetic action on the part of the Dutch. The Duke of Medina Sidonia now found that he could get no direct sea communication with the Spanish land-forces; and the Duke of Parma found himself in a situation where his invincible army was powerless, and his soldierly experience and talents were of no avail. The plans of the Spanish admiral to make use of the small vessels of Parma had been thwarted by the Dutch, and the dispersion of the Dutch vessels had been prevented by the fierce attack of Howard and Drake upon the Armada.

71. In coming to anchor on that Saturday night in Calais Harbor, however, the Spaniards had gained two important points. Their ships were under the protection of friendly land-batteries; and nothing remained to prevent the co-operation of the land-forces and the fleet. The Duke of Parma could march his forces westward and embark from Calais instead of Dunkirk, and thus turn the flank of the Dutch fleet.

72. Sunday, July 29th, was a day of suspense and anxiety on the part of both the contending forces. The English knew that a junction with Parma was now possible, and Howard and Drake were too good seamen not to know that, in a close and general engagement, the superior size, weight, and numbers of the Spanish ships would prevail. On the other hand, the Spaniards knew that they were in an unsafe harbor should a strong wind spring up from the west, and Medina Sidonia began to have a wholesome dread of the valor and strength which guarded the homes of Britain. The day passed in Sabbath quiet and repose, and when the sun set there was no indication that a night's strife was to follow, potential as shaping the future destinies of both Spain and England.

#### FRIGHT AND FLIGHT.

73. During the day, Captain Winter, of the English fleet, suggested that the Spaniards might be driven from their anchorage by fire-ships, and his plan was adopted. Six vessels were loaded with wild-fire, rosin, pitch, brimstone, and other combustibles, and made ready to sail. The night was dark, with indications in sky and sea of a coming gale. "When the Spanish bells," says Froude, "were about striking twelve, and, save the watch on deck, soldiers and seamen lay stretched in sleep, certain dark

objects, which had been seen dimly drifting in the tide near where the galleons lay thickest, shot suddenly into pyramids of light, flames leaping from ruddy sail to sail, flickering on the ropes and forecastles, masts and bowsprits, a lurid blaze of conflagration.

74. "A cool commander might have ordered out his boats and towed the fire-ships clear; but Medina Sidonia, with a strain already upon him beyond the strength of his capacity, saw coming some terrible engine of destruction, like the floating mine which had shattered Parma's bridge at Antwerp. Panic spread through the entire Armada. Hasty and impetuous cries arose on board each menaced vessel. 'Up anchors, comrades! Out every stitch of canvas! Away, away! for in the track of those blazing ships follow death and ruin!'

75. "There are times when immense bodies of men suddenly give way to the influence of a needless but overmastering panic, and this was one of them. Every cable was cut; galleon, galliase, and patache drove hurriedly through the press of shipping, each heedless of its comrade's danger, and seeking frantically some channel of escape. In vain the Duke of Medina Sidonia attempted to reform his disordered array. So long as the darkness lasted, the confusion prevailed; and ship after ship reeled, staggered, and drifted out to sea. Several of the Spanish ships were disabled, two were burned, and it was not until they found themselves six miles from shore, and at a secure distance from the smoldering hulks, that they recovered from their terror."

#### RENEWAL OF THE FIGHT.

76. On Monday, July 29th, when the day dawned, Lord Howard discovered the Spanish fleet in great disorder.

der, scattered over a wide space in the Channel. He immediately ordered an advance, and, while Drake made a bold attack upon the main body of the enemy, the lord high admiral drove upon the sands several of the sluggish vessels of the Armada which the fire-ships had failed to drive out to sea. For several hours he engaged the great galliasses under the direct command of Admiral Moncada, which was aground upon the sands. The vessel was captured and Moncada slain, and the English admiral hastened to the assistance of Drake.

77. "It was well," says Froude, "that no more time was wasted over so small a matter. Lord Howard had already delayed too long for his fame. It was no time for the admiral of the fleet to be loitering over a stray feather which had dropped from the enemy's plume when every ship was imperiously needed for a far more important service. Medina Sidonia intended to return to Calais, but his ships had drifted in the night far to the east, and before his signal of return could be obeyed the English fleet was upon them.

78. "Sir Henry Seymour, with his sixteen ships, having the advantage of wind, speed, and skill, came upon a cluster of Spanish galleons at eight in the morning. Reserving their fire till within a hundred and twenty yards, and wasting no cartridges, the English ships continued through the entire forenoon to pour upon them one continuous rain of shot. They were driven together, and became entangled in a confused and helpless mass.

79. "Drake, in the mean time, had fallen upon a score of galleons under the direct command of Medina Sidonia himself. They were better handled than the rest, and were endeavoring to keep sea-room and retain some command of themselves. But their wretched sailing powers put them to a disadvantage, for which no skill or courage

could compensate. The English were always at windward of them; and, hemmed in at every turn, they, too, were forced back upon their consorts, hunted together as a shepherd hunts sheep upon a common, and the whole mass of them were forced slowly eastward, away from the only harbor open to them, and into the unknown waters of the North Sea.

80. "Howard came up at noon to join in the work of destruction. The Spaniards' gun-practice, always bad, was helpless beyond all past experience. From eight o'clock in the morning until sunset the English, almost untouched themselves, fired into them without intermission at short range. They ceased only when the last cartridge was spent, and every man was weary with labor. They took no prizes, and they attempted to take none. Their orders were to sink and destroy. They saw three great galleons go down, and three more drift toward the sands, where their destruction was certain.

81. "On board the Spanish ships all was consternation and despair. Toward sunset the great Santa Maria went down with all on board. When the ships' companies were called over, it was discovered that no less than four thousand men had been killed or drowned, and twice as many wounded. The survivors were so utterly dispirited that nothing could induce them to face England's seakings again."

#### CHASE AND DESTRUCTION.

82. On Tuesday afternoon, July 30th, Lord Howard summoned a council of war, which decided upon a course of action. Lord Henry Seymour with his squadron was to return to guard the mouth of the Thames against any attempt on the part of Parma, while the remainder of the fleet was to continue the chase of the Armada. Ninety

vessels, under Howard, Drake, and Frobisher, followed the flying Spaniards into the North Sea. "We have the army of Spain before us," Drake wrote, "and hope, with the grace of God, to wrestle a fall with him. There was never anything pleased me better than seeing the enemy flying with a southerly wind to the northward. God grant you have a good eye to the Duke of Parma, for, if we live, I doubt not to handle the matter with the Duke of Sidonia, as he shall wish himself at St. Mary's Port, among his orange-trees!"

83. The wind, now strong from the south, had risen to a gale. The Spanish ships, so fashioned as to sail only before the wind, were driven northward. Between them and the shore, where lay possible safety, was the dreadful English fleet, which had battered them so sorely during the past ten days. Before them was the sea, full of unknown perils. "Not only man but God was against them. His wind blew discomfiture to their meditated enterprise. More than one poor, crippled ship dropped behind as her spars snapped, or the water made its way through her wounded seams in the straining seas. The Spaniards, stricken with a wonderful fear, made no attempt to succor their consorts, but pressed heavily on, leaving them to founder."

84. The pursuit continued until Friday, August 2d. There was now no more danger to be apprehended from the scattered enemy. The wind was threatening, and, the supply of provisions beginning to fail, Howard and Drake determined on returning homeward, leaving a couple of pinnaces to dog the Spaniards past the Scottish isles. Though the wind was contrary, they beat back against it without loss, and in four or five days the vessels, with their half-starved crews, all safely arrived in Margate Roads, having done the noblest service that fleet ever rendered to a country in the hour of supreme peril.

85. "Meanwhile, so much as remained of the Invincible Armada was buffeted to and fro by the resistless gale, like a shuttlecock between two invisible players. The monster left its bones on the iron-bound shore of Norway and on the granite cliffs of the Hebrides. Its course could be traced by its wrecks. Day followed day, and still God's wrath endured. On the 5th of August Admiral Oguendo, in his flag-ship, together with one of the great galliasses and thirty-eight other vessels, were driven by the fury of the tempest upon the rocks and reefs of Ireland, and nearly every soul on board perished. Of one hundred and thirty-four vessels which, gay with gold and amid triumphal shouts and loud music, had sailed from Corunna July 12th, only fifty-three battered and useless hulks returned to the ports of Spain."

86. The fate and exploits of the Armada are graphically summed up in the emphatic language of Sir Francis Drake. "It is happily manifested," he says, "indeed, to all nations how their navy which they termed *invincible*, consisting of nearly one hundred and forty sail of ships, were by thirty of her Majesty's ships of war, and a few of our own merchants, by the wise and advantageous conduct of Lord Charles Howard, High Admiral of England, beaten and shuffled together from Lizard in Cornwall to Portland, from Portland to Calais; and from Calais, driven by squibs from their anchors, were chased out of sight of England, round about Scotland and Ireland. With all their great and terrible ostentation, they did not, in all their sailing round about England, so much as sink or take one ship, bark, pinnace, or cock-boat of ours, or even burn so much as one sheep-cote on the land."