



CHAPTER VII

THE TRUE AND TRAGICAL HISTORY OF MR. JOHN OXENHAM OF PLYMOUTH

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew ;
The furrow follow'd free ;
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.'

The Ancient Mariner.

IT was too late and too dark last night to see the old house at Stow. We will look round us, then, this bright October day, while Sir Richard and Amyas, about eleven o'clock in the forenoon, are pacing up and down the terraced garden to the south. Amyas has slept till luncheon, *i.e.* till an hour ago : but Sir Richard, in spite of the bustle of last night, was up and in the valley by six o'clock, recreating the valiant souls of himself and two terrer dogs by the chase of sundry badgers.

Old Stow House stands, or rather stood, some four miles beyond the Cornish border, on the northern slope of the largest and loveliest of those coombes of which I spoke in the last chapter. Eighty years after Sir Richard's time there arose there a huge Palladian pile, bedizened with every monstrosity of bad taste, which was built, so the story runs,

by Charles the Second, for Sir Richard's great-grandson, the heir of that famous Sir Bevil who defeated the Parliamentary troops at Stratton, and died soon after, fighting valiantly at Lansdowne over Bath. But, like most other things which owed their existence to the Stuarts, it rose only to fall again. An old man who had seen, as a boy, the foundation of the new house laid, lived to see it pulled down again, and the very bricks and timber sold upon the spot; and since then the stables have become a farmhouse, the tennis-court a sheep-cote, the great quadrangle a rickyard; and civilisation, spreading wave on wave so fast elsewhere, has surged back from that lonely corner of the land—let us hope, only for a while.

But I am not writing of that great new Stow House, of the past glories whereof quaint pictures still hang in the neighbouring houses; nor of that famed Sir Bevil, most beautiful and gallant of his generation, on whom, with his grandfather Sir Richard, old Prince has his pompous epigram—

Where next shall famous Grenvil's ashes stand?
Thy grandsire fills the sea, and thou the land.

I have to deal with a simpler age, and a sterner generation; and with the old house, which had stood there, in part at least, from grey and mythic ages, when the first Sir Richard, son of Hamon Dentatus, Lord of Carboyle, the grandson of Duke Robert, son of Rou, settled at Bideford, after slaying the Prince of South-Galis and the Lord of Glamorgan, and gave to the Cistercian monks of Neath all his conquests in South Wales. It was a huge rambling building, half castle, half dwelling-house, such as may be seen still (almost an unique specimen) in Compton Castle near Torquay, the dwelling-place of Humphrey Gilbert, Walter Raleigh's half-brother, and Richard Grenville's bosom friend, of whom more hereafter. On three sides, to the north, west, and south, the lofty walls of the old ballium still stood, with their machicolated turrets, loopholes, and dark downward crannies for dropping stones and fire on the

besiegers, the relics of a more unsettled age: but the southern court of the ballium had become a flower-garden, with quaint terraces, statues, knots of flowers, clipped yews and hollies, and all the pedantries of the topiarian art. And toward the east, where the vista of the valley opened, the old walls were gone, and the frowning Norman keep, ruined in the Wars of the Roses, had been replaced by the rich and stately architecture of the Tudors. Altogether, the house, like the time, was in a transitional state, and represented faithfully enough the passage of the old middle age into the new life which had just burst into blossom throughout Europe, never, let us pray, to see its autumn or its winter.

From the house, on three sides, the hill sloped steeply down, and the garden where Sir Richard and Amyas were walking gave a truly English prospect. At one turn they could catch, over the western walls, a glimpse of the blue ocean flecked with passing sails; and at the next, spread far below them, range on range of fertile park, stately avenue, yellow autumn woodland, and purple heather moors, lapping over and over each other up the valley to the old British earthwork, which stood black and furze-grown on its conical peak; and standing out against the sky on the highest bank of hill which closed the valley to the east, the lofty tower of Kilkhampton church, rich with the monuments and offerings of five centuries of Grenvilles. A yellow eastern haze hung soft over park, and wood, and moor; the red cattle lowed to each other as they stood brushing away the flies in the rivulet far below; the colts in the horse-park close on their right whinnied as they played together, and their sires from the Queen's Park, on the opposite hill, answered them in fuller though fainter voices. A rutting stag made the still woodland rattle with his hoarse thunder, and a rival far up the valley gave back a trumpet note of defiance, and was himself defied from heathery brows which quivered far away above, half seen through the veil of eastern mist. And close at hand, upon the terrace before the house, amid romping spaniels, and golden-haired

children, sat Lady Grenville herself, the beautiful St. Leger of Annery, the central jewel of all that glorious place, and looked down at her noble children, and then up at her more noble husband, and round at that broad paradise of the West, till life seemed too full of happiness, and heaven of light.

And all the while up and down paced Amyas and Sir Richard, talking long, earnestly, and slow; for they both knew that the turning-point of the boy's life was come.

'Yes,' said Sir Richard, after Amyas in his blunt, simple way had told him the whole story about Rore Salterne and his brother,—'yes, sweet lad, thou hast chosen the better part, thou and thy brother also, and it shall not be taken from you. Only be strong, lad, and trust in God that He will make a man of you.'

'I do trust,' said Amyas.

'Thank God,' said Sir Richard, 'that you have yourself taken from my heart that which was my great anxiety for you, from the day that your good father, who sleeps in peace, committed you to my hands. For all best things, Amyas, become, when misused, the very worst; and the love of woman, because it is able to lift man's soul to the heavens, is also able to drag him down to hell. But you have learnt better, Amyas; and know, with our old German forefathers, that, as Tacitus saith, "*Sera juvenum Venus, ideoque inexhausta pubertas.*" And not only that, Amyas; but trust me, that silly fashion of the French and Italians, to be hanging ever at some woman's apron-string, so that no boy shall count himself a man unless he can "*vaggezziare le donne,*" whether maids or wives, alas! matters little; that fashion, I say, is little less hurtful to the soul than open sin; for by it are bred vanity and expense, envy and heartburning, yea, hatred and murder often; and even if that be escaped, yet the rich treasure of a manly worship, which should be kept for one alone, is squandered and parted upon many, and the bride at last comes in for nothing but the very last leavings and *caput mortuum* of her bridegroom's heart, and becomes a mere ornament for his table, and the means whereby he may obtain a progeny. May God, who has saved me from

that death in life, save you also !' And as he spoke, he looked down toward his wife upon the terrace below ; and she, as if guessing instinctively that he was talking of her, looked up with so sweet a smile, that Sir Richard's stern face melted into a very glory of spiritual sunshine.

Amyas looked at them both and sighed ; and then turning the conversation suddenly—

'And I may go to Ireland to-morrow?'

'You shall sail in the *Mary* for Millford Haven, with these letters to Winter. If the wind serves, you may bid the master drop down the river to-night, and be off ; for we must lose no time.'

'Winter?' said Amyas. 'He is no friend of mine, since he left Drake and us so cowardly at the Straits of Magellan.'

'Duty must not wait for private quarrels, even though they be just ones, lad : but he will not be your general. When you come to the Marshal, or the Lord Deputy, give either of them this letter, and they will set you work,—and hard work too, I warrant.'

'I want nothing better.'

'Right, lad ; the best reward for having wrought well already, is to have more to do ; and he that has been faithful over a few things, must find his account in being made ruler over many things. That is the true and heroic rest, which only is worthy of gentlemen and sons of God. As for those who, either in this world or the world to come, look for idleness, and hope that God shall feed them with pleasant things, as it were with a spoon, Amyas, I count them cowards and base, even though they call themselves saints and elect.'

'I wish you could persuade my poor cousin of that.'

'He has yet to learn what losing his life to save it means, Amyas. Bad men have taught him (and I fear these Anabaptists and Puritans at home teach little else), that it is the one great business of every one to save his own soul after he dies, every one for himself ; and that that, and not divine self-sacrifice, is the one thing needful, and the better part which Mary chose.'

‘I think men are inclined enough already to be selfish, without being taught that.’

‘Right, lad. For me, if I could hang up such a teacher on high as an enemy of mankind, and a corrupter of youth, I would do it gladly. Is there not cowardice and self-seeking enough about the hearts of us fallen sons of Adam, that these false prophets, with their baits of heaven, and their terrors of hell, must exalt our dirtiest vices into heavenly virtues and the means of bliss? Farewell to chivalry and to desperate valour, farewell to patriotism and loyalty, farewell to England and to the manhood of England, if once it shall become the fashion of our preachers to bid every man, as the Jesuits do, take care first of what they call the safety of his soul. Every man will be afraid to die at his post, because he will be afraid that he is not fit to die. Amyas, do thou do thy duty like a man, to thy country, thy queen, and thy God; and count thy life a worthless thing, as did the holy men of old. Do thy work, lad; and leave thy soul to the care of Him who is just and merciful in this, that He rewards every man according to his work. Is there respect of persons with God? Now come in, and take the letters, and to horse. And if I hear of thee dead there at Smerwick fort, with all thy wounds in front, I shall weep for thy mother, lad; but I shall have never a sigh for thee.’

If any one shall be startled at hearing a fine gentleman and a warrior like Sir Richard quote Scripture, and think Scripture also, they must be referred to the writings of the time; which they may read not without profit to themselves, if they discover therefrom how it was possible then for men of the world to be thoroughly ingrained with the Gospel, and yet to be free from any taint of superstitious fear, or false devoutness. The religion of those days was such as no soldier need have been ashamed of confessing. At least, Sir Richard died as he lived, without a shudder, and without a whine; and these were his last words, fifteen years after that, as he lay shot through and through, a captive among Popish Spaniards, priests, crucifixes, confession, extreme

unction, and all other means and appliances for delivering men out of the hands of a God of love :—

‘Here die I, Richard Grenvile, with a joyful and quiet mind ; for that I have ended my life as a true soldier ought, fighting for his country, queen, religion, and honour : my soul willingly departing from this body, leaving behind the lasting fame of having behaved as every valiant soldier is in his duty bound to do.’

Those were the last words of Richard Grenvile. The pulpits of those days had taught them to him.

But to return. That day’s events were not over yet. For, when they went down into the house, the first person whom they met was the old steward, in search of his master.

‘There is a manner of roog, Sir Richard, a masterless man, at the door ; a very forward fellow, and must needs speak with you.’

‘A masterless man ? He had better not to speak to me, unless he is in love with gaol and gallows.’

‘Well, your worship,’ said the steward, ‘I expect that is what he does want, for he swears he will not leave the gate till he has seen you.’

‘Seen me ? Halidame ! he shall see me, here and at Launceston too, if he likes. Bring him in.’

‘Fegs, Sir Richard, we are half afeard, with your good leave—’

‘Hillo, Tony,’ cried Amyas, ‘who was ever afeard yet with Sir Richard’s good leave ?’

‘What, has the fellow a tail or horns ?’

‘Massy no ; but I be afeard of treason for your honour ; for the fellow is pinked all over in heathen patterns, and as brown as a filbert ; and a tall roog, a very strong roog, sir, and a foreigner too, and a mighty staff with him. I expect him to be a manner of Jesuit, or wild Irish, sir ; and indeed the grooms have no stomach to handle him, nor the dogs neither, or he had been under the pump before now, for they that saw him coming up the Mill swear that he had fire coming out of his mouth.’

‘Fire out of his mouth?’ said Sir Richard. ‘The men are drunk.’

‘Pinked all over? He must be a sailor,’ said Amyas; ‘let me out and see the fellow, and if he needs putting forth——’

‘Why, I dare say he is not so big but what he will go into thy pocket. So go, lad, while I finish my writing.’

Amyas went out, and at the back door, leaning on his staff, stood a tall, raw-boned, ragged man, ‘pinked all over,’ as the steward had said.

‘Hillo, lad!’ quoth Amyas. ‘Before we come to talk, thou wilt please to lay down that Plymouth cloak of thine.’ And he pointed to the cudgel, which among West-country mariners usually bore that name.

‘I’ll warrant,’ said the old steward, ‘that where he found his cloak he found a purse not far off.’

‘But not hose or doublet; so the magical virtue of his staff has not helped him much. But put down thy staff, man, and speak like a Christian, if thou be one.’

‘I am a Christian, though I look like a heathen; and no rogue, though a masterless man, alas! But I want nothing, deserving nothing, and only ask to speak with Sir Richard, before I go on my way.’

There was something stately and yet humble about the man’s tone and manner which attracted Amyas, and he asked more gently where he was going and whence he came.

‘From Padstow Port, sir, to Clovelly town, to see my old mother, if indeed she be yet alive, which God knoweth.’

‘Clovelly man! why didn’t thee say thee was Clovelly man?’ asked all the grooms at once, to whom a West-countryman was of course a brother. The old steward asked—

‘What’s thy mother’s name, then?’

‘Susan Yeo.’

‘What, that lived under the archway?’ asked a groom.

‘Lived?’ said the man.

‘Iss, sure; her died three days since, so we heard, poor soul.’

The man stood quite silent and unmoved for a minute or two; and then said quietly to himself, in Spanish, 'That which is, is best.'

'You speak Spanish?' asked Amyas, more and more interested.

'I had need to do so, young sir; I have been five years in the Spanish Main, and only set foot on shore two days ago; and if you will let me have speech of Sir Richard, I will tell him that at which both the ears of him that heareth it shall tingle; and if not, I can but go on to Mr. Cary of Clovelly, if he be yet alive, and there disburthen my soul; but I would sooner have spoken with one that is a mariner like to myself.'

'And you shall,' said Amyas. 'Steward, we will have this man in; for all his rags, he is a man of wit.' And he led him in.

'I only hope he ben't one of those Popish murderers,' said the old steward, keeping at a safe distance from him as they entered the hall.

'Popish, old master? There's little fear of my being that. Look here!' And drawing back his rags, he showed a ghastly scar, which encircled his wrist and wound round and up his forearm.

'I got that on the rack,' said he quietly, 'in the Inquisition at Lima.'

'O Father! Father! why didn't you tell us that you were a poor Christian?' asked the penitent steward.

'Because I have had nought but my deserts; and but a taste of them either, as the Lord knoweth who delivered me; and I wasn't going to make myself a beggar and a show on their account.'

'By heaven, you are a brave fellow!' said Amyas. 'Come along straight to Sir Richard's room.'

So in they went, where Sir Richard sat in his library among books, despatches, state-papers, and warrants; for though he was not yet, as in after times (after the fashion of those days), admiral, general, member of parliament, privy councillor, justice of the peace, and so forth, all at once, yet

there were few great men with whom he did not correspond, or great matters with which he was not cognisant.

‘Hillo, Amyas, have you bound the wild man already, and brought him in to swear allegiance?’

But before Amyas could answer, the man looked earnestly on him—‘Amyas?’ said he; ‘is that your name, sir?’

‘Amyas Leigh is my name, at your service, good fellow.’

‘Of Burrough with Bideford?’

‘Why then? What do you know of me?’

‘O sir, sir! young brains and happy ones have short memories; but old and sad brains too too long ones often! Do you mind one that was with Mr. Oxenham, sir? A swearing reprobate he was, God forgive him, and hath forgiven him too, for His dear Son’s sake—one, sir, that gave you a horn, a toy with a chart on it?’

‘Soul alive!’ cried Amyas, catching him by the hand; ‘and are you he? The horn? why, I have it still, and will keep it to my dying day, too. But where is Mr. Oxenham?’

‘Yes, my good fellow, where is Mr. Oxenham?’ asked Sir Richard, rising. ‘You are somewhat over-hasty in welcoming your old acquaintance, Amyas, before we have heard from him whether he can give honest account of himself and of his captain. For there is more than one way by which sailors may come home without their captains, as poor Mr. Barker of Bristol found to his cost. God grant that there may have been no such traitorous dealing here.’

‘Sir Richard Grenville, if I had been a guilty man to my noble captain, as I have to God, I had not come here this day to you, from whom villainy has never found favour, nor ever will; for I know your conditions well, sir; and trust in the Lord, that if you will be pleased to hear me, you shall know mine.’

‘Thou art a well-spoken knave. We shall see.’

‘My dear sir,’ said Amyas in a whisper, ‘I will warrant this man guiltless.’

‘I verily believe him to be; but this is too serious a matter to be left on guess. If he will be sworn——’

Whereon the man, humbly enough, said, that if it would please Sir Richard, he would rather not be sworn.

‘But it does not please me, rascal! Did I not warn thee, Amyas?’

‘Sir,’ said the man proudly, ‘God forbid that my word should not be as good as my oath: but it is against my conscience to be sworn.’

‘What have we here? some fantastical Anabaptist, who is wiser than his teachers.’

‘My conscience, sir——’

‘The devil take it and thee! I never heard a man yet begin to prate of his conscience, but I knew that he was about to do something more than ordinarily cruel or false.’

‘Sir,’ said the man, coolly enough, ‘do you sit here to judge me according to law, and yet contrary to the law swear profane oaths, for which a fine is provided?’

Amyas expected an explosion: but Sir Richard pulled a shilling out and put it on the table. ‘There—my fine is paid, sirrah, to the poor of Kilkhampton: but hearken thou all the same. If thou wilt not speak on oath, thou shalt speak on compulsion; for to Launceston gaol thou goest, there to answer for Mr. Oxenham’s death, on suspicion whereof, and of mutiny causing it, I will attach thee and every soul of his crew that comes home. We have lost too many gallant captains of late by treachery of their crews, and he that will not clear himself on oath, must be held for guilty, and self-condemned.’

‘My good fellow,’ said Amyas, who could not give up his belief in the man’s honesty; ‘why, for such fantastical scruples, peril not only your life, but your honour, and Mr. Oxenham’s also? For if you be examined by question, you may be forced by torment to say that which is not true.’

‘Little fear of that, young sir!’ answered he, with a grim smile; ‘I have had too much of the rack already, and the strappado too, to care much what man can do unto me. I would heartily that I thought it lawful to be sworn: but not so thinking, I can but submit to the cruelty of man; though I did expect more merciful things, as a most miserable and

wrecked mariner, at the hands of one who hath himself seen God's ways in the sea, and His wonders in the great deep. Sir Richard Grenville, if you will hear my story, may God avenge on my head all my sins from my youth up until now, and cut me off from the blood of Christ, and, if it were possible, from the number of His elect, if I tell you one whit more or less than truth; and if not, I commend myself into the hands of God.'

Sir Richard smiled. 'Well, thou art a brave ass, and valiant, though an ass manifest. Dost thou not see, fellow, how thou hast sworn a ten times bigger oath than ever I should have asked of thee? But this is the way with your Anabaptists, who, by their very hatred of forms and ceremonies, show of how much account they think them, and then bind themselves out of their own fantastical self-will with far heavier burdens than ever the lawful authorities have laid on them for the sake of the commonweal. But what do they care for the commonweal, as long as they can save, as they fancy, each man his own dirty soul for himself? However, thou art sworn now with a vengeance; go on with thy tale: and first, who art thou, and whence?'

'Well, sir,' said the man, quite unmoved by this last explosion; 'my name is Salvation Yeo, born in Clovelly Street, in the year 1526, where my father exercised the mystery of a barber surgeon, and a preacher of the people since called Anabaptists, for which I return humble thanks to God.'

Sir Richard.—Fie! thou naughty knave; return thanks that thy father was an ass?

Yeo.—Nay, but because he was a barber surgeon; for I myself learnt a touch of that trade, and thereby saved my life, as I will tell presently. And I do think that a good mariner ought to have all knowledge of carnal and worldly cunning, even to tailoring and shoemaking, that he may be able to turn his hand to whatsoever may hap.

Sir Richard.—Well spoken, fellow: but let us have thy text without thy comments. Forwards!

Yeo.—Well, sir. I was bred to the sea from my youth,

and was with Captain Hawkins in his three voyages, which he made to Guinea for negro slaves, and thence to the West Indies.

Sir Richard.—Then thrice thou wentest to a bad end, though Captain Hawkins be my good friend; and the last time to a bad end thou camest.

Yeo.—No denying that last, your worship: but as for the former, I doubt:—about the unlawfulness I mean; being the negroes are of the children of Ham, who are cursed and reprobate, as Scripture declares, and their blackness testifies, being Satan's own livery; among whom therefore there can be none of the elect, wherefore the elect are not required to treat them as brethren.

Sir Richard.—What a plague of a pragmatistical sea-lawyer have we here! And I doubt not, thou hypocrite, that though thou wilt call the negroes' black skin Satan's livery, when it serves thy turn to steal them, thou wilt find out sables to be Heaven's livery every Sunday, and up with a godly howl unless a parson shall preach in a black gown Geneva fashion. Out upon thee! Go on with thy tale, lest thou finish thy sermon at Launceston after all.

Yeo.—The Lord's people were always a reviled people and a persecuted people: but I will go forward, sir; for Heaven forbid but that I should declare what God has done for me. For till lately, from my youth up, I was given over to all wretchedness and unclean living, and was by nature a child of the devil, and to every good work reprobate, even as others.

Sir Richard.—Hark to his 'even as others'! Thou new-whelped Pharisee, canst not confess thine own villainies without making out others as bad as thyself, and so thyself no worse than others? I only hope that thou hast shown none of thy devil's doings to Mr. Oxenham.

Yeo.—On the word of a Christian man, sir, as I said before, I kept true faith with him, and would have been a better friend to him, sir, what is more, than ever he was to himself.

Sir Richard.—Alas! that might easily be.

Yeo.—I think, sir, and will make good against any man, that Mr. Oxenham was a noble and valiant gentleman; true of his word, stout of his sword, skilful by sea and land, and worthy to have been Lord High Admiral of England (saving your worship's presence), but that through two great sins, wrath and avarice, he was cast away miserably or ever his soul was brought to the knowledge of the truth. Ah, sir, he was a captain worth sailing under! And Yeo heaved a deep sigh.

Sir Richard.—Steady, steady, good fellow! If thou wouldst quit preaching, thou art no fool after all. But tell us the story without more bush-beating.

So at last Yeo settled himself to his tale:—

'Well, sirs, I went, as Mr. Leigh knows, to Nombre de Dios, with Mr. Drake and Mr. Oxenham, in 1572, where what we saw and did, your worship, I suppose, knows as well as I; and there was, as you've heard maybe, a covenant between Mr. Oxenham and Mr. Drake to sail the South Seas together, which they made, your worship, in my hearing, under the tree over Panama. For when Mr. Drake came down from the tree, after seeing the sea afar off, Mr. Oxenham and I went up and saw it too; and when we came down, Drake says, "John, I have made a vow to God that I will sail that water, if I live and God gives me grace"; which he had done, sir, upon his bended knees, like a godly man as he always was, and would I had taken after him! and Mr. O. says, "I am with you, Drake, to live or die, and I think I know some one there already, so we shall not be quite among strangers"; and laughed withal. Well, sirs, that voyage, as you know, never came off, because Captain Drake was fighting in Ireland; so Mr. Oxenham, who must be up and doing, sailed for himself, and I who loved him, God knows, like a brother (saving the difference in our ranks), helped him to get the crew together, and went as his gunner. That was in 1575; as you know, he had a 140-ton ship, sir, and seventy men out of Plymouth and Fowey and Dartmouth, and many of them old hands of Drake's, beside a dozen or so from Bideford that I picked up when I saw young master here.'

'Thank God that you did not pick me up too.'

'Amen, amen!' said Yeo, clasping his hands on his breast. 'Those seventy men, sir,—seventy gallant men, sir, with every one of them an immortal soul within him,—where are they now? Gone, like the spray!' And he swept his hands abroad with a wild and solemn gesture. 'And their blood is upon my head!'

Both Sir Richard and Amyas began to suspect that the man's brain was not altogether sound.

'God forbid, my man,' said the knight kindly.

'Thirteen men I persuaded to join in Bideford town, beside William Penberthy of Marazion, my good comrade. And what if it be said to me at the day of judgment, "Salvation Yeo, where are those fourteen whom thou didst tempt to their deaths by covetousness and lust of gold?" Not that I was alone in my sin, if the truth must be told. For all the way out Mr. Oxenham was making loud speech, after his pleasant way, that he would make all their fortunes, and take them to such a Paradise, that they should have no lust to come home again. And I—God knows why—for every one boast of his would make two, even to lying and empty fables, and anything to keep up the men's hearts. For I had really persuaded myself that we should all find treasures beyond Solomon his temple, and Mr. Oxenham would surely show us how to conquer some golden city or discover some island all made of precious stones. And one day, as the Captain and I were talking after our fashion, I said, "And you shall be our king, Captain." To which he, "If I be, I shall not be long without a queen, and that no Indian one either." And after that he often jested about the Spanish ladies, saying that none could show us the way to their hearts better than he. Which speeches I took no count of then, sirs: but after I minded them, whether I would or not. Well, sirs, we came to the shore of New Spain, near to the old place—that's Nombre de Dios; and there Mr. Oxenham went ashore into the woods with a boat's crew, to find the negroes who helped us three years before. Those are the Cimaroons,

gentles, negro slaves who have fled from those devils incarnate, their Spanish masters, and live wild, like the beasts that perish; men of great stature, sirs, and fierce as wolves in the onslaught, but poor jabbering mazed fellows if they be but a bit dismayed; and have many Indian women with them, who take to these negroes a deal better than to their own kin, which breeds war enough, as you may guess.

‘Well, sirs, after three days the Captain comes back, looking heavy enough, and says, “We played our trick once too often, when we played it once. There is no chance of stopping another *caro* (that is, a mule-train, sirs) now. The Cimaroons say that since our last visit they never move without plenty of soldiers, two hundred shot at least. Therefore,” he said, “my gallants, we must either return empty-handed from this, the very market and treasury of the whole Indies, or do such a deed as men never did before, which I shall like all the better for that very reason.” And we, asking his meaning, “Why,” he said, “if Drake will not sail the South Seas, we will”; adding profanely that Drake was like Moses, who beheld the promised land afar; but he was Joshua, who would enter into it, and smite the inhabitants thereof. And, for our confirmation, showed me and the rest the superscription of a letter: and said, “How I came by this is none of your business: but I have had it in my bosom ever since I left Plymouth; and I tell you now, what I forbore to tell you at first, that the South Seas have been my mark all along! such news have I herein of plate-ships, and gold-ships, and what not, which will come up from Quito and Lima this very month, all which, with the pearls of the Gulf of Panama, and other wealth unspeakable, will be ours, if we have but true English hearts within us.”

‘At which, gentles, we were like madmen for lust of that gold, and cheerfully undertook a toil incredible; for first we run our ship aground in a great wood which grew in the very sea itself, and then took out her masts, and covered her in boughs, with her four cast pieces of great ordnance (of which more hereafter), and leaving no man in her, started

for the South Seas across the neck of Panama, with two small pieces of ordnance and our culverins, and good store of victuals, and with us six of those negroes for a guide, and so twelve leagues to a river which runs into the South Sea.

‘Aye there, having cut wood, we made a pinnace (and work enough we had at it) of five-and-forty foot in the keel; and in her down the stream, and to the Isle of Pearls in the Gulf of Panama.’

‘Into the South Sea? Impossible!’ said Sir Richard. ‘Have a care what you say, my man, for there is that about you which would make me sorry to find you out a liar.’

‘Impossible or not, liar or none, we went there, sir.’

‘Question him, Amyas, lest he turn out to have been beforeband with you.’

The man looked inquiringly at Amyas, who said—

‘Well, my man, of the Gulf of Panama I cannot ask you, for I never was inside it, but what other parts of the coast do you know?’

‘Every inch, sir, from Cabo San Francisco to Lima; more is my sorrow, for I was a galley-slave there for two years and more.’

‘You know Lima?’

‘I was there three times, worshipful gentlemen, and the last was February come two years; and there I helped lade a great plate-ship, the *Cacafuogo*, they called her.’

Amyas started. Sir Richard nodded to him gently to be silent, and then—

‘And what became of her, my lad?’

‘God knows, who knows all, and the devil who freighted her. I broke prison six weeks afterwards, and never heard but that she got safe into Panama.’

‘You never heard, then, that she was taken?’

‘Taken, your worships? Who should take her?’

‘Why should not a good English ship take her as well as another?’ said Amyas.

‘Lord love you, sir; yes faith, if they had but been there. Many’s the time that I thought to myself, as we went alongside, “Oh, if Captain Drake was but here, well

to windward, and our old crew of the *Dragon!*" Ask your pardon, gentles: but how is Captain Drake, if I may make so bold?'

Neither could hold out longer

'Fellow, fellow!' cried Sir Richard, springing up, 'either thou art the cunningest liar that ever earned a halter, or thou hast done a deed the like of which never man adventured. Dost thou not know that Captain Drake took that *Cacafuogo* and all her freight, in February come two years?'

'Captain Drake! God forgive me, sir; but—Captain Drake in the South Seas? He saw them, sir, from the tree-top over Panama, when I was with him, and I too; but sailed them, sir?—sailed them?'

'Yes, and round the world too,' said Amyas, 'and I with him; and took that very *Cacafuogo* off Cape San Francisco, as she came up to Panama.'

One glance at the man's face was enough to prove his sincerity. The great stern Anabaptist, who had not winced at the news of his mother's death, dropt right on his knees on the floor, and burst into violent sobs.

'Glory to God! Glory to God! O Lord, I thank thee! Captain Drake in the South Seas! The blood of thy innocents avenged, O Lord! The spoiler spoiled, and the proud robbed; and all they whose hands were mighty have found nothing. Glory, Glory! Oh, tell me, sir, did she fight?'

'We gave her three pieces of ordnance only, and struck down her mizzenmast, and then boarded sword in hand, but never had need to strike a blow; and before we left her, one of her own boys had changed her name, and rechristened her the *Cacaplata*.'

'Glory, glory! Cowards they are, as I told them. I told them they never could stand the Devon mastiffs, and well they flogged me for saying it; but they could not stop my mouth. Oh, sir, tell me, did you get the ship that came up after her?'

'What was that?'

‘A long race-ship, sir, from Guayaquil, with an old gentleman on board,—Don Francisco de Xararte was his name, and by token, he had a gold falcon hanging to a chain round his neck, and a green stone in the breast of it. I saw it as we rowed him aboard. Oh tell me, sir, tell me for the love of God, did you take that ship?’

‘We did take that ship, and the jewel too, and her Majesty has it at this very hour.’

‘Then, tell me, sir,’ said he slowly, as if he dreaded an answer; ‘tell me, sir, and oh, try and mind—was there a little maid aboard with the old gentleman?’

‘A little maid? Let me think. No; I saw none.’

The man settled his features again sadly.

‘I thought not. I never saw her come aboard. Still I hoped, like; I hoped. Alackaday! God help me, Salvation Yeo!’

‘What have you to do with this little maid, then, good fellow?’ asked Grenvile.

‘Ah, sir, before I tell you that, I must go back and finish the story of Mr. Oxenham, if you will believe me enough to hear it.’

‘I do believe thee, good fellow, and honour thee too.’

‘Then, sir, I can speak with a free tongue. Where was I?’

‘Where was he, Amyas?’

‘At the Isle of Pearls.’

‘And yet, O gentles, tell me first, how Captain Drake came into the South Seas:—over the neck, as we did?’

‘Through the Straits, good fellow, like any Spaniard: but go on with thy story, and thou shalt have Mr. Leigh’s after.’

‘Through the Straits! Oh glory! But I’ll tell my tale. Well, sirs both—To the Island of Pearls we came, we and some of the negroes. We found many huts, and Indians fishing for pearls, and also a fair house, with porches; but no Spaniard therein, save one man; at which Mr. Oxenham was like a man transported; and fell on that Spaniard, crying, “Perro, where is your mistress? Where is the bark

from Lima?" To which he boldly enough, "What was his mistress to the Englishman?" But Mr. O. threatened to twine a cord round his head till his eyes burst out; and the Spaniard, being terrified, said that the ship from Lima was expected in a fortnight's time. So for ten days we lay quiet, letting neither negro nor Spaniard leave the island, and took good store of pearls, feeding sumptuously on wild cattle and hogs until the tenth day, when there came by a small bark; her we took, and found her from Quito, and on board 60,000 pezos of gold and other store. With which if we had been content, gentlemen, all had gone well. And some were willing to go back at once, having both treasure and pearls in plenty; but Mr. O., he waxed right mad, and swore to slay any one who made that motion again, assuring us that the Lima ship of which he had news was far greater and richer, and would make princes of us all; which bark came in sight on the sixteenth day, and was taken without shot or slaughter. The taking of which bark, I verily believe, was the ruin of every mother's son of us.'

And being asked why, he answered, 'First because of the discontent which was bred thereby; for on board was found no gold, but only 100,000 pezos of silver.'

Sir Richard Grenvile.—Thou greedy fellow; and was not that enough to stay your stomachs?

Yeo answered that he would to God it had been; and that, moreover, the weight of that silver was afterwards a hindrance to them, and a fresh cause of discontent, as he would afterwards declare. 'So that it had been well for us, sirs, if we had left it behind, as Mr. Drake left his three years before, and carried away the gold only. In which I do see the evident hand of God, and His just punishment for our greediness of gain; who caused Mr. Oxenham, by whom we had hoped to attain great wealth, to be a snare to us, and a cause of utter ruin.'

'Do you think, then,' said Sir Richard, 'that Mr. Oxenham deceived you wilfully?'

'I will never believe that, sir: Mr. Oxenham had his private reasons for waiting for that ship, for the sake of one

on board, whose face would that he had never seen, though he saw it then, as I fear, not for the first time by many a one.' And so was silent.

'Come,' said both his hearers, 'you have brought us thus far, and you must go on.'

'Gentlemen, I have concealed this matter from all men, both on my voyage home and since; and I hope you will be secret in the matter, for the honour of my noble Captain, and the comfort of his friends who are alive. For I think it shame to publish harm of a gallant gentleman, and of an ancient and worshipful family, and to me a true and kind Captajn, when what is done cannot be undone, and least said soonest mended. Neither now would I have spoken of it, but that I was inwardly moved to it for the sake of that young gentleman there (looking at Amvas), that he might be warned in time of God's wrath against the crying sin of adultery, and flee youthful lusts, which war against the soul.'

'Thou hast done wisely enough, then,' said Sir Richard; 'and look to it if I do not reward thee: but the young gentleman here, thank God, needs no such warnings, having got them already both by precept and example, where thou and poor Oxenham might have had them also.'

'You mean Captain Drake, your worship?'

'I do, sirrah. If all men were as clean livers as he, the world would be spared one half the tears that are shed in it.'

'Amen, sir. At least there would have been many a tear spared to us and ours. For—as all must out—in that bark of Lima he took a young lady, as fair as the sunshine, sir, and seemingly about two or three-and-twenty years of age, having with her a tall young lad of sixteen, and a little girl, a marvellously pretty child, of about a six or seven. And the lady herself was of an excellent beauty, like a whale's tooth for whiteness, so that all the crew wondered at her, and could not be satisfied with looking upon her. And, gentlemen; this was strange, that the lady seemed in no wise afraid or mournful, and bid her little girl

fear nought, as did also Mr. Oxenham: but the lad kept a very sour countenance, and the more when he saw the lady and Mr. Oxenham speaking together apart.

‘Well, sir, after this good luck we were minded to have gone straight back to the river whence we came, and so home to England with all speed. But Mr. Oxenham persuaded us to return to the island, and get a few more pearls. To which foolishness (which after caused the mishap) I verily believe he was moved by the instigation of the devil and of that lady. For as we were about to go ashore, I, going down into the cabin of the prize, saw Mr. Oxenham and that lady making great cheer of each other with “My life,” and “My king,” and “Light of my eyes,” and such toys; and being bidden by Mr. Oxenham to fetch out the lady’s mails, and take them ashore, heard how the two laughed together about the old ape of Panama (which ape, or devil rather, I saw afterwards to my cost), and also how she said that she had been dead for five years, and now that Mr. Oxenham was come, she was alive again, and so forth.

‘Mr. Oxenham bade take the little maid ashore, kissing her and playing with her, and saying to the lady, “What is yours is mine, and what is mine is yours.” And she asking whether the lad should come ashore, he answered, “He is neither yours nor mine; let the spawn of Beelzebub stay on shore.” After which I, coming on deck again, stumbled over that very lad, upon the hatchway ladder, who bore so black and despicable a face, that I verily believe he had overheard their speech, and so thrust him upon deck; and going below again, told Mr. Oxenham what I thought, and said that it were better to put a dagger into him at once, professing to be ready so to do. For which grievous sin, seeing that it was committed in my unregenerate days, I hope I have obtained the grace of forgiveness, as I have that of hearty repentance. But the lady cried out, “Though he be none of mine, I have sin enough already on my soul”; and so laid her hand on Mr. Oxenham’s mouth, entreating pitifully. And Mr. Oxenham answered laughing, when she would let him, “What care we? let the

young monkey go and howl to the old one"; and so went ashore with the lady to that house, whence for three days he never came forth, and would have remained longer, but that the men, finding but few pearls, and being wearied with the watching and warding so many Spaniards and negroes, came clamouring to him, and swore that they would return or leave him there with the lady. So all went on board the pinnace again, every one in ill-humour with the Captain, and he with them.

'Well, sirs, we came back to the mouth of the river, and there began our troubles; for the negroes, as soon as we were on shore, called on Mr. Oxenham to fulfil the bargain he had made with them. And now it came out (what few of us knew till then) that he had agreed with the Cimaroons that they should have all the prisoners which were taken, save the gold. And he, though loth, was about to give up the Spaniards to them, near forty in all, supposing that they intended to use them as slaves: but as we all stood talking, one of the Spaniards, understanding what was forward, threw himself on his knees before Mr. Oxenham, and shrieking like a madman, entreated not to be given up into the hands of "those devils," said he, "who never take a Spanish prisoner, but they roast him alive, and then eat his heart among them." We asked the negroes if this was possible? To which some answered, What was that to us? But others said boldly, that it was true enough, and that revenge made the best sauce, and nothing was so sweet as Spanish blood; and one, pointing to the lady, said such foul and devilish things as I should be ashamed either for me to speak, or you to hear. At this we were like men amazed for very horror; and Mr. Oxenham said, "You incarnate fiends, if you had taken these fellows for slaves, it had been fair enough; for you were once slaves to them, and I doubt not cruelly used enough: but as for this abomination," says he, "God do so to me, and more also, if I let one of them come into your murderous hands." So there was a great quarrel; but Mr. Oxenham stoutly bade put the prisoners on board the ships again, and so let the prizes go, taking with him only the

treasure, and the lady and the little maid. And so the lad went on to Panama, God's wrath having gone out against us.

'Well, sirs, the Cimaroons after that went away from us, swearing revenge (for which we cared little enough), and we rowed up the river to a place where three streams met, and then up the least of the three, some four days' journey, till it grew all shoal and swift; and there we hauled the pinnace upon the sands, and Mr. Oxenham asked the men whether they were willing to carry the gold and silver over the mountains to the North Sea. Some of them at first were loth to do it, and I and others advised that we should leave the plate behind, and take the gold only, for it would have cost us three or four journeys at the least. But Mr. Oxenham promised every man 100 pezos of silver over and above his wages, which made them content enough, and we were all to start the morrow morning. But, sirs, that night, as God had ordained, came a mishap by some rash speeches of Mr. Oxenham's, which threw all abroad again; for when we had carried the treasure about half a league inland, and hidden it away in a house which we made of boughs, Mr. O. being always full of that his fair lady, spoke to me and William Penberthy of Marazion, my good comrade, and a few more, saying, "That we had no need to return to England, seeing that we were already in the very garden of Eden, and wanted for nothing, but could live without labour or toil; and that it was better, when we got over to the North Sea, to go and seek out some fair island, and there dwell in joy and pleasure till our lives' end. And we two," he said, "will be king and queen, and you, whom I can trust, my officers; and for servants we will have the Indians, who, I warrant, will be more fain to serve honest and merry masters like us than those Spanish devils," and much more of the like; which words I liked well,—my mind, alas! being given altogether to carnal pleasure and vanity,—as did William Penberthy, my good comrade, on whom I trust God has had mercy. But the rest, sirs, took the matter all across, and began murmuring against the captain, saying that poor honest

mariners like them had always the labour and the pain, while he took his delight with his lady; and that they would have at least one merry night before they were slain by the Cimaroons, or eaten by panthers and jagartos; and so got out of the pinnace two great skins of Canary wine, which were taken in the Lima prize, and sat themselves down to drink. Moreover, there were in the pinnace a great sight of hens, which came from the same prize, by which Mr. O. set great store, keeping them for the lady and the little maid; and falling upon these, the men began to blaspheme, saying, "What a plague had the Captain to fill the boat with dirty live lumber for that giglet's sake? They had a better right to a good supper than ever she had, and might fast awhile to cool her hot blood"; and so cooked and ate those hens, plucking them on board the pinnace, and letting the feathers fall into the stream. But when William Penberthy, my good comrade, saw the feathers floating away down, he asked them if they were mad, to lay a trail by which the Spaniards would surely track them out, if they came after them, as without doubt they would. But they laughed him to scorn, and said that no Spanish cur dared follow on the heels of true English mastiffs as they were, and other boastful speeches; and at last, being heated with wine, began afresh to murmur at the Captain. And one speaking of his counsel about the island, the rest altogether took it amiss and out of the way; and some sprang up crying treason, and others that he meant to defraud them of the plate which he had promised, and others that he meant to desert them in a strange land, and so forth, till Mr. O., hearing the hubbub, came out to them from the house, when they reviled him foully, swearing that he meant to cheat them: and one Edward Stiles, a Wapping man, mad with drink, dared to say that he was a fool for not giving up the prisoners to the negroes, and what was it to him if the lady roasted? the negroes should have her yet; and drawing his sword, ran upon the Captain: for which I was about to strike him through the body; but the Captain, not caring to waste steel on such a ribald, with his fist caught him such a buffet

behind the ear, that he fell down stark dead, and all the rest stood amazed. Then Mr. Oxenham called out, "All honest men who know me, and can trust me, stand by your lawful captain against these ruffians." Whereon, sirs, I, and Penberthy, my good comrade, and four Plymouth men, who had sailed with Mr. O. in Mr. Drake's ship, and knew his trusty and valiant conditions, came over to him, and swore before God to stand by him and the lady. Then said Mr. O. to the rest, "Will you carry this treasure, knaves, or will you not? Give me an answer here." And they refused, unless he would, before they started, give each man his share. So Mr. O. waxed very mad, and swore that he would never be served by men who did not trust him, and so went in again; and that night was spent in great disquiet, I and those five others keeping watch about the house of boughs till the rest fell asleep, in their drink. And next morning when the wine was gone out of them, Mr. O. asked them whether they would go to the hills with him, and find those negroes, and persuade them after all to carry the treasure. To which they agreed after awhile, thinking that so they should save themselves labour; and went off with Mr. Oxenham, leaving us six who had stood by him to watch the lady and the treasure, after he had taken an oath of us that we would deal justly and obediently by him and by her, which God knows, gentlemen, we did. So he parted with much weeping and wailing of the lady, and was gone seven days; and all that time we kept that lady faithfully and honestly, bringing her the best we could find, and serving her upon our bended knees, both for her admirable beauty, and for her excellent conditions, for she was certainly of some noble kin, and courteous, and without fear, as if she had been a very princess. But she kept always within the house, which the little maid (God bless her!) did not, but soon learned to play with us and we with her, so that we made great cheer of her, gentlemen, sailor fashion—for you know we must always have our minions aboard to pet and amuse us—maybe a morkey, or a little dog, or a singing bird, ay, or mice and spiders, if we have nothing better to

play withal. And she was wonderful sharp, sirs, was the little maid, and picked up her English from us fast, calling us jolly mariners, which I doubt but she has forgotten by now, but I hope in God it be not so'; and therewith the good fellow began wiping his eyes.

'Well, sir, on the seventh day we six were down by the pinnace clearing her out, and the little maid with us gathering of flowers, and William Penberthy fishing on the bank, about a hundred yards below, when on a sudden he leaps up and runs toward us, crying, "Here come our hens' feathers back again with a vengeance!" and so bade catch up the little maid, and run for the house, for the Spaniards were upon us.

'Which was too true; for before we could win the house, there were full eighty shot at our heels, but could not overtake us; nevertheless, some of them stopping, fixed their calivers and let fly, killing one of the Plymouth men. The rest of us escaped to the house, and catching up the lady, fled forth, not knowing whither we went, while the Spaniards, finding the house and treasure, pursued us no farther.

'For all that day and the next we wandered in great misery, the lady weeping continually, and calling for Mr. Oxenham most piteously, and the little maid likewise, till with much ado we found the track of our comrades, and went up that as best we might: but at nightfall, by good hap, we met the whole crew coming back, and with them 200 negroes or more, with bows and arrows. At which sight was great joy and embracing, and it was a strange thing, sirs, to see the lady; for before that she was altogether desperate: and yet she was now a very lioness, as soon as she had got her love again; and prayed him earnestly not to care for that gold, but to go forward to the North Sea, vowing to him in my hearing that she cared no more for poverty than she had cared for her good name, and then—they being a little apart from the rest—pointed round to the green forest, and said in Spanish—which I suppose they knew not that I understood,—"See, all round us is Paradise. Were it not enough for you and me to stay here for

ever, and let them take the gold or leave it as they will?"

'To which Mr. Oxenham—"Those who lived in Paradise had not sinned as we have, and would never have grown old or sick, as we shall."

'And she—"If we do that, there are poisons enough in these woods, by which we may die in each other's arms, as would to Heaven we had died seven years ago!"

'But he—"No, no, my life. It stands upon my honour both to fulfil my bond with these men, whom I have brought hither, and to take home to England at least something of my prize as a proof of my own valour."

'Then she smiling—"Am I not prize enough, and proof enough?" But he would not be so tempted, and turning to us offered us the half of that treasure, if we would go back with him, and rescue it from the Spaniard. At which the lady wept and wailed much; but I took upon myself to comfort her, though I was but a simple mariner, telling her that it stood upon Mr. Oxenham's honour; and that in England nothing was esteemed so foul as cowardice, or breaking word and troth betwixt man and man; and that better was it for him to die seven times by the Spaniards, than to face at home the scorn of all who sailed the seas. So, after much ado, back they went again; I and Penberthy, and the three Plymouth men which escaped from the pinnace, keeping the lady as before.

'Well, sirs, we waited five days, having made houses of boughs as before, without hearing aught; and on the sixth we saw coming afar off Mr. Oxenham, and with him fifteen or twenty men, who seemed very weary and wounded; and when we looked for the rest to be behind them, behold there were no more; at which, sirs, as you may well think, our hearts sank within us.

'And Mr. O., coming nearer, cried out afar off, "All is lost!" and so walked into the camp without a word, and sat himself down at the foot of a great tree with his head between his hands, speaking neither to the lady nor to any one, till she very pitifully kneeling before him, cursing her-

self for the cause of all his mischief, and praying him to avenge himself upon that her tender body, won him hardly to look once upon her, after which (as is the way of vain and unstable man) all between them was as before.

‘ But the men were full of curses against the negroes, for their cowardice and treachery ; yea, and against high Heaven itself, which had put the most part of their ammunition into the Spaniards’ hands ; and told me, and I believe truly, how they forced the enemy awaiting them in a little copse of great trees, well fortified with barricades of boughs, and having with them our two falcons, which they had taken out of the pinnace. And how Mr. Oxenham divided both the English and the negroes into two bands, that one might attack the enemy in front, and the other in the rear, and so set upon them with great fury, and would have utterly driven them out, but that the negroes, who had come on with much howling, like very wild beasts, being suddenly scared with the shot and noise of the ordnance, turned and fled, leaving the Englishmen alone ; in which evil strait Mr. O. fought like a very Guy of Warwick, and I verily believe every man of them likewise ; for there was none of them who had not his shrewd scratch to show. And indeed Mr. Oxenham’s party had once gotten within the barricades, but the Spaniards being sheltered by the tree trunks (and especially by one mighty tree, which stood as I remembered it, and remember it now, borne up two fathoms high upon its own roots, as it were upon arches and pillars), shot at them with such advantage, that they had several slain, and seven more taken alive, only among the roots of that tree. So seeing that they could prevail nothing, having little but their pikes and swords, they were fain to give back ; though Mr. Oxenham swore he would not stir a foot, and making at the Spanish captain was borne down with pikes, and hardly pulled away by some, who at last reminding him of his lady, persuaded him to come away with the rest. Whereon the other party fled also ; but what had become of them they knew not, for they took another way. And so they miserably drew off, having lost in men eleven killed and seven taken alive,

besides five of the rascal negroes who were killed before they had time to run ; and there was an end of the matter.¹

¹ In the documents from which I have drawn this veracious history, a note is appended to this point of Yeo's story, which seems to me to smack sufficiently of the old Elizabethan seaman, to be inserted at length.

'All so far, and most after, agreeth with Lopez Vaz his tale, taken from his pocket by my Lord Cumberland's mariners at the river Plate, in the year 1586. But note here his vainglory and falsehood, or else fear of the Spaniard.

'First, lest it should be seen how great an advantage the Spaniards had, he maketh no mention of the English calivers, nor those two pieces of ordnance which were in the pinnace.

'Second, he saith nothing of the flight of the Cimaroons : though it was evidently to be gathered from that which he himself saith, that of less than seventy English were slain eleven, and of the negroes but five. And while of the English seven were taken alive, yet of the negroes none. And why, but because the rascals ran ?

'Thirdly, it is a thing incredible, and out of experience, that eleven English should be slain and seven taken, with loss only of two Spaniards killed.

'Search now, and see (for I will not speak of mine own small doings), in all those memorable voyages, which the worthy and learned Mr. Hakluyt hath so painfully collected, and which are to my old age next only to my Bible, whether in all the fights which we have endured with the Spaniards, their loss, even in victory, hath not far exceeded ours. For we are both bigger of body and fiercer of spirit, being even to the poorest of us (thanks to the care of our illustrious princes), the best fed men of Europe, the most trained to feats of strength and use of weapons, and put our trust also not in any Virgin or saints, dead rags and bones, painted idols which have no breath in their mouths, or St. Bartholomew medals and such devil's remembrancers : but in the only true God and our Lord Jesus Christ, in whom whosoever trusteth, one of them shall chase a thousand. So I hold, having had good experience ; and say, if they have done it once, let them do it again and kill their eleven to our two, with any weapon they will, save paper bullets blown out of Fame's lying trumpet. Yet I have no quarrel with the poor Portugal ; for I doubt not but friend Lopez Vaz had looking over his shoulder as he wrote some mighty black velvet Don, with a name as long as that Don Bernaldino Delgadillo de Avellaneda who set forth lately his vainglorious libel of lies concerning the last and fatal voyage of my dear friends Sir F. Drake and Sir John Hawkins, who rest in peace, having finished their labours as would God I rest I. To whose shameless and unspeakable lying my good friend Mr. Henry Savile of this county did most pithily and wittily reply, stripping the ass out of his lion's skin ; and Sir Thomas Baskerville, general of the fleet, by my advice, sent him a cartel of defiance, offering to meet him with choice of weapons, in any indifferent kingdom of equal distance from this realm ; which challenge he hath prudently put in his pipe, or rather roled it up for one of his Spanish cigarros, and smoked it, and I doubt not, found it foul in the mouth.'

‘But the next day, gentlemen, in came some five-and-twenty more, being the wreck of the other party, and with them a few negroes; and these proved themselves no honest men than they were brave, for there being great misery among us English, and every one of us straggling where he could to get food, every day one or more who went out never came back, and that caused a suspicion that the negroes had betrayed them to the Spaniards, or may be, slain and eaten them. So these fellows being upbraided with that altogether left us, telling us boldly, that if they had eaten our fellows, we owed them a debt instead of the Spanish prisoners; and we, in great terror and hunger, went forward and over the mountains till we came to a little river which ran northward, which seemed to lead into the Northern Sea; and there Mr. O.—who, sirs, I will say, after his first rage was over, behaved himself all through like a valiant and skilful commander—bade us cut down trees and make canoes, to go down to the sea; which we began to do with great labour and little profit, hewing down trees with our swords, and burning them out with fire, which, after much labour, we kindled; but as we were a-burning out of the first tree, and cutting down of another, a great party of negroes came upon us, and with much friendly show bade us flee for our lives, for the Spaniards were upon us in great force. And so we were up and away again, hardly able to drag our legs after us for hunger and weariness, and the broiling heat. And some were taken (God help them!) and some fled with the negroes, of whom what became God alone knoweth; but eight or ten held on with the Captain, among whom was I, and fled downward toward the sea for one day; but afterwards finding by the noise in the woods that the Spaniards were on the track of us, we turned up again toward the inland, and coming to a cliff, climbed up over it, drawing up the lady and the little maid with cords of liana (which hang from those trees as honeysuckle does here, but exceeding stout and long, even to fifty fathoms); and so breaking the track, hoped to be out of the way of the enemy.

‘By which, nevertheless, we only increased our misery. For two fell from that cliff, as men asleep for very weariness, and miserably broke their bones; and others, whether by the great toil, or sunstrokes, or eating of strange berries, fell sick of fluxes and fevers; where was no drop of water, but rock of pumice stone as bare as the back of my hand, and full, moreover, of great cracks, black and without bottom, over which we had not strength to lift the sick, but were fain to leave them there aloft, in the sunshine, like Dives in his torments, crying aloud for a drop of water to cool their tongues; and every man a great stinking vulture or two sitting by him, like an ugly black fiend out of the pit, waiting till the poor soul should depart out of the corpse: but nothing could avail, and for the dear life we must down again and into the woods, or be burned up alive upon those rocks.

‘So getting down the slope on the farther side, we came into the woods once more, and there wandered for many days, I know not how many; our shoes being gone, and our clothes all rent off us with brakes and briars. And yet how the lady endured all was a marvel to see; for she went bare-foot many days, and for clothes was fain to wrap herself in Mr. Oxenham’s cloak; while the little maid went all but naked: but ever she looked still on Mr. Oxenham, and seemed to take no care as long as he was by, comforting and cheering us all with pleasant words; yea, and once sitting down under a great fig-tree, sang us all to sleep with very sweet music; yet, waking about midnight, I saw her sitting still upright, weeping very bitterly; on whom, sirs, God have mercy; for she was a fair and a brave jewel.

‘And so, to make few words of a sad matter, at last there were none left but Mr. Oxenham and the lady and the little maid, together with me and William Penberthy of Marazion, my good comrade. And Mr. Oxenham always led the lady, and Penberthy and I carried the little maid. And for food we had fruits, such as we could find, and water we got from the leaves of certain lilies which grew on the bark of trees, which I found by seeing the monkeys drink at them; and the little maid called them monkey-cups, and asked for

them continually, making me climb for them. And so we wandered on, and upward into very high mountains, always fearing lest the Spaniards should track us with dogs, which made the lady leap up often in her sleep, crying that the bloodhounds were upon her. And it befell upon a day, that we came into a great wood of ferns (which grew not on the ground like ours, but on stems as big as a pinnace's mast, and the back of them was like a fine meshed net, very strange to see), where was very pleasant shade, cool and green; and there, gentlemen, we sat down on a bank of moss, like folk desperate and foredone, and every one looked the other in the face for a long while. After which I took off the bark of those ferns, for I must needs be doing something to drive away thought, and began to plait slippers for the little maid.

'And as I was plaiting, Mr. Oxenham said, "What hinders us from dying like men, every man falling on his own sword?" To which I answered that I dare not; for a wise woman had prophesied of me, sirs, that I should die at sea, and yet neither by water or battle, wherefore I did not think right to meddle with the Lord's purposes. And William Penberthy said, "That he would sell his life, and that dear, but never give it away." But the lady said, "Ah, how gladly would I die! but then la pauvre garse," which is in French "the poor maid," meaning the little one. Then Mr. Oxenham fell into a very great weeping, a weakness I never saw him in before or since; and with many tears besought me never to desert that little maid, whatever might befall; which I promised, swearing to it like a heathen, but would, if I had been able, have kept it like a Christian. But on a sudden there was a great cry in the wood, and coming through the trees on all sides Spanish arquebusiers, a hundred strong at least, and negroes with them, who bade us stand or they would shoot. William Penberthy leapt up, crying, "Treason!" and running upon the nearest negro ran him through, and than another, and then falling on the Spaniards, fought manfully till he was borne down with pikes, and so died. But I, seeing nothing better to do, sate still

and finished my plaiting. And so we were all taken, and I and Mr. Oxenham bound with cords; but the soldiers made a litter for the lady and child, by commandment of Señor Diego de Trees, their commander, a very courteous gentleman.

‘Well, sirs, we were brought down to the place where the house of boughs had been by the river-side; there we went over in boats, and found waiting for us certain Spanish gentlemen, and among others one old and ill-favoured man, grey-bearded and bent, in a suit of black velvet, who seemed to be a great man among them. And if you will believe me, Mr. Leigh, that was none other than the old man with the gold falcon at his breast, Don Francisco Xararte by name, whom you found aboard of the Lima ship. And had you known as much of him as I do, or as Mr. Oxenham did either, you had cut him up for shark’s bait, or ever you let the cur ashore again.

‘Well, sirs, as soon as the lady came to shore, that old man ran upon her sword in hand, and would have slain her, but some there held him back. On which he turned to, and reviled with every foul and spiteful word which he could think of, so that some there bade him be silent for shame; and Mr. Oxenham said, “It is worthy of you, Don Francisco, thus to trumpet abroad your own disgrace. Did I not tell you years ago that you were a cur; and are you not proving my words for me?”

‘He answered, “English dog, would to Heaven I had never seen you!”

‘And Mr. Oxenham, “Spanish ape, would to Heaven that I had sent my dagger through your herring-ribs when you passed me behind St. Ildegonde’s church, eight years last Easter eve.” At which the old man turned pale, and then began again to upbraid the lady, vowing that he would have her burnt alive, and other devilish words, to which she answered at last—

‘“Would that you had burnt me alive on my wedding morning, and spared me eight years of misery!” And he—

‘“Miserery? Hear the witch, Señors! Oh, have I not

pampered her. heaped with jewels, clothes, coaches, what not? The saints alone know what I have spent on her. What more would she have of me?"

'To which she answered only but this one word, "Fool!" but in so terrible a voice, though low, that they who were about to laugh at the old pantaloon, were more minded to weep for her.

"'Fool!" she said again, after a while, "I will waste no words upon you. I would have driven a dagger to your heart months ago, but that I was loth to set you free so soon from your gout and your rheumatism. Selfish and stupid, know when you bought my body from my parents, you did not buy my soul! Farewell, my love, my life! and farewell, Señors! May you be more merciful to your daughters than my parents were to me!" And so, catching a dagger from the girdle of one of the soldiers, smote herself to the heart, and fell dead before them all.

'At which Mr. Oxenham smiled, and said, "That was worthy of us both. If you will unbind my hands, Señors, I shall be most happy to copy so fair a schoolmistress."

'But Don Diego shook his head, and said—

"'It were well for you, valiant Señor, were I at liberty to do so; but on questioning those of your sailors, whom I have already taken, I cannot hear that you have any letters of licence, either from the Queen of England, or any other potentate. I am compelled, therefore, to ask you, whether this is so; for it is a matter of life and death."

'To which Mr. Oxenham answered merrily, "That so it was: but that he was not aware that any potentate's licence was required to permit a gentleman's meeting his lady love; and that as for the gold which they had taken, if they had never allowed that fresh and fair young May to be forced into marrying that old January, he should never have meddled with their gold; so that was rather their fault than his." And added, that if he was to be hanged, as he supposed, the only favour which he asked for was a long drop and no priests. And all the while, gentlemen, he still kept his eyes fixed on the lady's corpse, till he was led away with me,

while all that stood by, God reward them for it, lamented openly the tragical end of those two sinful lovers.

‘And now, sirs, what befell me after that matters little ; for I never saw Captain Oxenham again, nor ever shall in this life.’

‘He was hanged, then?’

‘So I heard for certain the next year, and with him the gunner and sundry more : but some were given away for slaves to the Spaniards, and may be alive now, unless, like me, they have fallen into the cruel clutches of the Inquisition. For the Inquisition now, gentlemen, claims the bodies and souls of all heretics all over the world (as the devils told me with their own lips, when I pleaded that I was no Spanish subject) ; and none that it catches, whether peaceable merchants, or shipwrecked mariners, but must turn or burn.’

‘But how did you get into the Inquisition?’

‘Why, sir, after we were taken, we set forth to go down the river again ; and the old Don took the little maid with him in one boat (and bitterly she screeched at parting from us, and from the poor dead corpse), and Mr. Oxenham with Don Diego de Trees in another, and I in a third. And from the Spaniards I learnt that we were to be taken down to Lima, to the Viceroy ; but that the old man lived hard by Panama, and was going straight back to Panama forthwith with the little maid. But they said, “It will be well for her if she ever gets there, for the old man swears she is none of his, and would have left her behind him in the woods, now, if Don Diego had not shamed him out of it.” And when I heard that, seeing that there was nothing but death before me, I made up my mind to escape ; and the very first night, sirs, by God’s help, I did it, and went southward away into the forest, avoiding the tracks of the C’maroons, till I came to an Indian town. And there, gentlemen, I got more mercy from heathens than ever I had from Christians ; for when they found that I was no Spaniard, they fed me and gave me a house, and a wife (and a good wife she was to me), and painted me all over in patterns, as you see ; and because I had some knowledge of surgery and blood-letting, and my

fleams in my pocket, which were worth to me a fortune, I rose to great honour among them, though they taught me more of simples than ever I taught them of surgery. So I lived with them merrily enough, being a very heathen like them, or indeed worse, for they worshipped their Xemes, but I nothing. And in time my wife bare me a child; in looking at whose sweet face, gentlemen, I forgot Mr. Oxenham and his little maid, and my oath, ay, and my native land also. Wherefore it was taken from me, else had I lived and died as the beasts^e which perish; for one night, after we were all lain down, came a noise outside the town, and I starting up saw armed men and calivers shining in the moonlight, and heard one read in Spanish, with a loud voice, some fool's sermon, after their custom when they hunt the poor Indians, how God had given to St. Peter the dominion of the whole earth, and St. Peter again the Indies to the Catholic king; wherefore, if they would all be baptized and serve the Spaniard, they should have some monkey's allowance or other of more kicks than pence; and if not, then have at them with fire and sword; but I dare say your worships know that devilish trick of theirs better than I.'

'I know it, man. Go on.'

'Well—no sooner were the words spoken than, without waiting to hear what the poor innocents within would answer (though that mattered little, for they understood not one word of it), what do the villains but let fly right into the town with their calivers, and then rush in, sword in hand, killing pell-mell all they met, one of which shots, gentlemen, passing through the doorway, and close by me, struck my poor wife to the heart, that she never spoke word more. I, catching up the babe from her breast, tried to run: but when I saw the town full of them, and their dogs with them in leashes, which was yet worse, I knew all was lost, and sat down again by the corpse with the babe on my knees, waiting the end, like one stunned and in a dream; for now I thought God from whom I had fled had surely found me out, as He did Jonah, and the punishment of all my sins was come. Well, gentlemen, they dragged me out, and all the young

men and women, and chained us together by the neck ; and one, catching the pretty babe out of my arms, calls for water and a priest (for they had their shavelings with them), and no sooner was it christened, than, catching the babe by the heels, he dashed out its brains,—oh ! gentlemen, gentlemen !—against the ground, as if it had been a kitten ; and so did they to several more innocents that night, after they had christened them ; saying it was best for them to go to heaven while they were still sure thereof ; and so marched us all for slaves, leaving the old folk and the wounded to die at leisure. But when morning came, and they knew by my skin that I was no Indian, and by my speech that I was no Spaniard, they began threatening me with torments, till I confessed that I was an Englishman, and one of Oxenham's crew. At that says the leader, "Then you shall to Lima, to hang by the side of your Captain the pirate" ; by which I first knew that my poor Captain was certainly gone ; but alas for me ! the priest steps in and claims me for his booty, calling me Lutheran, heretic, and enemy of God ; and so, to make short a sad story, to the Inquisition at Carthageua I went, where what I suffered, gentlemen, were as disgustful for you to hear, as unmanly for me to complain of ; but so it was, that being twice racked, and having endured the water-torment as best I could, I was put to the scarpines, whereof I am, as you see, somewhat lame of one leg to this day. At which I could abide no more, and so, wretch that I am ! denied my God, in hope to save my life ; which indeed I did, but little it profited me ; for though I had turned to their superstition, I must have two hundred stripes in the public place, and then go to the galleys for seven years. And there, gentlemen, oftentimes I thought that it had been better for me to have been burned at once and for all : but you know as well as I what a floating hell of heat and cold, hunger and thirst, stripes and toil, is every one of those accursed craft. In which hell, nevertheless, gentlemen, I found the road to heaven,—I had almost said heaven itself. For it fell out, by God's mercy, that my next comrade was an Englishman like myself, a young man of Bristol, who, as he told me, had

been some manner of factor on board poor Captain Barker's ship, and had been a preacher among the Anabaptists here in England. And, oh! Sir Richard Grenville, if that man had done for you what he did for me, you would never say a word against those who serve the same Lord, because they don't altogether hold with you. For, from time to time, sir, seeing me altogether despairing and furious, like a wild beast in a pit, he set before me in secret earnestly the sweet promises of God in Christ,—who says, "Come to me, all ye that are heavy laden, and I will refresh you; and though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow,"—till all that past sinful life of mine looked like a dream when one awaketh, and I forgot all my bodily miseries in the misery of my soul, so did I loathe and hate myself for my rebellion against that loving God who had chosen me before the foundation of the world, and come to seek and save me when I was lost; and falling into very despair at the burden of my heinous sins, knew no peace until I gained sweet assurance that my Lord had hanged my burden upon His cross, and washed my sinful soul in His most sinless blood, Amen!

And Sir Richard Grenville said Amen also.

'But, gentlemen, if that sweet youth won a soul to Christ, he paid as dearly for it as ever did saint of God. For after a three or four months, when I had been all that while in sweet converse with him, and I may say in heaven in the midst of hell, there came one night to the barranco at Lima, where we were kept when on shore, three black devils of the Holy Office, and carried him off without a word, only saying to me, "Look that your turn come not next, for we hear that you have had much talk with the villain." And at these words I was so struck with terror that I swooned right away, and verily, if they had taken me there and then, I should have denied my God again, for my faith was but young and weak: but instead, they left me aboard the galley for a few months more (that was a whole voyage to Panama and back), in daily dread lest I should find myself in their cruel claws again—and then nothing for me, but to burn as a relapsed heretic. But when we came back to Lima, the

officers came on board again, and said to me, "That heretic has confessed nought against you, so we will leave you for this time : but because you have been seen talking with him so much, and the Holy Office suspects your conversion to be but a rotten one, you are adjudged to the galleys for the rest of your life in perpetual servitude."

'But what became of him?' asked Amyas.

'He was burned, sir, a day or two before we got to Lima, and five others with him at the same stake, of whom two were Englishmen ; old comrades of mine, as I guess.'

'Ah!' said Amyas, 'we heard of that when we were off Lima ; and they said, too, that there were six more lying still in prison, to be burnt in a few days. If we had had our fleet with us (as we should have had if it had not been for John Winter) we would have gone in and rescued them all, poor wretches, and sacked the town to boot : but what could we do with one ship?'

'Would to God you had, sir ; for the story was true enough ; and among them, I heard, were two young ladies of quality and their confessor, who came to their ends for reproving out of Scripture the filthy and loathsome living of those parts, which, as I saw well enough and too well, is liker to Sodom than to a Christian town ; but God will avenge His saints, and their sins. Amen'

'Amen,' said Sir Richard : 'but on with thy tale, for it is as strange as ever man heard.'

'Well, gentlemen, when I heard that I must end my days in that galley, I was for awhile like a madman : but in a day or two there came over me, I know not how, a full assurance of salvation, both for this life and the life to come, such as I had never had before ; and it was revealed to me (I speak the truth, gentlemen, before Heaven) that now I had been tried to the uttermost, and that my deliverance was at hand.

'And all the way up to Panama (that was after we had laden the *Cacafuogo*) I cast in my mind how to escape, and found no way : but just as I was beginning to lose heart again, a door was opened by the Lord's own hand ; for (I know not why) we were marched across from Panama to

Nombre, which had never happened before, and there put altogether into a great barranco close by the quay-side, shackled, as is the fashion, to one long bar that ran the whole length of the house. And the very first night that we were there, I, looking out of the window, spied, lying close aboard of the quay, a good-sized caravel well armed and just loading for sea; and the land breeze blew off very strong, so that the sailors were laying out a fresh warp to hold her to the shore. And it came into my mind, that if we were aboard of her, we should be at sea in five minutes; and looking at the quay, I saw all the soldiers who had guarded us scattered about drinking and gambling, and some going into taverns to refresh themselves after their journey. That was just at sundown; and half an hour after, in comes the gaoler to take a last look at us for the night, and his keys at his girdle. Whereon, sirs (whether by madness, or whether by the spirit which gave Samson strength to rend the lion), I rose against him as he passed me, without forethought or treachery of any kind, chained though I was, caught him by the head, and threw him there and then against the wall, that he never spoke word after; and then with his keys freed myself and every soul in that room, and bid them follow me, vowing to kill any man who disobeyed my commands. They followed, as men astounded and leaping out of night into day, and death into life, and so aboard that caravel and out of the harbour (the Lord only knows how, who blinded the eyes of the idolaters), with no more hurt than a few chance-shot from the soldiers on the quay. But my tale has been overlong already, gentlemen——'

'Go on till midnight, my good fellow, if you will.'

'Well, sirs, they chose me for captain, and a certain Genoese for lieutenant, and away to go. I would fain have gone ashore after all, and back to Panama to hear news of the little maid: but that would have been but a fool's errand. Some wanted to turn pirates: but I, and the Genoese too, who was a prudent man, though an evil one, persuaded them to run for England and get employment

in the Netherland wars, assuring them that there would be no safety in the Spanish Main, when once our escape got wind. And the more part being of one mind, for England we sailed, watering at the Barbadoes because it was desolate; and so eastward toward the Canaries. In which voyage what we endured (being taken by long calms), by scurvy, calentures, hunger, and thirst, no tongue can tell. Many a time were we glad to lay out sheets at night to catch the dew, and suck them in the morning; and he that had a noggin of rain-water out of the scuppers was as much sought to as if he had been Adelantado of all the Indies; till of a hundred and forty poor wretches a hundred and ten were dead, blaspheming God and man, and above all, me and the Genoese, for taking the Europe voyage, as if I had not sins enough of my own already. And last of all, when we thought ourselves safe, we were wrecked by south-westers on the coast of Brittany, near to Cape Race, from which but nine souls of us came ashore with their lives; and so to Brest, where I found a Flushingier who carried me to Falmouth; and so ends my tale, in which if I have said one word more or less than truth, I can wish myself no worse, than to have it all to undergo a second time.'

And his voice, as he finished, sank from very weariness of soul; while Sir Richard sat opposite him in silence, his elbows on the table, his cheeks on his doubled fists, looking him through and through with kindling eyes. No one spoke for several minutes; and then—

'Amyas, you have heard this story. You believe it?'

'Every word, sir, or I should not have the heart of a Christian man.'

'So do I. Anthony!'

The butler entered.

'Take this man to the buttery; clothe him comfortably, and feed him with the best; and bid the knaves treat him as if he were their own father.'

But Yeo lingered.

'If I might be so bold as to ask your worship a favour?—'

‘Anything in reason, my brave fellow.’

‘If your worship could put me in the way of another adventure to the Indies?’

‘Another! Hast not had enough of the Spaniards already?’

‘Never enough, sir, while one of the idolatrous tyrants is left unchanged,’ said he, with a right bitter smile. ‘But it’s not for that only, sir: but my little maid—Oh, sir! my little maid, that I swore to Mr. Oxenham to look to, and never saw her from that day to this! I must find her, sir, or I shall go mad, I believe. Not a night but she comes and calls to me in my dreams, the poor darling; and not a morning but when I wake there is my oath lying on my soul, like a great black cloud, and I no nearer the keeping of it. I told that poor young minister of it when we were in the galleys together; and he said oaths were oaths, and keep it I must; and keep it I will, sir, if you’ll but help me.’

‘Have patience, man. God will take as good care of thy little maid as ever thou wilt.’

‘I know it, sir. I know it: but faith’s weak, sir! and oh! if she were bred up a Papist and an idolater; wouldn’t her blood be on my head then, sir? Sooner than that, sooner than that, I’d be in the Inquisition again to-morrow, I would!’

‘My good fellow, there are no adventures to the Indies forward now: but if you want to fight Spaniards, here is a gentleman will show you the way. Amyas, take him with you to Ireland. If he has learnt half the lessons God has set him to learn, he ought to stand you in good stead.’

Yeo looked eagerly at the young giant.

‘Will you have me, sir? There’s few matters I can’t turn my hand to: and maybe you’ll be going to the Indies again, some day, eh? and take me with you? I’d serve your turn well, though I say it, either for gunner or for pilot. I know every stone and tree from Nombre to Panama, and all the ports of both the seas. You’ll never

be content, I'll warrant, till you've had another turn along the gold coasts, will you now?'

Amyas laughed and nodded; and the bargain was concluded.

So out went Yeo to eat, and Amyas having received his despatches, got ready for his journey home.

'Go the short way over the moors, lad; and send back Cary's grey when you can. You must not lose an hour, but be ready to sail the moment the wind goes about.'

So they started: but as Amyas was getting into the saddle, he saw that there was some stir among the servants, who seemed to keep carefully out of Yeo's way, whispering and nodding mysteriously; and just as his foot was in the stirrup, Anthony, the old butler, plucked him back.

'Dear father alive, Mr. Amyas!' whispered he: 'and you ben't going by the moor road all alone with that chap?'

'Why not, then? I'm too big for him to eat, I reckon.'

'Oh, Mr. Amyas! he's not right, I tell you; not company for a Christian—to go forth with creatures as has flames of fire in their inwards; 'tis temptation of Providence, indeed, then, it is.'

'Tale of a tub.'

'Tale of a Christian, sir. There was two boys pig-minding, seed him at it down the hill, beside a maiden that was taken mazed (and no wonder, poor soul!) and lying in screeching asterisks now down to the mill—you ask as you go by—and saw the flames come out of the mouth of mun, and the smoke out of mun's nose like a vire-drake, and the roaring of mun like the roaring of ten thousand bulls. Oh, sir! and to go with he after dark over moor! 'Tis the devil's devices, sir, against you, because you'm going against his sarvants the Pope of Room and the Spaniard; and you'll be Pixy-led, sure as life, and locked into a bog, you will, and see mun vanish away to fire and brimstone, like a jack-o'-lantern. Oh, have a care, then, have a care!'

And the old man wrung his hands, while Amyas, bursting with laughter, rode off down the park, with the unconscious

Yeo at his stirrup, chatting away about the Indies, and delighting Amyas more and more by his shrewdness, high spirit, and rough eloquence.

They had gone ten miles or more; the day began to draw in, and the western wind to sweep more cold and cheerless every moment, when Amyas, knowing that there was not an inn hard by around for many a mile ahead, took a pull at a certain bottle which Lady Grenville had put into his holster, and then offered Yeo a pull also.

He declined; he had meat and drink too about him, Heaven be praised!

‘Meat and drink? Fall to, then, man, and don’t stand on manners.’

Whereon Yeo, seeing an old decayed willow by a brook, went to it, and took therefrom some touchwood, to which he set a light with his knife and a stone, while Amyas watched, a little puzzled and startled, as Yeo’s fiery reputation came into his mind. Was he really a Salamander-Sprite, and going to warm his inside by a meal of burning tinder? But now Yeo, in his solemn methodical way, pulled out of his bosom a brown leaf, and began rolling a piece of it up neatly to the size of his little finger; and then, putting the one end into his mouth and the other on the tinder, sucked at it till it was a-light; and drinking down the smoke, began puffing it out again at his nostrils with a grunt of deepest satisfaction, and resumed his dog-trot by Amyas’s side, as if he had been a walking chimney.

On which Amyas burst into a loud laugh, and cried—

‘Why, no wonder they said you breathed fire! Is not that the Indians’ tobacco?’

‘Yea, verily, Heaven be praised! but did you never see it before?’

‘Never, though we heard talk of it along the coast; but we took it for one more Spanish lie. Humph—well, live and learn!’

‘Ah, sir, no lie, but a blessed truth, as I can tell, who have ere now gone in the strength of this weed three days and nights without eating; and therefore, sir, the Indians

always carry it with them on their war-parties: and no wonder; for when all things were made none was made better than this; to be a lone man's companion, a bachelor's friend, a hungry man's food, a sad man's cordial, a wakeful man's sleep, and a chilly man's fire, sir; while for staunching of wounds, purging of rheum, and settling of the stomach, there's no herb like unto it under the canopy of heaven.'

The truth of which eulogium Amyas tested in after years, as shall be fully set forth in due place and time. But 'Mark in the meanwhile,' says one of the veracious chroniclers from whom I draw these facts, writing seemingly in the palmy days of good Queen Anne, and 'not having' (as he says) 'before his eyes the fear of that misopapnic Solomon James I. or of any other lying Stuart,' 'that not to South Devon, but to North; not to Sir Walter Raleigh, but to Sir Amyas Leigh; not to the banks of Dart, but to the banks of Torridge, does Europe owe the dayspring of the latter age, that age of smoke which shall endure and thrive, when the age of brass shall have vanished like those of iron and of gold; for whereas Mr. Lane is said to have brought home that divine weed (as Spenser well names it) from Virginia, in the year 1584, it is hereby indisputable that full four years earlier, by the bridge of Putford in the Torridge moors (which all true smokers shall hereafter visit as a hallowed spot and point of pilgrimage), first twinkled that fiery beacon and beneficent lode-star of Bidefordian commerce, to spread hereafter from port to port and peak to peak, like the watch-fires which proclaimed the coming of the Armada or the fall of Troy, even to the shores of the Bosphorus, the peaks of the Caucasus, and the farthest isles of the Malayan sea; while Bideford, metropolis of tobacco, saw her Pool choked with Virginian traders, and the pavement of her Bridgeland Street groaning beneath the savoury bales of roll Trinadado, leaf, and pudding; and her grave burghers, bolstered and blocked out of their own houses by the scarce less savoury stock-fish casks which filled cellar, parlour, and attic, were fain to sit outside the door, a silver pipe in every strong right hand, and each left

hand chinking cheerfully the doubloons deep lodged in the auriferous caverns of their trunk-hose ; while in those fairy-rings of fragrant mist, which circled round their contemplative brows, flitted most pleasant visions of Wiltshire farmers jogging into Sherborne fair, their heaviest shillings in their pockets, to buy (unless old Aubrey lies) the lotus-leaf of Torridge for its weight in silver, and draw from thence, after the example of the Caciques of Dariena, supplies of inspiration much needed, then as now, in those Gothamite regions. And yet did these improve, as Englishmen, upon the method of those heathen savages ; for the latter (so Salvation Yeo reported as a truth, and Dampier's surgeon Mr. Wafer after him), when they will deliberate of war or policy, sit round in the hut of the chief ; where being placed, enter to them a small boy with a cigarro of the bigness of a rolling-pin, and puffs the smoke thereof into the face of each warrior, from the eldest to the youngest ; while they, putting their hand funnel-wise round their mouths, draw into the sinuosities of the brain that more than Delphic vapour of prophecy ; which boy presently falls down in a swoon, and being dragged out by the heels and laid by to sober, enter another to puff at the sacred cigarro, till he is dragged out likewise ; and so on till the tobacco is finished, and the seed of wisdom has sprouted in every soul into the tree of meditation, bearing the flowers of eloquence, and in due time the fruit of valiant action.' With which quaint fact (for fact it is, in spite of the bombast) I end the present chapter.