

Days of the Discoverers eBook

Days of the Discoverers

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Contents

Days of the Discoverers eBook.....	1
Contents.....	2
Table of Contents.....	9
Page 1.....	11
Page 2.....	13
Page 3.....	15
Page 4.....	17
Page 5.....	19
Page 6.....	21
Page 7.....	23
Page 8.....	25
Page 9.....	26
Page 10.....	28
Page 11.....	30
Page 12.....	32
Page 13.....	34
Page 14.....	35
Page 15.....	37
Page 16.....	39
Page 17.....	40
Page 18.....	42
Page 19.....	44
Page 20.....	46
Page 21.....	47
Page 22.....	48



[Page 23..... 50](#)

[Page 24..... 52](#)

[Page 25..... 54](#)

[Page 26..... 55](#)

[Page 27..... 57](#)

[Page 28..... 59](#)

[Page 29..... 61](#)

[Page 30..... 62](#)

[Page 31..... 64](#)

[Page 32..... 65](#)

[Page 33..... 66](#)

[Page 34..... 68](#)

[Page 35..... 69](#)

[Page 36..... 71](#)

[Page 37..... 73](#)

[Page 38..... 74](#)

[Page 39..... 76](#)

[Page 40..... 77](#)

[Page 41..... 78](#)

[Page 42..... 80](#)

[Page 43..... 82](#)

[Page 44..... 84](#)

[Page 45..... 86](#)

[Page 46..... 87](#)

[Page 47..... 88](#)

[Page 48..... 90](#)



[Page 49..... 91](#)

[Page 50..... 93](#)

[Page 51..... 95](#)

[Page 52..... 96](#)

[Page 53..... 97](#)

[Page 54..... 99](#)

[Page 55..... 101](#)

[Page 56..... 103](#)

[Page 57..... 105](#)

[Page 58..... 106](#)

[Page 59..... 107](#)

[Page 60..... 108](#)

[Page 61..... 110](#)

[Page 62..... 112](#)

[Page 63..... 114](#)

[Page 64..... 116](#)

[Page 65..... 118](#)

[Page 66..... 120](#)

[Page 67..... 121](#)

[Page 68..... 122](#)

[Page 69..... 123](#)

[Page 70..... 124](#)

[Page 71..... 126](#)

[Page 72..... 128](#)

[Page 73..... 130](#)

[Page 74..... 132](#)



[Page 75..... 133](#)

[Page 76..... 134](#)

[Page 77..... 136](#)

[Page 78..... 138](#)

[Page 79..... 139](#)

[Page 80..... 141](#)

[Page 81..... 143](#)

[Page 82..... 144](#)

[Page 83..... 145](#)

[Page 84..... 146](#)

[Page 85..... 147](#)

[Page 86..... 148](#)

[Page 87..... 149](#)

[Page 88..... 151](#)

[Page 89..... 153](#)

[Page 90..... 155](#)

[Page 91..... 156](#)

[Page 92..... 157](#)

[Page 93..... 158](#)

[Page 94..... 160](#)

[Page 95..... 162](#)

[Page 96..... 163](#)

[Page 97..... 165](#)

[Page 98..... 167](#)

[Page 99..... 168](#)

[Page 100..... 169](#)



[Page 101..... 170](#)

[Page 102..... 171](#)

[Page 103..... 173](#)

[Page 104..... 175](#)

[Page 105..... 177](#)

[Page 106..... 179](#)

[Page 107..... 180](#)

[Page 108..... 181](#)

[Page 109..... 182](#)

[Page 110..... 184](#)

[Page 111..... 185](#)

[Page 112..... 187](#)

[Page 113..... 189](#)

[Page 114..... 191](#)

[Page 115..... 193](#)

[Page 116..... 195](#)

[Page 117..... 197](#)

[Page 118..... 199](#)

[Page 119..... 200](#)

[Page 120..... 201](#)

[Page 121..... 203](#)

[Page 122..... 205](#)

[Page 123..... 207](#)

[Page 124..... 209](#)

[Page 125..... 211](#)

[Page 126..... 212](#)



[Page 127..... 214](#)

[Page 128..... 216](#)

[Page 129..... 218](#)

[Page 130..... 219](#)

[Page 131..... 220](#)

[Page 132..... 222](#)

[Page 133..... 224](#)

[Page 134..... 226](#)

[Page 135..... 228](#)

[Page 136..... 230](#)

[Page 137..... 231](#)

[Page 138..... 233](#)

[Page 139..... 234](#)

[Page 140..... 235](#)

[Page 141..... 236](#)

[Page 142..... 238](#)

[Page 143..... 239](#)

[Page 144..... 241](#)

[Page 145..... 243](#)

[Page 146..... 245](#)

[Page 147..... 246](#)

[Page 148..... 248](#)

[Page 149..... 249](#)

[Page 150..... 250](#)

[Page 151..... 252](#)

[Page 152..... 254](#)



[Page 153..... 255](#)

[Page 154..... 256](#)

[Page 155..... 258](#)

[Page 156..... 259](#)

[Page 157..... 261](#)

[Page 158..... 263](#)

[Page 159..... 265](#)

[Page 160..... 267](#)



Table of Contents

Section	Table of Contents	Page
Start of eBook		1
BIBLIOGRAPHY 300		1
DAYS OF THE DISCOVERERS		1
I		1
NOTES		9
THE VIKING'S SECRET		10
II		10
NOTES		17
THE NAVIGATORS		19
III		19
NOTES		26
SUNSET SONG		26
IV		27
NOTE		35
THE QUEEN'S PRAYER		35
V		35
NOTE		42
THE ESCAPE		42
VI		43
NOTE		49
GRAY SAILS		50
VII		50
NOTE		56
THE GOLD ROAD		56
VIII		56
NOTE		63
COLD O' THE MOON		63
IX		65
NOTE		71
THE DRUM		71
X		72
NOTE		79
A LEGEND OF MALINCHE		79
XI		80
NOTE		88
MOCCASIN FLOWER		88
XII		89
NOTES		96
THE MUSTANGS		96
XIII		97



NOTE	104
LONE BAYOU	104
XIV	105
NOTE	114
THE DESTROYERS	114
XV	114
A WATCH-DOG OF ENGLAND	126
XVI	126
NOTES	133
THE CHANGELINGS	133
XVII	134
THE WOODEN SHOE	143
XVIII	143
NOTES	149
IMPERIALISM	150
XIX	150
NOTE	158
THE DISCOVERIES	158
THE END	159



Page 1

BIBLIOGRAPHY 300

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

“I will tell you where there is plenty of it” (in color)

Frontispiece

&nb
sp;

FACING

PAGE

“And Freya came from Asgard in her chariot drawn by two cats” (in color) 4

“Nils marked out an inscription in Runic letters” 30

“The miniature globe took form as the children watched, fascinated” 44

“He proposed that Caonaba should put on the gift the Spanish captain had brought” 78

“A sapling, bent down, was attached to a noose ingeniously hidden” 86

“The natives seemed prepared to traffic in all peace and friendliness” (in color) 132

“Cortes flung about his shoulders his own cloak” 146

“Moteczuma awaited them in the courtyard” (in color) 162

“Cartier read from his service-book” 176

“The creatures darkened the plain almost as far as the eye could see” 190

“Gentlemen, whence does this fleet come?” 204

“Drake was silent, fingering the slender Milanese poniard” 226

“If he had to wear her fetters, they should at least be golden” 244

“The Grand Master of the day entered the dining hall” 266



DAYS OF THE DISCOVERERS

I

ASGARD THE BEAUTIFUL

A red fox ran into the empty church. In the middle of the floor he sat up and looked around. Nothing stirred—not the painted figures on the wooden walls, nor the boy who now stood in the doorway. This boy was gray-eyed and flaxen-haired, and might have been eleven or twelve years old. He was looking for the good old priest, Father Ansgar, and the wild shy animal eyeing him from the foot of the altar made it only too clear that the church, like the village, was deserted.

Father Ansgar was dead of the strange swift pestilence that was called in 1348 the Black Death. So also were the sexton, the cooper, the shoemaker, and almost all the people of the valley. A ship had come into Bergen with the plague on board, and it spread through Norway like a grass-fire. Only last week Thorolf Erlandsson[1] had had a father and mother, a grandmother, two younger sisters and a brother. Now he was alone. In the night the dairy woman and the plowmen at Ormgard farm had run away. Other farms and houses were already closed and silent, or plundered and burned. Ormgard being remote had at first escaped the sickness.

Page 2

Thorolf turned away from the church door and began to climb the mountain. At the lane leading to his home he did not stop, but kept on into the woods. It was not so lonely there.

Up and up he climbed, the thrilling scent of fir-balsam in his nostrils, the small friendly noises of the forest all about him. Only a few months ago he had come down this very road with his father, driving the cattle and goats home from the summer pasture. All the other farmers were doing the same, and the clear notes of the lure, the long curving horn, used for calling the cattle and signaling across valleys, soared from slope to slope. There was laughter and shouting and joking all the way down. Now the only persons abroad seemed to be thieving ruffians whose greed for plunder was more than their fear of the plague.

A thought came to the boy. How could he leave his father's cattle unfed and uncared for? What if he were to drive the cows himself to the saeter and tend them through the summer? He faced about, resolutely, and began to descend the hill.

Within sight of the familiar roofs he heard some one coming from the village, on horseback. It proved to be Nils the son of Magnus the son of Nils who was called the Bear-Slayer, with a sack of grain and a pair of saddlebags on a sedate brown pony. Nils was lame of one foot and no taller than a boy of nine, although he was thirteen this month and his head was nearly as large as a man's. He had been an orphan from baby-hood, and for the last three years had lived in the priest's house learning to be a clerk.

"Hoh!" called Nils, "where are you going?"

"To the farm to get our cattle and take them to the saeter. There is no one left to do it but me."

"Cattle?" queried the other interestedly, "She will be glad of that."

"She!" said Thorolf, "who?"

"The Wind-wife[2]—Mother Elle, who used to sell wind to the sailors—the Finnish woman from Stavanger. She has gathered up a lot of children who have no one to look after them and is leading them into the mountains. She has Nikolina Sven's daughter Larsson, and Olof and Anders Amundson, and half a score of younger ones from different villages. She says that if it is God's will for the plague to come to the saeter it will come, but it is not there now, and it is in the valleys and the towns. She has gone on with the small ones who cannot walk fast, and left Olof and Anders and me to bring along the ponies with the loads. I'll help you drive your beasts."



Without trouble the lads got the animals out of the byres and headed them up the road. Norway is so sharply divided by precipitous mountain ranges and deeply-penetrating fiords, that it may be but a few miles from a farm near sea level to the high grassy pastures three or four thousand feet above it where the cattle are pastured in summer. The saeter maidens live there in their cottages from June to September, making butter and cheese, tending the herds and doing such other work as they can. The saeter belonging to Ormgard and its neighbors was the one chosen by Mother Elle as a refuge for her flock.



Page 3

The forest of magnificent firs through which the road passed presently grew less somber, beginning to be streaked with white birches whose bright leaves twinkled in the sun. Then it reached the height at which evergreens cease to grow. The birches were shorter and sparser, and through the thinning woodland appeared glimpses of a treeless pasture dotted with scrubby low bushes and clumps of rushes. A glint of clear green water betrayed a small lake in a dip of the hills. And now were heard sounds most unusual in that lonely place, the high sweet voices of children.

Birch trees, little trees, dwarfed by sharp winds and poor soil, encircled a level space perhaps ten feet across, carpeted with new soft grass, reindeer moss and cupped lichens. Here sat seven or eight children eagerly listening to a story told by an older child as she divided the ration of fladbrod,[3] wild strawberries from a small basket of birchbark, and brown goat's-milk cheese.

“And Freya came from Asgard in her chariot drawn by two cats—”

Nikolina the daughter of Sven Larsson of the Trolle farm was known through all the valley, not only as the sole child of its richest farmer, but for the bright blonde hair that covered her shoulders with its soft abundance and hung to her waist. Her father would not have it cut or braided or even covered save by such a little embroidered cap as she wore now. Her scarlet bodice, and blue-black skirt bordered with bright woven bands, were of the finest wool; the full-sleeved white linen under-dress had been spun and woven and embroidered by skilful and loving fingers. Nikolina had lost the roof from over her head, and a great deal more than that. Now she was giving her whole mind to the little ones of all ages from four to eight, crowding close about her.

[Illustration: “And Freya came from Asgard in her chariot drawn by two cats” —Page 4]

“Hi!” called Nils, “where is Mother Elle? See what Thorolf and I have got!”

The children scrambled to their feet and gazed with round eyes, their small hungry teeth munching their morsels of hard bread. Nikolina plucked a bunch of grass for Snow, the foremost cow, and patted her as she ate it.

“The little ones were so tired and hungry,” she said, “that Mother Elle said they might have their supper now, while she and Olof and Anders went on to the saeter. This is wonderful! She was saying only this morning that she feared all the cattle were dead or stolen.”

Within an hour they came in sight of the log huts with turf-covered roofs that sloped almost to the ground in the rear. A broad plain stretched away beyond, and the new grass was of that vivid green to be found in places which deep snow makes pure. Hills enclosed it, and beyond, a gleaming network of lake and stream ended in range above

range of blue and silver peaks. The clear invigorating air was like some unearthly wine.
The cows at the scent



Page 4

of fresh pasture moved more briskly; the pony tossed his head and whinnied. Not far from the cottages there came to meet them a little old woman, dark and wiry, with bright searching eyes. Her face was wrinkled all over in fine soft lines, but her hair was hardly gray at all. She wore a pointed hood and girdled tunic of tanned reindeer hide, with leggings and shoes of the same. A blanket about her shoulders was draped into a kind of pouch, in which she carried on her back a tow-headed, solemn-eyed baby.

“Welcome to you, Thorolf Erlandsson,” she said, just as if she had been expecting him. “With this good milk we shall fare like the King.”

No king, truly, could have supped on food more delicious than that enjoyed by Nils and Thorolf on this first night in the saeter. It is strange but true that the most exquisite delights are those that money cannot buy. No man can taste cold spring water and barley bread in absolute perfection who has not paid the poor man’s price—hard work and keen hunger.

When Nikolina, Karen and Lovisa came up with the smaller children the place had already an inhabited, homelike look. There was even a wise old raven, almost as large as a gander, whom Nils had christened Munin, after Odin’s bird. The little ones had all the new milk they could drink from their wooden bowls, and were put to bed in the movable wooden bed-places, on beds of hay covered with sheepskins and blankets. All were asleep before dark, for at that season the night lasted only two or three hours. The last thing that Thorolf heard was a happy little pipe from the five-year-old Ellida,—

“Now we shall live in Asgard forever and ever.”

For all it had to do with the experience of many of the children the saeter might really have been Asgard, the Norse paradise. The youngest had never before been outside the narrow valley where they were born. Ellida and Margit, Didrik and little Peder, could not be convinced that they were anywhere but in Asgard the Blest.

Norway had long since become Christian, but the old faith was not forgotten. The legends, songs and customs of the people were full of it. In the sagas Asgard was described as being on a mountain at the top of the world. Around the base of this mountain lay Midgard, the abode of mankind. Beyond the great seas, in Utgard, the giants lived. Hel was the under-world, the home of evil ghosts and spirits. Tales were told in the long winter evenings, of Baldur the god of spring, Loki the crafty, Odin the old one-eyed beggar in a hooded cloak, with his two ravens and his two tame wolves, Freya the lovely lady of flowers, Elle-folk dancing in the moonlight, and little rascally Trolls.

The songs and legends repeated by the old people or chanted by minstrels or skalds were more than idle stories—they were the history of a race. Children heard over and

over again the family records telling in rude rhyme the story of centuries. In distant Iceland, Greenland, the Shetlands, the Faroes or the Orkneys, a Norseman could tell exactly what might be his udall right, or right of inheritance, in the land of his fathers.



Page 5

On Nils and Thorolf, Anders, Olof, Nikolina, Karen and Lovisa, who were all over ten years old, rested great responsibility. Mother Elle always managed to solve her own problems and expected them to attend to theirs without constant direction from her. She told them what there was to be done and left them to attend to it.

All were hardy, active youngsters who took to fending for themselves as naturally as a day-old chick takes to scratching. In ordinary seasons the work at the saeter was heavy, for the maidens must not only follow the herds over miles of pasture land, but make butter and cheese for the winter from their milking. The few cows that were here now could be tethered near by; the milk, when the children had had all they wanted, was mostly used in soups, pudding or groet (porridge). A net or weir stretched across the outlet of the lake would fill with fish overnight. The streams were full of trout. Mother Elle knew how to make fish-hooks of bone, bows and arrows, ropes, and baskets of bark, how to weave osiers, how to cure bruises and cuts, how to trap the wild hares, grouse and plover and cook them over an open fire. The children found plover's eggs and the eggs of other wild fowl. They raised pulse, leeks, onions and turnips in a little garden patch. They gathered strawberries, cranberries, crowberries, wild currants, black and red, the cloudberry and the delicious arctic raspberry which tastes of pineapple. Some stores of salt and grain were already at the saeter and the grain-fields had been sowed, before the pestilence appeared in the valley.

In the long summer days of these northern mountains, one has the feeling that they will never end, that life must go on in an infinite succession of still, sunshiny, fragrant hours, filled with the songs of birds, the chirr of insects and the distant lowing of cattle. There is time for everything. At night comes dreamless slumber, and the morning is like a birth into new life.

There was a great deal of singing and story-telling at odd times. A group of children making mats or baskets, gathering pease or going after berries would beg Nils or Nikolina to tell a story, or Karen would lead them in some old song with a familiar refrain. But some of the songs the Wind-wife crooned to the baby were not like any the children had heard. They were not even in Norwegian.

Thorolf was a silent lad, who would rather listen than talk, and hated asking questions. But one day, when he and Nikolina were hunting wild raspberries, he asked her if she thought Mother Elle meant to stay in the mountains through the winter. Nikolina did not know.

“’Tis well to be wise but not too wise,
’Tis well that to-morrow is hid from our eyes,
For in forward-looking forebodings rise,”

she added quaintly. “I have heard her say that it is colder in Greenland than it is here.”

“Has she been in Greenland?”



Page 6

“Her father and mother were on the way there when she was little, and the ship was wrecked somewhere on the coast. The Skroelings found her and took her to live in their country. That is how she learned so much about trees and herbs, and how to make bows and arrows and moccasins.”

“Moccasins?”

“The little shoes she made for Ellida. And she made a little boat for Peder, like their skiffs.”

This was interesting. For a private reason, Thorolf held Greenland to be the most fascinating of all places.

“Can she speak their language?”

“Of course. I asked her to teach me, and she said that perhaps she would some day. The songs that she sings to the little ones are some that the Skroeling woman who adopted her used to sing to her when she cried for her own mother. One of them begins like this:

“Piche Klooskap pechian
Machieswi menikok.”

“What does it mean?”

“‘Long ago Klooskap came to the island of the partridges.’ Klooskap was like Odin, or Thor. The priests in Greenland told her he was a devil and wouldn’t let her talk about him, but the Skroelings had runes for everything just like the people in the sagas,—runes for war, and healing, and the sea.”

“How did she ever get away?”

“Some men came from Westbyrg to cut wood in the forest, and when they saw that she was not really a Skroeling they bought her for an iron pot and one of them married her. But he was drowned a long time ago.”

“I wish I knew the Skroelings’ language. Some day I mean to go to Greenland.”

“Perhaps Mother Elle will teach you. I’ll ask her.”

The Wind-wife was rather chary of information about the country of the Skroelings until Nikolina’s coaxing and Thorolf’s silent but intense interest had taken effect. The country, she said, was rather like Norway, with mountains and great forests, lakes and streams, but far colder. There were no fiords, and no cities. The people lived in tents made of poles covered with bark, or hides. They dressed in the hides of wild animals



and lived by hunting and fishing. They had no reindeer, horses, cattle, sheep or goats, no fowls, no pigs. They could not work iron, nor did they spin or weave. The man and woman who had adopted her treated her just like their own child.

The stories she had learned from these people were intensely interesting to her listeners. There was one about a battle between the wasps and the squirrels, and another about the beaver who wanted wings. One was about a girl who was married to the Spirit of the Mountain and had a son beautiful and straight and like any other boy except that he had stone eyebrows. Then there was the tale about Klooskap tying up the White Eagle of the Wind so that he could not flap his wings. After a short time everything was so dirty and ill-smelling and unhealthy that Klooskap had to go back and untie one wing, and let the wind blow to clear the air and make the earth once more wholesome.



Page 7

Wild apples fell, grain ripened, nights lengthened. Long ago the twin-flower, violet, wild pansy, forget-me-not and yellow anemone had left their fairy haunts, and there remained only the curving fantastic fronds of the fern,—the dragon-grass. Then had come brilliant spots and splashes of color on the summer slopes—purple butterwort, golden ragweed, aconite, buttercup, deep crimson mossy patches of saxifrage, rosy heather, catchfly, wild geranium, cinnamon rose. These also finished their triumphal procession and went to their Valhalla. Then one September morning the children woke to hear the wind screaming as if the White Eagle had escaped his prison, and the rain pelting the world.

All summer they had been out, rain or shine, like water-ouzels, but now they were glad to sit about the fire with the shutters all closed, and the smoke now and then driven down into the room by the storm. Before evening the little ones were begging for stories.

“I wish I could remember a saga I heard last Yule,” Nikolina said at last. “It was about a voyage the Vikings made to a country where the people had never seen cattle. When they heard the cattle bellowing they all ran away and left the furs they had come to sell.”

“Tell all you remember and make up the rest,” suggested Karen, but Nikolina shook her head.

“One should never do that with a saga.”

“I know that tale,” spoke up Thorolf suddenly, although he had never in his life repeated a saga. “Grandmother used to tell it. In the beginning Bjarni Heriulfson the sea-rover, after many years came home to Iceland to drink wassail in his father’s house. But strangers dwelt there and told him that his father was gone to Greenland, and he set sail for that land. Soon was the ship swallowed up in a gray mist in which were neither sun nor stars. They sailed many days they knew not where, but suddenly the fog lifted and the sun revealed to them a coast of low hills covered with forest. By this Bjarni thought that it was not Greenland but some southerly coast. Therefore turned he northward and sailed many days before he sighted the mountains of Greenland and his father’s house.

“Years afterward returned Bjarni to Iceland, and in his telling of that voyage it came to the ears of Leif Ericsson, who asked him many questions about the land he had seen. There grew no trees in Iceland or Greenland, fit for house-timber, and Leif was minded to find out this place of great forests. Thus it came that Leif sailed from Brattahlid in Greenland with five and thirty men in a long ship upon a journey of discovery.

“First came they to a barren land covered with big flat stones, and this Leif named Helluland, the slate land. Southward sailed he for many days until he saw a coast covered with wooded hills, and there he landed, calling it Markland, the land of woods.

Then southward again they bore and came to a place where a river flowed out of a lake and fell into the sea. The country was pleasant, with good fishing. Leif said that they would spend the winter there, and they built wooden cabins well-made and warm.



Page 8

“Then at the season when the leaves are blood-red and bright gold came in from the woods Thorkel the German, smacking his lips and making strange faces and jabbering in his own language. When they asked what ailed him he said that he had found vines loaded with grapes, and having seen none since he left his own country, which was a land of vineyards, he was out of his senses with delight. Therefore was that country named Vinland the Fair. In the spring went Leif home, well pleased, with a cargo of timber, but his father being dead he voyaged no more to Vinland, but remained to be head of his house.

“Next went Thorvald, Leif’s brother, to Vinland and stayed two winters in the booths that Leif built, until he was slain in a fight with the men of that land. His men buried him there and returned sorrowfully to their own land.

“Next went Thorestein, Leif’s second brother, forth, with Gudrid his wife, to get the body of Thorvald but he died on the voyage and his widow returned to Brattahlid.

“Next came to Brattahlid Thorfin Karlsefne, the Viking from Iceland, who loved and married Gudrid and from her heard the story of Vinland, and desired it for his own. In good time went he forth in a long ship with his wife, and there went with him three other valiant ships. They had altogether one hundred and sixty men and five women, with cattle, grain and all things fit for a settlement. This was seven years after Leif Ericsson found Vinland. Among the stores for trading was scarlet cloth, which the Skroelings greatly covet, insomuch that one small strip of scarlet would buy many rich furs. But when they came to trade, hearing a bull bellow, with a great squalling they all ran away and left their packs on the ground, nor did they show their faces again for three weeks. Snorre, the son of Thorfin Karlsefne, born in Vinland, was three years old when the Northmen left that land. They had found the winter hard and cold, and in a fight with the Skroelings many had been killed, so that they took ship and returned to Iceland.

“They had gone but a little way when one of the ships, which was commanded by Bjarni Grimulfsson, lagged so far behind that it lost sight of the others. The men then discovered that shipworms[4] had bored the hull so that it was about to sink. None could hope to be saved but in the stern boat, and that would not hold half of them.

“Then stood Bjarni Grimulfsson forth, and said to his men that in this matter there should be no advantage of rank, but they would draw lots, who should go in the boat and who remain in the ship. When this had been done it was Bjarni’s lot to go in the boat. After all had gone down into the boat who had the right, an Icelander who had been Bjarni’s companion made outcry dolefully saying, ‘Bjarni, Bjarni, do you leave me here to die in the sea? It was not so you promised me when I left my father’s house.’ Then said Bjarni, for the lot was fairly cast, ‘What else can be done?’



Page 9

Then said the Icelander, 'I think that you should come up into the ship and let me go down into the boat.' And indeed no other way might be found for him to live. Then answered Bjarni making light of the matter, 'Let it be so, since I see that you are so anxious to live and so afraid of death; I will return to the ship.' This was done, and the men rowing away looked back and saw the ship go down in a great swirl of waves with Bjarni and those who remained.

"This tale my grandmother heard from her father, and he from his, and so on until the time of that Thorolf Erlandsson who sailed with Bjarni Grimulfsson and went down into the sea by his side singing, for he feared nothing but to be a coward."

Thorolf's eyes were as proud and his head as high as were his Viking forefather's when the worm-riddled galley went to her grave with more than half her crew, three hundred and forty years before. In the little silence which followed the fire crackled and whistled, the gusty rain-drenched wind beat upon the little hut. And then Nils repeated musingly the ancient saying from the Runes of Odin,

"Cattle die, Kings die,
Kindred die, we also die,—
One thing never dies,
The fair fame of the valiant."

Some one knocked at the door. A real Viking in winged helmet and scale-armor would hardly have surprised them just then. But it was only a tall man in a traveler's cloak and hat, and they made quickly room for him to dry himself by the fire, and brought food and drink for him to refresh himself.

"I thought that I knew the way to the old place," he said, looking about, "but in this tempest I nearly lost myself. Which of you is Thorolf Erlandsson?"

The stranger was Syvert Thorolfson, a merchant of Iceland, Thorolf's uncle. He brought messages from Nikolina's grandmother in Stavanger, and from the Bishop, who was ready to see that all the children who had no relatives should be taken care of in Bergen. Within three days Asgard the Beautiful was left to the lemming and the raven. Yet the long bright summer lived always in the hearts of the children. Years after Thorolf remembered the words of the Wind-wife,—

"Make friends with the Skroelings—make friends. Friendship is a rock to stand on; hatred is a rock to split on. In the land of Klooskap shall you be Klooskap's guest."



NOTES

[1] In old Norse families names alternated from father to son. For example, Thorolf Erlandsson (Thorolf the son of Erland) would name his son after his own father, and the boy would be known as Erland Thorolfsson. A daughter was known by her given name and her father's, as Sigrid Erlandsdatter. In the case of the farm being of sufficient importance for a surname the name might be added, as "Elsie Tharaldsdatter Ormgrass."

[2] Northern sailors regard the Finns as wizards.

[3] Fladbrod is the coarse peasant-bread of Norway, made from an unfermented dough of barley and oatmeal rolled out into large thin cakes and baked. It will keep a long time.



Page 10

[4] The teredo or shipworm was a serious peril in the days before the sheathing of ships. Even tar sheathing was not used until the sixteenth century.

THE VIKING'S SECRET

In the days of jarl and hersir, while yet the world was young,
And sagas of gods and heroes the grim-lipped minstrel sung,
With the beak of his open galley in the sunset's scarlet flame,
Over the wild Atlantic the Norseland Viking came.

Life was a thing to play with,—oh, then the world was wide,
With room for man and mammoth, and a goblin life beside.
Now we have slain the mammoths, and we have driven the ghosts away,
And we read the saga of Vinland in the light of a new-born day.

We have harnessed the deadly lightnings; we have ridden the restless
wave.
We have chased the brood of the werewolf back to their noisome cave.
But far in the icy Northland, with weird witch-lights aglow,
Locked in the Greenland glaciers, is a tale we do not know.

Out of Brattahlid's portal, southward from Herjulf'sness,
They came to their new-found kingdom, their Vinland to possess.
Armored with careless laughter, strong with a stubborn will,
The Vikings found it and lost it—it is undiscovered still!

Where did they beach their galleys? How were their cabins planned?
Who were the fearful Skroelings? What was the Fuerduerstrand?
What were the grapes of Tyrker? For all that is written or said,
The Rune Stones hold the secret of the days of Eric the Red!

II

THE RUNES OF THE WIND-WIFE

Salt and scarred from the northern seas, the *Taernan*, deep-laden with herring, nosed in at the Hanse quay in Bergen. Thorolf Erlandsson looked grimly up at the huge warehouses. Since the Hanseatic League secured a foothold in Norway, in 1343, most Norwegian ports had been losing trade, and Bergen, or rather the Hanse merchants in Bergen, had been getting it. Between the Danes and the Germans it looked rather as if Norwegians were to be crowded out of their own country.



The Hanse traders not only received and sold fish for the Friday markets of northern Europe, but sold all kinds of manufactured goods. It was said that they had two sets of scales—one for buying and one for selling. Norwegians had either to adapt themselves to the new methods or give their sons to the ceaseless battle of the open sea. From the Baltic and Icelandic fisheries, the North Sea and the Lofoden Islands, their ships got the heaviest and the hardest of the sea-harvesting.

But it takes more than hardship to break a Norseman. In his four years at sea Thorolf had become tall, broad-shouldered and powerful, and at eighteen he looked a grown man. He did more than he promised, and listened oftener than he talked, and his only close friend was Nils Magnusson, who was now coming down to the wharf. They had known each other from boyhood.



Page 11

Nils had been for three years a clerk in Syvert Thorolfsson's warehouse. While not tall he was neither stunted nor crippled, and easily kept pace with Thorolf. As he set out the silver-bound horn cups to drink *skál*[1] with his friend in his own lodging, the croak and sputter of German talk sounded in the street below.

"Behold a new Bergen," observed Nils whimsically. "Let us drink to the founding of a new Iceland. Did you go to Greenland?"

"We touched at Kakortok with letters for the Bishop. The people are sick and savage with fighting against the Skroelings."

"Now," said Nils, rubbing his long nose, "it is odd that you say that, for I was just going to tell you some news. The King has given Paul Knutson leave to raise a company to fight against the Skroelings in Greenland—and parts beyond. He sails in a month."

"I wish I had known of it."

"I thought you would say that. This is between us two and the candle, but Anders Amundson is going, and I am going, and you may go if you will."

Thorolf's gray eyes flamed. "What is Knutson like?"

"Well, they may call him Chevalier, but he has the old Viking way with him. I said that I had a friend who had long wished to lay his bones in a strange land, and he answered, 'If your friend sails with me I would prefer to have him bring his bones home again.' He kept a place for you."

Three weeks later Thorolf, looking backward as the *Rotge*, (little auk or sea-king) stood out to sea, saw the familiar outline of Snaehatten against the sunrise and wondered when he should see it again. Like a questing raven his mind returned to the summer spent at the saeter, and recalled that dark saying of the Wind-wife,—

"In the land of Klooskap shall you be Klooskap's guest."

The galley[2] rode the waves with the bold freedom of her kind. Her keel was carved out of a single great tree. Her seasoned oaken timbers, overlapping, were riveted together by iron bolts, with the round heads outside. Where a timber touched a rib, a strip was cut out on each side, forming a block through which a hole was bored. Another hole was bored in the rib to match and a rope twisted of the inner bark of the linden was put through both holes and knotted. In surf or heavy sea, this construction gave the craft a supple strength. Calking was done with woolen cloth steeped in pitch. The mast, of a chosen trunk of fir, was set upright in a log with ends shaped like a fishtail. The long oarlike rudder was on the board or side of the ship to the right of the stern, called the starboard or steerboard. The lading was done on the opposite side,



the larboard or ladderboard. There were ten oars to a side, and a single large triangular sail.

Long and narrow, hardly ten feet above the water-line at her lowest, her curved prow glancing over the waves like the head of a swimming snake, she was no more like the tumbling cargo-ships than a shark is like a porpoise. When they were two days out, Nils said to Thorolf,



Page 12

“A Viking in such a galley would sail to the end of the world. By the way, did the Skroelings in Greenland understand that language the Wind-wife spoke?”

“I was not there long enough to find out. I once asked a man who knows their talk well, and he said it was no tongue that ever he heard.”

The Greenland folk welcomed them heartily. Finding that the white men had not after all been forgotten by their own people, the natives drew off and gave them no more trouble. The Northmen spent the winter in sleep, talk, song, and hunting with native guides. Besides the old man in white fur, as the polar bear was respectfully called, Arctic foxes, walrus, whales and seal abounded. Many of the new-comers became skilful in the making and the use of the skin-covered native boats called Kayaks. Nils had some skill in carving wood and stone, and could write in the Runic script of Elfdal. In the long evenings when winds from the cave of the Great Bear buffeted the low huts, he taught Thorolf and Anders what he knew, and talked with the Skroelings. But none of them understood the runes of the Wind-wife. Their speech was quite different.

Spring came with brief, hot sunshine, and the creeping birches budded on the pebbly shore. Encouraged by the reports from Greenland, new colonists ventured out, and house-building went on briskly. One day Thorolf was summoned to Knutson’s headquarters.

“Erlandsson,” began the Chevalier, “they say that you have information about Vinland[3] and the Skroelings there, from an old woman who lived among them. What can you tell me?”

Thorolf told the story of the Wind-wife. Knutson looked interested but doubtful.

“I have talked with the oldest colonists,” he said, “and they know nothing of any Skroelings but those hereabouts. They say also that Vinland is hard to come at. Boats venturing south return with tales of heavy winds, dense fogs and dangerous cliffs and skerries—or do not return at all. One was caught and crushed in the ice, and the crew were found on the floe half starved and gnawing bits of hide. In the sagas of Vinland the Skroelings are spoken of as fierce and treacherous. To hold such a land would need a strong hand. The old woman may have forgotten—or the stories may be those of her own people.”

Thorolf shook his head. “Nay, my lord. She was not a forgetful person—and the language is neither Lapp nor Finn.”

“She was very old, you say?”

“I think so. I do not know how old.”



“Old people sometimes confuse what they have heard with what they have seen. But I shall remember what you have said.”

“If he had known the Wind-wife,” said Nils when told of this conversation, “he would have no doubt.”



Page 13

Knutson wrote to the King, but got no reply for a long time. A ship with a cargo of trading stores was sent for, and was wrecked on the Faroës. But in the following spring an expedition to Vinland was really planned. There was no general desire to take part in it. Many of Knutson's party now longed for their native land, where the mountains were drawn swords flashing in the sun, and the malachite and silver waters and flowery turf, the jeweled scabbards. They dreamed of the lure sounding over the valleys, of bright-paired maidens dancing the *spring dans*. Nevertheless in due season the *Rotge* left the Greenland shore and pointed her inquiring beak southeast by south. In the *Gudrid* sailed Knutson and his immediate following, with the trading cargo and most of the provisions. By keeping well out to sea at first the commander hoped to escape the perils of the coast.

This hope was dashed by an Atlantic gale which drove them westward. For two days and two nights they were tossed between wind and tide. Toward the end of the second night the sound of the waves indicated land to starboard. In the growing light they saw a harbor that seemed spacious enough for all the ships in the world, sheltered by wooded hills. If this were Vinland, it was greater than saga told or skald sang.

They landed to take in fresh water, mend a leak and see the country, but found no grapes, no Skroelings nor any sign of Northmen's presence. On the rocks grew vineberries, or mountain cranberries, and Knutson thought that perhaps these and not true grapes were the fruit found in Vinland. He sent a party of a dozen men, Anders and Thorolf leading, to explore the forest, ascend some hill if possible and return the same day. He himself remained with the ships and kept Nils by him. He rather expected that the natives, learning of the strangers' arrival, would be drawn by curiosity to visit the bay.

The scouting party followed the banks of the little stream that had given them fresh water, Anders leading, Thorolf just behind him. Wind stirred softly in the leaves overhead, unseen birds fluttered and chirped, sunshine sifting through the maple undergrowth turned it to emerald and gold and jasper. Once there was a discordant screech from the evergreens, but it was only a brilliant blue jay with crest erect, scolding at them. A striped squirrel flashed up the trunk of a tree to his hole. Then sudden as lightning, from the bushes they had just passed, came a flight of arrows.

Two men were slightly wounded, but most of the arrows were turned by the light strong body armor of the Norsemen. The foe remained unseen and unheard. Nothing stirred, though the men scanned the woods about them with the keen eyes of seamen and hunters.

Thorolf was seized with an inspiration. He went forward a step or two, lifted his hand in salutation, and called,—

“Klooskap mech p'maosa?”[4] (Is Klooskap yet alive?)



Page 14

There was a silence stiller than death. The Norsemen faced the ominous thicket without moving a muscle. Some one within it called out something which Thorolf did not understand. But no more arrows came. He tried another sentence.

“Klooskap k-chi skitap, pechedog latogwesnuk.” (Klooskap was a great man in the country far to the northward.)

This time he made out the answer. In a swift aside he explained to his comrades,—

“‘K’putuswin’ means ‘let us take council.’ They want to have a talk.”

He managed to convey his assent to the unseen listeners, and every tree, rock and log sprouted Skroelings. They were quite unlike the natives of Greenland, though of copper-colored complexion.[5] These men—there were no women among them,—were tall and sinewy, and wore their coarse black hair knotted up on the head with a tuft of feathers. They were naked to the waist, and wore fringed breeches of deerskin, and soft shoes embroidered in bright colors. Some had necklaces of bears’ claws, beads or shells, but the only weapons seemed to be the bow and arrow and a stone-headed hatchet or club. They stared at the white man half curiously and half threateningly.

Then began the queerest conversation that any one present had ever heard. Thorolf discovered the wild men’s language to be so nearly like that learned from the Wind-wife that he could understand it when spoken slowly, and in a halting fashion could make them comprehend him. His companions listened in wonder. Not even Anders had really believed in that language.

At last Thorolf held out his hand, and the leader of the Skroelings came forward in a very gingerly manner and took it. Then walking in single file, toes pointed straight forward, the savages melted into the forest as frost melts in sunshine.

With a broad grin, the first he had worn for some time, Thorolf translated.

“He asked why we came here. I told him, to see the country and trade with his people. He says that white men have come here before, very long ago. I think they were killed and he did not wish to say so. He says that the Sagem, the jarl of his people, lives in a castle over there somewhere. I told him to give the Sagem greeting from our commander, and invite him to visit the place where our ships are. He says that it will not be safe for us to go further into the forest until the Skroelings have heard who we are and what we are doing here.”

“That is very good advice,” said Anders with a wry face, as he plucked some moss to stanch the wound in his arm. The arrow-head which had made it was a shaped piece of flint bound to the shaft with cords of fine sinew. “We are too few to get into a general fight. Besides, that is not in our orders.”



They accordingly went back to the ships, arriving a little before sundown. Knutson was greatly interested.

“You have done well,” he said. “A boat was hovering about soon after you left. This may have been a scouting party sent through the forest to cut you off.”



Page 15

All the next day they waited, but nothing happened. On the morning after, a large number of boats appeared rounding the headland to the south. In the largest sat the Sagem, a very old man wrapped in furs. The boats were made of birchbark laced on a wooden framework with fibrous roots, like the toy skiff Mother Elle had made for little Peder.

The Skroelings landed, and advanced with great dignity to meet Knutson, who was equally ceremonious. Nils and Thorolf had all they could do to interpret the old chief's long speech, although many phrases were repeated again and again, which made it easier. Knutson made one in reply, briefer but quite as polite, and brought out beads, little knives, and scarlet cloth from his trading stores. The red cloth and beads were received with eagerness, the knives with interest, and after a young chief had cut himself, with some awe. The Sagem in his turn presented the stranger with skins of the sable, the silver fox and the bear. He and a few of the warriors tasted of the food offered them, and all the white men were asked to a feast in the village the next day.

So friendly were the Skroelings, in fact, that Knutson determined to return to Greenland and see what could be done toward founding a settlement here. He would leave part of the men in winter quarters, with the *Rotge* as a means of further explorations, or if necessary, of escape. Her captain, Gustav Sigerson, was a cautious, wise and experienced seaman. Anders Amundson, as the best hunter of the expedition, was to stay, with Nils as clerk and Thorolf as interpreter. Booths were erected, stores landed, and on a brilliant day in late summer some forty Norsemen and Gothlanders on the shore watched the *Gudrid* slowly fading out of sight.

In talking with the natives Nils and Thorolf observed that their world seemed to be infested with demons—particularly water-fiends. A reason for this appeared in time. Half a dozen men one day took the stern-boat and went a-fishing. They came back white-faced, with a story of a giant squid with arms four times as long as the boat, that had risen out of the sea and tried to pull them under. Only their skill as rowers had saved them. Nils remembered the kraken, of ancient legends, and thought he could see why the Skroelings never ventured out to sea in their frail canoes. This put an end to plans for exploring along the coast.

The winter was colder than they had expected. This land, so much further south than Norway, was bitten by frost as Norway never was. There is something in intense cold which is inhuman. When men are shut up together in exile by it, all that is bad in them is likely to crop out. It might have been worse but for the fortunate friendliness of the Skroelings. When scurvy appeared in the camp, their first acquaintance, Munumqueh (woodchuck) had his women brew a drink which cured it. He showed the white men also how to make pemmican, the compressed meat ration of native hunters, and how to construct and use a birch canoe, a pair of snowshoes, and a fire-drill. Gustav Sigerson died in the spring, and Nils was chosen captain. He and Munumqueh became great cronies, and exchanged names, Nils being thereafter known to his native friends as the

Woodchuck, and bestowing upon Munumqueh the proud name of his grandfather, Nils the Bear-Slayer.



Page 16

“It will never do for us to sit quiet here until Knutson returns,” said Nils when at Midsummer nothing had been seen of the ships. “We shall be at one another’s throats or quarreling with the savages.” He had been inquiring about the nature of the country, and had learned that westward a great river led to five inland seas, so connected that canoes could go from one to another. Along this chain of waters lived tribes who spoke somewhat the same language and traded with one another. Southward lived a warlike people who sometimes attacked the lake tribes. Beyond the last of the lakes they did not know what the country was like. The waters inland were not troubled with the water-demon so far as they knew. Nils, Anders and Thorolf held a council and decided to explore the wilderness as far as they could go in the *Rotge*. It was nothing more than all their ancestors had done. Often, in their invasions of England, France and other unknown regions Vikings had gone up one river and come down another, and the *Rotge*, for all her iron strength, was no more than a wooden shell when stripped.[6]

They set forth, escorted by a flotilla of small canoes, on a clear summer morning, and found their progress surprisingly easy. Fish, game and berries were plentiful, the villages along the river supplied corn and beans, and though it was not always easy to drag the *Rotge* around the carrying-places pointed out by their native guides, they did not have to turn back. It was a proud moment when the undefeated crew launched their “water-snake” as the Skroelings called her, on the shining waters of a great inland sea.

The journey had been a far longer one than they expected, and to natives of any other country would have been much more exciting than it was to the Norsemen.[7] They had seen cliffs a thousand feet high, cataracts, rapids, a multitude of wooded islands, narrow valleys where floating misty clouds came and went and the sky looked like a riband. But the precipice above Naero Fiord rises four thousand perpendicular feet, and the water which laps its base is thousands of feet in depth. The Skjaeggedalsfos is loftier than Niagara, and the mist-maidens dance along the perilous pathways of a hundred Norwegian cliffs. Nils and Thorolf agreed that the Wind-wife was right when she said that the country of the Skroelings was like Norway but had no end.

“The trouble is,” reflected Nils as he set down the day’s happenings on a birch-bark scroll, “that nobody will believe us when we tell how great the land is.”

At the end of the fifth and largest lake they found people with some knowledge of the country beyond. It seemed that after crossing the Big Woods one came to great open plains where a ferocious and cruel race of warriors hunted animals as large as the moose, with hoofs and short horns and curly brown fur. This sounded like a cattle country. The lake tribes evidently stood in great fear of the plains people, but in spite of their evident alarm the Norsemen determined to go and see for themselves.[8] Leaving the boat with ten of their company to guard it they struck off southwestward through a country of forests, lakes and streams. After fourteen days they stopped to make camp and go a-fishing, for dried fish would be the most convenient ration for a quick march, and they did not intend to spend much more time in exploring.

Page 17

It seemed to Nils and Thorolf that some mark or monument should be left to show how far they had really come. A small natural column of dark trap rock was chosen, and while the others fished, or made a seine after the native fashion, Nils marked out an inscription in Runic letters, which are suited to rough work. Not far from the place where they found the stone, and about a day's journey from camp, was a small high island in a little lake, the kind of place usually chosen by Vikings for a first camp. The stone, set in the middle of this island, would be easily seen by any one looking for it, and savages would not see it at all. When finished it was rafted across to the island and set up, the inscription covering about half of it on both sides. While Nils and several others were thus busy, the remainder of the party were trying the seine. They reached camp after dark to find their booths in ashes, and Nils with his men murdered a little way off, as they had come up from the Rune Stone.[9]

[Illustration: "NILS MARKED OUT AN INSCRIPTION IN RUNIC LETTERS."—Page 30]

With fury and horror the Norsemen looked upon the destruction. It was all Thorolf and the cooler heads could do to keep the rest from attacking the first Skroelings they saw. But the mischief had been done, without doubt, by the unknown warriors of the plains, who had been perhaps watching their advance. They sadly prepared to return to their boat. But before they went, Thorolf paddled out to the island on two logs, while the others kept guard, and added some lines to the inscription on the stone.

They never saw their Vinland again. Knutson, finding the King fighting hard against the Danes, gave no further thought to the wilderness. Thorolf and a handful of his men finally reached Bergen; Anders stayed in Greenland. More than five centuries afterward, a Scandinavian farmer, grubbing for stumps in a Minnesota marsh, found overgrown by the roots of a tulip tree a stone with an inscription in Runic letters, took it to learned men and had it translated.

"8 Goths and 22 Norsemen upon journey of discovery from Vinland westward. We had camp by two rocks one day's journey from this stone. We were out fishing one day. When we returned home we found ten men red with blood and dead. AVM save us from evil. have ten men by the sea to look after our ship 14 days journey from this island. Year 1362."

NOTES

[1] Skal or skoal was the Norwegian word used in drinking a health.

[2] The description of the Norse galley is taken from Du Chaillu's "Land of the Midnight Sun," in which the construction of one which was unearthed at Nydam in Jutland is described (Vol. I. 380). The galley "Viking" built in Norway on the model of an actual Viking ship of the early Middle Ages, was taken across the Atlantic in 1893 by a

Norwegian crew of fourteen, anchoring in Lake Michigan, after a voyage in which they had no shelter except an awning and cooked their own food as best they could.



Page 18

[3] The question of the actual whereabouts of Leif Ericsson's booths and Thorfin Karlsefne's later settlement has never been positively decided. The Knutson expedition to Greenland is an historical fact. It left Norway about 1354 and returned about 1364. It is not positively known that Knutson attempted the rediscovery of Vinland, unless what is known as the Kensington Rune Stone is evidence of it. The writer has adopted the theory that he did take a party southward, landing at Halifax, and left a part of his men there, intending to return with more colonists; that on returning to Norway he found the country in the throes of war and abandoned any thought of further settlement, leaving his men to find their way back as they could.

[4] The Indian phrases and legends referred to as learned by the Wind-wife are Abenaki.

[5] According to historians the region along the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes was for a long time inhabited by tribes belonging to the great Ojibway nation. Their territory extended nearly to the western boundary of what is now Minnesota. Southward were the tribes later known as Iroquois.

[6] Accounts of the open galleys of the Northmen agree in describing them as small and light compared with the later decked ships. The open "sea-serpent" of forty-two feet, with her mast unshipped was heavier but not much bigger than the largest Indian carrying-canoes such as were used in the fur-trade, and these were taken from the St. Lawrence through the Great Lakes. Vikings landing in Europe were prepared not only to return by a new route but even to take their boats apart or build new ones if necessary.

[7] Bayard Taylor, visiting the Saguenay and the St. Lawrence immediately after a sojourn in Norway, speaks of his inability to be impressed as others had been, by the height of the cliffs and waterfalls of Canada, although fully appreciating the beauty of the scenery.

[Footnote 8: The Sioux or Dakotas, who occupied the Great Plains, were hereditary enemies of the Ojibways. In the Ojibway language one name for these Plains Indians indicated that they were in the habit of mutilating their victims.]

[9] The monument known as the Kensington Rune Stone was found near Kensington, Minnesota, and is fully described in the reports of the Minnesota Historical Society. It was the subject of many arguments at first. Well known authorities pronounced it a forgery, while other well known authorities declared it genuine. It was pointed out that the language used was not that of the time of Leif Ericsson, but much more modern; but later it was found that the inscription was exactly such as would have been written about the middle of the fourteenth century, when Knutson's expedition was in Greenland. Aside from the obvious lack of motive for a forgery, investigation showed that neither the farmer nor any one who might have been in a position to bury the stone where it was



found had any knowledge of Runic writing. Moreover, if the stone had been a forgery it would seem that the forger would have used the name of some well known leader, whereas no name is mentioned. If Knutson had been with the expedition he would certainly have seen to it that his presence was recorded.



Page 19

Otter Tail Lake, just north of the place where the stone was discovered, was one of the points marking the boundary between the Ojibway and Dakota country. The position of the runes on the stone is precisely what it would be if the inscription had been finished, or nearly finished, as a guide to future exploration, and the account of the massacre added as a warning.

A song commonly sung at the time of the Black Death contains the lines:

“The Black Plague sped over land and sea
And swept so many a board.
That will I now most surely believe,
It was not with the Lord’s will.
Help us God and Mary,
Save us all from evil.”

THE NAVIGATORS

We were Prince Henry’s gentlemen,—
His gentlemen were we,
To dare the gods of Heathendom,
Whoever they might be,—
To do our master’s sovereign will
Upon a trackless sea.

We were Prince Henry’s gentlemen,
And undismayed we went
To fight for Lusitania
Wherever we were sent,—
The stars had laid our course for us,
And we were well content.

We were Prince Henry’s gentlemen,
And though our flagship lie
Where white the great-winged albatross
Came wheeling down the sky,
Or black abysses yawned for us,
We could not fear to die.

We were Prince Henry’s gentlemen,—
Around the Cape of Wrath
We sailed our wooden cockleshells—
Great pride the pilot hath



To voyage to-day the Indian Sea—
But we marked out his path!

III

SEA OF DARKNESS

“Those things that you say cannot be true, Fernao! How do you know that the sea turns black and dreadful just behind those heavenly clouds? If there are hydras, and gorgons, and sea-snakes that can swallow a ship, and a great black hand reaching up out of a whirlpool to drag men down, why do we never see them here? Look at that sea, can there be anything in the world more beautiful?”

The vehement small speaker waved her slender hand with a gesture that seemed to take in half the horizon. The old Moorish garden, overrun with the brilliant blossoms that drink their hues from the sea, overlooked the harbor. Across the huddled many-colored houses the ten-year-old Beatriz and her playfellow Fernao could see the western ocean in a great half-circle, bounded by the mysterious line above which three tiny caravels had just risen. The sea to-day was exquisite, bluer than the heavens that arched above it. The wave-crests looked like a flock of sea-doves playing on the sunlit sparkling waters. Fernao from his seat on the crumbling wall watched the incoming ships with the far-sighted gaze of a sailor. Portuguese through and through, the son and grandson of men who had sailed at the bidding of the great Prince Henry, he felt that he could speak with authority.[1]



Page 20

“Of course I am telling you the truth. You are very wise about the sea—you who never saw it until two weeks ago! Gil Andrade has been to places that you Castilians never even heard of. He has seen whales, and mermaids, and the Sea of Darkness itself! He has been to the Gold Coast beyond Bojador, where the people are fried black like charcoal, and the rivers are too hot to drink.”

“Then why didn’t he die?” inquired the unbelieving Beatriz.

“Because he didn’t stay there long enough. And there are devils in the forest, stronger than ten men, and all covered with shaggy hair—”

“I will not listen to such nonsense! Do you think that because I am Spanish, and a girl, I am without understanding? Tio Sancho, is it true that there is a Sea of Darkness?”

Sancho Serrao was an old seaman, as any one would know by his eyes and his walk. For fifty years he had used the sea, as ship-boy, sailor, and pilot. His daughter Catharina had been the nurse of Beatriz, and he had brought coral, shells and queer toys to the little thing from the time she could toddle to his knee.

“What has Fernao been saying to thee, pombinha agreste?” (little wood-dove) he asked soberly, though his eyes twinkled ever so little. He seated himself as he spoke, on an ancient bench that rested its back against the wall just where the wind was sweetest. Under the fragrances of ripening vineyards and flowering shrubs there was always the sharp clean smell of the sea.

“He believes all that Gil Andrade and Joao Pancado tell him as if it were the Credo,” Beatriz began, her words flung out like sparks from a little crackling fire. “He says that there is a Sea of Darkness out away beyond the Falcon Islands, where ships are drawn into a great pit under the edge of the world. And he says that ships cannot go too far south because the sun is so near it would burn them, and they cannot go too far north because the icebergs will catch them and crush them. If I were a man, I would sail straight out there, into the sunset, and show them what my people dared to do!”

Old Sancho was not all Portuguese. In his veins ran the blood of the three great seafaring races of southern Europe—the Genoese, the Lusitanian and the Vizcayan—and their jealousies and rivalries amused him. He had spent most of his life in the feluccas and caravels of Lisbon and Oporto, because when he was young they went where no other ships dared even follow; but he did not believe that the last word in discovery had been said even by Dom Henriques at Sagres, or the Mappede-Monde of Fra Mauro in Venice.



Page 21

“Not so fast there, *velinha* (small candle)” he cautioned, raising a whimsical forefinger. “So said many of us in our youth. And when we had sailed for weeks, and all our provisions were mouldy or weevilly, and our water-casks warped and leaking so that we had to catch the rain in our shirts, we began to wonder what it was we had come for. The sea won’t be mocked or threatened. She has ways of her own, the old witch, to tame the vainglorious. And ’t is true enough,” the old pilot went on with a quizzing look at Fernao on his insecure perch, “that sailors have a bad habit of doubling and trebling their recollections when they find anybody who will listen. I don’t know why they do it. Maybe it is because having told a perfectly true tale which nobody believed, they think that a little more or a little less will do no harm. For this you must remember, my children,—that at sea many things happen which when told no one believes to be true.”

“I would believe anything you told me, Tio Sancho,” promised Beatriz, all love and confidence in her little glowing face.

“Ay, would you now? What if I said that I have seen a ship with all sail set coming swiftly before the wind, in a place where no wind was, to stir our hair who beheld it—and sailing moreover through the air at the height of a tall mast-head above the sea? And a mountain of ice half a league long and as high as the Giralda at Seville, floating in a sea as blue as this one, and as warm? And islands with mountains that smoke, appearing and disappearing in broad daylight? Yet all of these are common sights at sea.”

“But is there a Sea of Darkness, verily, verily, *tio caro*?” persisted Beatriz. The old man shook his head, with a little quiet smile.

“I’ll not say there is not. And I’ll not say there is. I saw a Sea of Darkness on the second voyage that ever I made, but that’s all.”

“Oh, tell us all the story!” begged Beatriz, and Fernao silently slid from the wall and came closer.

“The commander of our ship was Gonsales Zarco, one of Dom Henriques’ gentlemen. Years before he’d been caught by a gale on his way to Africa, and driven north on to an island that he named because of that, Puerto Santo (Holy Haven). So when he came that way again he stopped to see how the settlement that was planted there prospered, and found the people in great trouble of mind. They showed him that a thick black cloud hung upon the sea to the northwest of the island, filling the air to the very heavens and never going away; and out of this cloud, they said, came strange noises, not like any they had heard before. They dared not sail far from their island, for they said that if a man lost sight of land thereabouts it was a miracle if he ever returned. They believed that place to be the great abyss, the mouth of hell. But learned men held the opinion that this cloud hid the island of Cipango, where the Seven Bishops had taken refuge from the Moors and the Saracens.



Page 22

“Certainly the cloud was there, for we all saw it, and when the Commander said that he would stay to see whether it would change when the moon changed, we liked it not, I can tell you. And when we learned that he was minded to sail straight into the darkness and see what lay behind it, why, there were some who would have run away—if they could have run anywhere but into the sea.

“But we had a Spanish pilot, Morales, who had once been a prisoner in Morocco, and there he knew two Englishmen who had sailed these seas in time past. Their ship had been lying ready to sail for France, when late at night Robert Macham, a gentleman of their country, came hurriedly aboard with his lady love whom he had carried off from her home in Bristol, and between dark and dawn the captain weighed anchor and was off. Then being driven from the course the ship was cast on a thickly wooded island with a high mountain in the middle, where they dwelt not long, for the lady died, and Macham died of grief. The crew left the island and were wrecked in Morocco and made slaves. All this was many years before, for the Englishmen had grown old in slavery, and Morales himself had grown old since he heard the tale.

“It was the belief of Morales that this was the island of which they told, and that the cloud which hung above the waters was the mist arising from those dense woods which covered it. The upshot was that the commander set sail one morning early and steered straight for the cloud.

“The nearer we came the higher and thicker looked the darkness that spread over the sea, and we heard about noon a great roaring of the waves. Still Gonsales held his course, and when the wind failed he ordered out the boats to tow the ship into the cloud, and I was one of those who rowed. As we got closer it was not quite so dark, but the roaring was louder, although the sea was smooth. Then through the darkness we beheld tall black objects which we guessed to be giants walking in the water, but as we came nearer we saw that they were great rocks, and before us loomed a high mountain covered with thick woods.

“We found no place to land but a cave under a rock that overhung the sea, and that was trodden all over the bottom by the sea-wolves, so that Gonsales named it the Camera dos Lobos. The island, because of its forests, he called Madeira. When we came back, having taken possession of the island for the King, he sent a colony to settle upon it, and the first boy and girl born there were named Adam and Eva. The people set fire to the trees, which were in their way, and could not put out the fire, so that it burned for seven years and all the trees were destroyed. And the King gave our commander the right to carry as supporters on his coat-of-arms two sea-wolves.”

Beatriz drew a long breath. “Weren’t you very scared, Tio Sancho?”

“Sailors must not be scared, little one. Or if they are, they must never let their arms and legs be scared. We knew that we had to obey orders or be dead, so we obeyed. I have

been glad many a time since that I sailed with Gonsales and old Morales to the discovery of Madeira.”



Page 23

“What are sea-wolves?” asked Fernao.

“Like no beast that ever you saw, my son. They have the fore part of the body like a dog or bear, the hind part ending in a tail like a fish, but with hair, not scales, on the body; the head has a thick mane, and the jaws are large and strong. They are no more seen on that island, for they went there only because it was never visited by men.”

“Did they try to drive the people away?”

“No; they do not fight men unless men attack them. But the settlers were once driven off Puerto Santo by animals, and not very fierce animals at that.” The old pilot grinned. “They were driven away by rabbits. Somebody brought rabbits there and let them loose, and in a few years there were so many that everything that was planted was eaten green. The people who live on that island now have made a strict rule about rabbits.”

The children’s laughter echoed the dry chuckle of the old man. Then Fernao, unwilling to abandon his authorities,—

“But if the Sea of Darkness and the great abyss are not in the western ocean, why haven’t they found out what really is there?”

“That, my son, is more than I can tell you,” said Sancho Serrao, getting up. “I sailed where I was told, and I never was told to sail due west from Lisbon. But here is a man who can answer your question, if any one can. Welcome to my humble dwelling, Senhor Colombo! Shall we go into the house, or will you find it pleasanter in the garden?”

The new-comer was a tall man of middle age, although at first sight he looked older, because of his white hair. The fresh complexion, alert walk, and keen thoughtful blue eyes were those of a man not old in either mind or body. He smiled in answer to the greeting, and replied with a quick wave of the hand. “Do not disturb yourself, I beg of you, my friend. The garden is very pleasant. I have come on an errand of my own this time. Did you ever see, in your voyages to Africa or elsewhere, any such carving as this?”

He held out a curious worm-eaten bit of reddish brown wood, rudely ornamented with carved figures in relief. Old Sancho took it and turned it about, examining it with narrowed attentive eyes.

“Where did it come from?” he asked, finally.

“From the beach at Puerto Santo. My little son Diego picked it up, the day before I came away from the island.”



“Now that is curious. I was just telling the young ones about an adventure of my youth, when Gonsales Zarco touched there on his way to Madeira. With your good permission I will leave you for a few minutes and rummage in an old sea-chest, and see whether there is any flotsam in it to compare with this.”

Left alone with the stranger, Fernao and Beatriz looked at him with shy curiosity. They had seen him before, and knew him to be a mapmaker in the King’s service, but he had never before been within speaking distance. He seemed to like children, for he smiled at them very kindly and spoke to them almost at once.



Page 24

“And you were hearing about the discovery of Madeira?”

“Ay, Senhor,” Beatriz answered with demure dignity.

“I live not very far from that island. It seems like living on the western edge of the world.”

“Senhor,” asked Fernao with sudden daring, “what is beyond the edge of the world?”

“There is no edge, my boy. The world is round—like an orange.”[2]

In all their fancies they had never thought of such a thing as that. Beatriz looked at the tall man with silent amazement, and Fernao looked as if he would like to ask who could prove the statement. The stranger’s smile was amused but quite comprehending, as if he was not at all surprised that they should doubt him.

“See,” he went on, taking an orange from the basket that stood by, “suppose this little depression where the stem lost its hold to be Jerusalem, the center of our world; then this is Portugal—” he traced with the point of a penknife the outline of the great western peninsula. “Here you see are the capes—Saint Vincent, Finisterre, the great rock the Arabs call Geber-al-Tarif—the Mediterranean—the northern coast of Africa—so. Beyond are Arabia and India, and the Spice Islands which we do not know all about—then Cathay, where Marco Polo visited the Great Khan—you have heard of that? Yes? On the eastern and southern shore of Cathay is a great sea in which are many islands—Cipangu here, and to the south Java Major and Java Minor. We are told in the Book of Esdras that six parts of the earth are land and one part water, so here we cut away the skin where there is any sea,—”

The miniature globe took form, like fairy mapmaking, under the cosmographer’s skilful fingers, and the children watched, fascinated.

[Illustration: “THE MINIATURE GLOBE TOOK FORM AS THE CHILDREN WATCHED, FASCINATED.”—Page 44]

“But,” cried Beatriz wonderingly, “a ship could sail around the world!”

Colombo nodded and smiled. “So it was written in the ‘Travels of Sir John Maundeville’ more than a hundred years ago. But no ship has done so.”

“Why not?” asked Fernao.

“Chiefly, perhaps, because of tales like that of the Sea of Darkness and Satan’s hand. And it is true that a ship venturing very far westward is drawn out of its course, as if the earth were not a perfect round, but sloped upward to the south. My own belief is,—he seemed for a moment to forget that he was talking to children, “that it is not perfectly



round, but somewhat like this pear,—” he selected a short chubby pear from the basket, “and that on this mountain may be a cool and lovely region which was once Paradise.”

“Oh!” cried Beatriz, her face alight with the glory of the thought. The geographer smiled at her and went on.

“Also you see that the ocean is on this side of the earth very much greater than the Mediterranean. We do not know how long it would take to cross it. I have lately received a map from the famous Florentine Toscanelli which—ah!” he interrupted himself, “here comes our good friend Master Serrao.”

Page 25

It had taken the pilot longer than he expected to hunt over his relics of old voyages, and there was nothing, after all, like the piece of wood cast ashore by the Atlantic waves. Old Sancho turned it over, examined the edges of the carving, and shook his head.

“No; that is not African work; at least it is not like any work of the black men that I have ever seen. They can all work iron, and this was made without the use of iron tools; that I am sure of. Some of our men were shipwrecked once where they had to make stone and shells serve their turn, and I know the look of wood that has been worked with such tools. And the wood itself is not like anything I have from Africa. It is more like the timber of the East.”

Now the stranger’s eyes lighted with keener interest.

“You think it may be Indian, do you?”

“It may. But how in the name of Sao Cristobal did it come here? Besides, the people of India understand the use of metal as well as we do, or better.”

“May there not be wild men in remote islands of the Indian seas?”

“That might be. Gil Andrade has been in those parts, and he says there are more islands than he could count. I have sometimes had occasion to take his stories with a pinch of salt, but if there are islands where wild people live they would make such things as this. And now I think of it, I once picked up a paddle myself, floating off the Azores, that was some such wood as this, but not carved. But the queerest thing I ever found was this nut. Look at it.”

It was part of a nutshell as big as a man’s head and as hard as wood. “The inside was quite spoiled,” went on the old seaman, “but so far as I could judge it was no kin to the palm nuts we get. I kept the shell, and I have never found any merchant who could match it. Now the current sets toward our coast from the west at a certain point, and that is where all these odd things come ashore.”

The guest nodded. “My brother-in-law and I have talked much of these matters. One of his captains saw some time ago the floating bodies of two men, brown-skinned, with straight black hair, not like the natives of any part of Europe or Africa. Another thing which is strange, though I hold it not as important as they do, is that the people of Madeira persistently declare that they see a great island appear and disappear to the westward. According to their description it has lofty mountains and wooded valleys, and some say it is Atlantis and some Saint Brandan’s Isle. No ship sailing that way has ever landed there, however.”

Sancho’s eyes turned seaward. “It is marvelous,” he said after a pause, “what things men think they see. And you think, senhor, that the world is not yet all known to us?”



Page 26

“I do not know.” Colombo stood up to take his departure. “If God hath reserved any great work to be done, He hath also chosen the man who is to do it. His tasks are not done by accident, or left to the blind or the selfish. Toscanelli thinks that since the world is round, we should reach the Indies by sailing due west from this coast, but in that case India would seem to be far greater than we have believed. If I had the ships and the men I would venture it. But at this time the King is altogether taken up with the eastward route to the Indies. It was said of old time, ‘He that believeth shall not make haste.’”

“But you will sail to Paradise some day, will you not, senhor?” asked Beatriz, treasuring the tiny globe in one careful hand while the other shaded her eyes from the level rays of the evening sun.

“There is only one way to Paradise, little maid. That is by the will of our Lord. And if you, my lad, are the first to sail round the world, remember that the sea is His, and He made it. Man makes his own Sea of Darkness by ignorance, and hate, and fear.”

NOTES

[1] Prince Henry of Portugal, often called “Henry the Navigator” built the first naval observatory in Europe at Sagres. He may be said to have laid the foundation of the Portuguese and later Spanish discoveries. In the time of Columbus the Mapped-Mondo or Map of the World of a Venetian monk was considered the most complete map yet made.

[2] The statement has been carelessly made in some juvenile books dealing with the age of discovery, that in the time of Columbus nobody knew that the world was round. This of course is not even approximately the case. The conception of the earth as a sphere was generally set forth in what might be called books of science, and even in some popular works like that of Sir John Maundeville, who died in 1372. Its acceptance by the public, however, may be said to have followed somewhat the course of the Darwinian theory in the nineteenth century. Long after evolution was admitted as a truth by scientific men there were schools and even colleges which refused to teach it, and in fact it was not accepted by the public until the generation which first heard of it had died.

SUNSET SONG

Down upon our seaward light,
Swept by all the winds that blow,
Birds come reeling in their flight—
(*Ay de mi, Cristofero!*)
Petrels tossing on the gale,



Falcons daring sleet and hail,
Curlews whistling high and far,
Waifs that cross the harbor bar
Borne from isles we do not know—
(Ay de mi, Cristofero!)

Round our island haven blest
Waves like drifted mountain snow
Break from out the shoreless West—
(Ay de mi, Cristofero!)
Cast ashore a broken spar
Born beneath some alien star,
Broken, beaten by the wave—
In what far-off unknown grave
Lie the hands that shaped it so?
(Ay de mi, Cristofero!)



Page 27

Sails upon the gray world's edge
Like mute phantoms come and go,—
Life and honor men will pledge—
(*Ay de mi, Cristofero!*)
For the pearls and gems and gold
That the burning Indies hold.
Or the Guinea coast they dare
With its fever-poisoned air
For the slaves they capture so
(*Ay de mi, Cristofero!*)

In our chamber small to-night,
Fair as love's immortal glow,
Shines our silver censer-light—
(*Ay de mi, Cristofero!*)
What is this that holds thee fast
In old histories of the past?
Put the time-stained parchments by,
Men have sought where dead men lie
For the secret thou wouldst know—
All too long, Cristofero!

IV

PEDRO AND HIS ADMIRAL

Juan de la Cosa, captain of the *Santa Maria*, was prowling about the beach of Gomera in a thoroughly dissatisfied frame of mind. His own ship, the *Gallego* before the Admiral re-christened her and made her his flagship, was riding trim as a mallard within sight of his eye. She would never have kept the fleet waiting in the Canaries for a little thing like a broken rudder.

It was the *Pinta* that had done this, and it was the veteran pilot's private opinion that she would behave much better if her owners, Gomez Rascon and Christoval Quintero, had been left behind in Palos. But what can you do when you have seized a ship for the service of the Crown, and turned her over to a captain who is a rival ship-owner, and her owners wish to serve in her crew and not elsewhere? They cannot be blamed for liking to keep an eye on their property!

"Capitano!" piped a voice at his elbow. He looked around, and then he looked down. An undersized urchin with not much on but a pair of ragged breeches stared up at him boldly, hands behind his back. "Do you know what ails your ship over there?" He nodded sideways at the disgraced *Pinta*.



The accent was that of Bilbao in the captain's own native province, Vizcaya. Ordinarily he would have cuffed the speaker heels over head for impudence, but the dialect made him pause. Besides, he wanted to hear something to confirm his suspicions.

"She is no ship of mine," he growled, "and anyway, what do you know about it?"

"I know much more than they think I do. The calkers did not half do their work before she left port. I'd like to sail in her if she were properly looked after. But when a man goes out on the dolphins' track he likes to come home again, you know."

"A man! Do babes take a ship round Bojador? And who may you call yourself, zagallo (strong youth)?"

"I am Pedro, son of Pedro who was an escaladero (climber) at the siege of Alhama. He was killed on the way home, and my mother died of grief, so that I get my bread where the saints put it. People say that they unlocked all the jails to get you your crew for the Indies, and now I see that it is true."

Page 28

Juan de la Cosa knew the untamable sauciness of the Vizcayan breed, and knew as well the loyalty that went with it. “Son,” he said seriously, “what do you know of this matter?” The boy put aside his insolence and spoke gravely.

“I know that these fellows who have been commanded to serve your Admiral hate him, and will make him lose his venture if they can. I would sooner put to sea in a meal-tub with myself that I can trust, than in a Cadiz galley manned with plotters. When they hauled this fine ship up on the beach I asked for a job, and the lazy fellows were glad enough of help. I never minded doing their work if they hadn’t kicked me. When I heard them planning I said to myself, ‘Pedro, mi hidalgo, a crow in hand is worth two buzzards in the bush waiting to pick your bones.’ Your Admiral may have to go back to Castile and eat crow.

“They have agreed that they will sail seven hundred leagues and no more, since that is the distance from here to the Indies if your map is true. If the Admiral refuse to turn back in case land is not found they will pitch him into the sea and tell the world that he was star-gazing and fell overboard, being an old man and unused to perilous voyages. He should get him another crew—if he can.”

This was important information. Yet to go back might be more dangerous than to go on. The expedition had already been delayed a fortnight with making a rudder for the *Pinta*, stopping her leaks, and replacing the lateen sails of the *Nina* with square ones, that she might be able to keep up with the others. Another week must pass before they could sail. If they returned to Palos it was doubtful whether they could get any men at all to replace the disloyal ones. Too much delay might cause the withdrawal of Martin Pinzon and his brother Vicente, owners of the *Nina*; and if they went, most of the seamen who were worth their salt would go also. La Cosa himself in the Admiral’s place would go on and take the chance of mutiny, trusting in his own power to prevent or subdue it.

“Pedro,” he said, “have you told this to any one else?”

“Not a soul.”

“Would you like to sail with us?”

“Will a wolf bite? Why do you suppose I told you all this?”

“Bite your tongue then, wolf-cub, until I have seen the Admiral. Where shall I find you if I want you?”

“Tia Josefa over there lets me sleep in the courtyard.”

“Very well—now, off with you.”



The Admiral said exactly what the pilot had thought he would say. He knew himself to be looked upon with envy and dislike, as a Genoese, and the Spaniards who made up his three crews had been collected as with a rake from the unwilling Andalusian seaports. It was decided that the mutinous sailors should be scattered so that they could not easily act together. Pedro was taken on as cabin-boy, for he was thirteen, and wiser than his age.



Page 29

On that May day when Christoval Colon,[1] the hare-brained foreigner whom the King and Queen had made an Admiral, read the royal orders in the Church of San Jorge in Palos, there was amazement, wrath and horror in that small seaport. Queen Ysabel had indeed been so rash as to pledge her jewels to meet the cost of this expedition; but the royal treasurers, looking over their accounts, noted that Palos owed a fine to the Crown which had never been paid. Very good; let Palos contribute the use and maintenance of two ships for two months, and let the magistrates of the Andalusian ports hunt up shipmasters and crews and supplies. The officers of the government came with Colon to enforce this order.

In vain did the Pinzon brothers, who had really been convinced by the arguments of Colon, use all their influence to secure him a proper equipment. Even after they had themselves enlisted as captains, with their own ship the *Nina*, they could not get men enough to go on so doubtful a venture. The royal officers finally took to the reckless course of pardoning all prisoners guilty of any crime short of murder or treason, on condition of their shipping for the voyage. At least half the sailors of the three ships were pressed men.

The *Santa Maria*, largest of the three caravels, was ninety feet long and twenty broad. She was a decked ship; the others had only the tiny cabin and forecastle. A caravel was never intended for long voyages into unknown seas. Her builders designed her for coasting trade, not for a quick voyage independent of wind and tide; but on the other hand she was cheaper to build and to sail than a Genoese galley. The Admiral believed that in the end the smallness of the ships would be no disadvantage. Among the estuaries, bays and groups of islands which he expected to find, they could go anywhere. Including shipmasters, pilots and crews the fleet carried eighty-seven men and three ship-boys, besides the personal servants of the Admiral, a physician, a surgeon, an interpreter and a few adventurers. The interpreter was a converted Jew who could speak not only several European languages but Arabic and Chaldean.

“A retinue of servants indeed!” observed Fonseca, the bishop, when the door had closed upon the Admiral of the Indies. “Since all enlisted in the expedition are at his service, why does he demand lackeys?”

But the head of the Genoese navigator had not been turned by his honors. No man cared less for display than he did, personally. He knew very well, however, that unless he maintained his own dignity the rabble under his command might be emboldened to cut his throat, seize the ships and become pirates. The men whom he could trust were altogether too few to control those he could not, if it came to an open fight,—but it must not be allowed to come to that. It was not agreeable to squabble with Fonseca about the number of servants he was allowed to have, but he must have personal attendants who were not discharged convicts.



Page 30

On the open seas, removed from their lamenting and despondent relatives, the crews gradually subsided into a state of discipline. The quarter-deck is perhaps the severest test of character known. Despite themselves the sailors began to feel the serene and kindly strength of the man who was their master.

With a tact and understanding as great as his courage and self-command Colon told his men more than they had ever known of the Indies. The East had for generations been the enchanted treasure-house of Europe. Arabic, Venetian, Genoese and Portuguese traders had brought from it spices, rare woods, gold, diamonds, pearls, silk, and other foreign luxuries. But the wide and varied reading of the Admiral had given him more definite information. He told of the gilded temples of Cipangu, the porcelain towers of Cathay, rajahs' elephants in gilded and jeweled trappings, golden idols with eyes of great glowing gems, thrones of ebony inlaid with patterns of diamonds, emeralds and rubies, rich cargoes of spices, dyewood, fine cotton and silk, pearl fisheries, the White Feast of Cambalu and the Khan's great hall where six thousand courtiers gathered. Portugal already was reaching out toward these Indies, groping her way around the African coast. Were they, Spaniards and Christians, to be outdone by Portuguese and Arab traders? No men ever had so great a future. Not only the wealth of the Indies, but the glory of winning heathen empires to abandon their idols for the Christian faith, was the adventure to which they were pledged; and he strove to kindle their spirits from his own.

To Pedro the cabin-boy, listening in silence, it was like an entrance into another world. When he asked to be taken on he had been moved simply by a boy's desire to go where he had not been before. Now he served a demigod, who led men where none had dared go. The Admiral might have the glory of rediscovering the western route to the Indies; his cabin-boy was discovering him.

The sea was beautifully calm, and there was time for talk and speculation. A drifting mast, to which nobody would have given two thoughts anywhere else, was pointed out as an evil omen. Pedro grinned cheerfully and elevated his nose.

"Do you not believe in omens, Pedro?" asked the Admiral, somewhat amused. He had not found many Spaniards who did not.

"One does not believe all one hears, my lord," the youngster answered, coolly. "Tia Josefa saw ill omens a dozen times a week, all sure death; and she is ninety years old. A mast drifting with the current is usual. When I see one drifting against it I will begin to worry."

The jumpy nerves of the sailors were easily upset. They might have been calmer if the sea had been less calm. It is hard for Spanish blood to endure inaction and suspense together. Day after day a soft strong wind wafted them westward. Ruiz, one of the

pilots, bluntly declared that he did not see how they could ever sail back to Spain against this wind, whether they reached the Indies or not.



Page 31

“Pedro,” said the Admiral quietly, “what do you think?”

Pedro hesitated only an instant. “My lord,” he answered boldly, “if we cannot go back we must go on—around the world.”

“So we can,” smiled the Admiral. “But it will not come to that.” And Ruiz, reassured and rather ashamed of his fears, told the other grumblers if they had seen as much rough weather as he had they would know when they were well off.

But after a time even the pilots took fright. The compass needle no longer pointed to the North Star, but half a point or more to the northwest of it. They had visions of the fleet helplessly drifting without a guide upon a vast unknown sea. It was not then known that the action of the magnetic pole upon the needle varies in different parts of the earth, but the quick mind of the Admiral found an explanation which quieted their fears. He told them that the real north pole was a fixed point indeed, but not necessarily the North Star. While this star might be in line with the pole when seen from the coast of Spain, it would not, of course, be in the same relative position when seen from a point hundreds of miles to the west.

On September 15 a meteor fell, which might be another omen—nobody could say exactly what it meant. Then about three hundred and sixty leagues from the Canaries the ships began to encounter patches of floating yellow-green sea-weed, which grew more numerous until the fleet was sailing in a vast level expanse of green like an ocean meadow. Tuna fish played in the waters; on one of the patches of floating weed rested a live crab. A white tropical bird of a kind never known to sleep upon the sea came flying toward them, alighting for a moment in the rigging. The owners of the *Pinta* predicted that they would all be caught in this ocean morass to starve, or die of thirst, for the light winds were not strong enough to drive the ships through it as easily as they had sailed at first. The Admiral, quite undisturbed, suggested that in his experience land-birds usually meant land not very far away.

Colon always answered frankly the questions put to him, but there was one secret which he kept to himself from the beginning. Knowing that he would be likely to have trouble when he reached the seven-hundred-league limit his crews had set for him, he kept two reckonings. One was for his private journal, the other was for all to see. He took the actual figures of each day’s run as set down in his private record, subtracted from them a certain percentage and gave out this revised reckoning to the fleet. He, and he alone, knew that they were nearly seven hundred leagues from Palos already, instead of five hundred and fifty. According to Toscanelli’s calculation, by sailing west from the Canaries along the thirtieth parallel of latitude he should land somewhere on the coast of Cipangu; but the map of Toscanelli might be incorrect. If the ocean should prove to be a hundred or more leagues wider than the chart showed it, they would have to go on, all the same.

Page 32

Even after they were out of the seaweed there was something weird and unnatural in the sluggish calm of the sea. Light winds blew from the west and southwest, but there were no waves, as by all marine experience there should have been. On September 25 the sea heaved silently in a mysterious heavy swell, without any wind. Then the wind once more shifted to the east, and carried them on so smoothly that they could talk from one ship to another. Martin Pinzon borrowed the Admiral's chart, and it seemed to him that according to this they must be near Cipangu. He tossed the chart back to the flagship on the end of a cord, and gave himself to scanning the horizon. Ten thousand maravedis had been promised by the sovereigns to the first man who actually saw land. Suddenly Pinzon shouted, "Tierra! Tierra!" There was a low bank of what seemed to be land, about twenty-five leagues away to the southwest. Even for this Colon hesitated to turn from his pre-arranged course, but at last he yielded to the chorus of pleading and protest which arose from his officers, set his helm southwest and found—a cloud-bank.

Again and again during the following days the eager eyes and strained nerves of the seamen led to similar disappointments. Land birds appeared; some alighted fearlessly on the rigging and sang. Dolphins frolicked about the keels. Flying-fish, pursued by their enemy the bonito (mackerel), rose from the water in rainbow argosies, and fell sometimes inside the caravels. A heron, a pelican and a duck passed, flying southwest. By the true reckoning the fleet had sailed seven hundred and fifty leagues. Colon wondered whether there could be an error in the map, or whether by swerving from their course they had passed between islands into the southern sea. Pedro, as sensitive as a dog to the moods of his master, watched the Admiral's face as he came and went, and wondered in his turn.

The pilots and shipmasters were cautious in expressing their fears within hearing of the sailors, for by this time every one in authority knew that open mutiny might break out at any moment. On the evening of October 10 a delegation of anxious officers came to explain to the Admiral that they could not hold the panic-stricken crews. If no land appeared within a week their provisions would not last until they reached home; they had not enough water to last through the homeward voyage even now. The Admiral knew as well as they the horrors of thirst and famine at sea, particularly with a crew of the kind they had been obliged to ship. What did he intend to do?

The Admiral, seated at his table, finished the sentence he was adding in his neat, legible hand to his log, put it aside, put the pen in the case which hung at his belt, closed his ink-horn. His quiet eyes rested fearlessly on their uneasy faces.

"This expedition," he said calmly, "has been sent out to look for the Indies. With God's blessing we shall continue to look for them until we find them. Say to the men, however, that if they will wait two or three days I think they will see land."

Page 33

Next morning Pedro was engaged in polishing his master's steel corslet and casque, while near by two or three sailors conferred in low tones.

"We have had enough of promises," growled one. "As Rascon says, we are like Fray Agostino's donkey, that went over the mountain at a trot, trying to reach the bunch of carrots hung on a staff in front of his nose."

There was a half-hearted snicker, and one of the men pointed a warning thumb at Pedro.

"Oh!" said the speaker. "You heard, you little beggar?"

"I did," said Pedro.

"Well?"

"Well, I was waiting for the end of the story. As I heard it the Abbot charged the old friar with deceiving the dumb beast, and he said he had to, because he was dealing with a donkey!"

Pedro slung the pieces of gleaming plate-mail to his shoulder and added as he turned to go, "You need not be afraid that I shall tell the Admiral what you were saying. I am not a fool, and he knows how scared you are, already."

More signs of land appeared—river weeds, a thorny branch with fresh berries like rose-hips, a reed, a piece of wood, a carved staff. As always, the vesper hymn to the Virgin was sung on the deck of the flagship, and after service the Admiral briefly addressed the men. He reminded them of the singular favor of God in granting them so quiet and safe a voyage, and recalled his statement made on leaving the Canaries, that after they had made seven hundred leagues he expected to be so near land that they should not make sail after midnight. He told them that in his belief they might find land before morning.

Nobody slept that night. About ten o'clock the Admiral, gazing from the top of the castle built up on the poop of the *Santa Maria*, thought that far away in the warm darkness he saw a glancing light.

"Pedro," he said to the boy near him, "do you see a light out there? Yes? Call Senor Gutierrez and we will see what he makes of it. I have come to the pass where I do not trust my own eyes."

Gutierrez saw it, but when Sanchez of Segovia came up, the light had vanished. It seemed to come and go as if it were a torch in a fishing-boat or in the hand of some one walking. But at two in the morning a gun boomed from the *Pinta*. Rodrigo de Triana, one of the seamen, had seen land from the mast-head.



The sudden sunrise of the tropics revealed a green Paradise lapped in tranquil seas. The ships must have come up toward it between sunset and midnight. No one had been able to imagine with any certainty what morning would show. But this was no seaport, or coast of any civilized land. People were coming down to the shore to watch the approach of the ships, but they were wild people, naked and brown, and the sight was evidently perfectly new to them.



Page 34

The Admiral ordered the ships to cast anchor, and the boats were manned and armed. He himself in a rich uniform of scarlet held the royal banner of Castile, while the brothers Pinzon, commanders of the *Pinta* and the *Nina*, in their boats, had each a banner emblazoned with a green cross and the crowned initials of the sovereigns, Fernando and Ysabel. The air was clear and soft, the sea was almost transparent, and strange and beautiful fruits could be seen among the rich foliage of the trees along the shore. The Admiral landed, knelt and kissed the earth, offering thanks to God, with tears in his eyes; and the other captains followed his example. Then rising, he drew his sword, and calling upon all who gathered around him to witness his action, took possession of the newly-discovered island in the name of his sovereigns, and gave it the name of San Salvador (Holy Savior).

The wild people, terrified at the sight of men coming toward them from these great white-winged birds, as they took the ships to be, ran away to the woods, but they presently returned, drawn by irresistible curiosity. They had no weapons of iron, and one of them innocently took hold of a sword by the edge. They were delighted with the colored caps, glass beads, hawk-bells and other trifles which were given to them, and brought the strangers great balls of spun cotton, cakes of cassava bread, fruits, and tame parrots. Pedro went everywhere, and saw everything, as only a boy could. Later, when the flagship was cruising among the islands, and the Admiral, worn out by long anxiety, lay asleep in his cabin, the helmsman, smothering a mighty yawn, called Pedro to him.

“See here, young chap,” he said, “we are running along the shore of this island and there is no difficulty—take my place will you, while I get a nap?”

The boy hesitated. He would have asked his master, but his master was asleep, and must not be awakened. This helmsman, moreover, was one of the men who had been kind to him, ready to answer his questions regarding navigation, and loyal to the Admiral. Moreover it was not quite the first time that Pedro had been allowed to take this responsibility. He accepted it now. The man staggered away and lost himself in heavy sleep almost before he lay down.

It was one of the still, breathless nights of the tropic seas. Pedro’s small strong hands had not grasped the helm for a half-hour before the wind freshened, and then a tremendous gust swept down upon the flagship hurling her right upon the unknown shore. Pedro strove desperately with the fearful odds, but before the half-awakened sailors heard his call the *Santa Maria* was past repair. No lives were lost, but the Admiral decided that it would be necessary to leave a part of the men on shore as the beginning of a settlement. He would not have chosen to do this but for the disaster, for the men who made up these crews were not promising material for a colony in a wild land. But he had no choice in the matter. The two smaller ships would not hold them all. Pedro, shaken with sobs, cast himself at the feet of his master and begged forgiveness.



Page 35

“No one blames you, my son,” said the Admiral, more touched than he had been for a long time. “Be not so full of sorrow for what cannot be helped. The wild people are friendly, the land is kind, and when we have sailed back to Spain with our news there will be no difficulty in returning with as many ships as we may need. Nay, I will not leave thee here, Pedro. I think that now I could not do without thee.”

NOTE

[1] The name of Columbus took various forms according to the country in which he lived. In his native Genoa it would be Cristofero Colombo. In Portugal, where he dwelt for many years, it would be Cristobal Colombo, and in Spanish Christoval or Cristobal Colon. In Latin, which was the common language of all learned men until comparatively recent times, the name took the form Christopherus Columbus, which has become in modern English Christopher Columbus. In each story the discoverer is spoken of as he would have been spoken of by the characters in that particular story.

THE QUEEN'S PRAYER

In this Thy world, O blessed Christ,
I live but for Thy will,
To serve Thy cause and drive Thy foes
Before Thy banner still.

In rich and stately palaces
I have my board and bed,
But Thou didst tread the wilderness
Unsheltered and unfed.

My gallant squadrons ride at will
The undiscover'd sea,
But Thou hadst but a fishing-boat
On windy Galilee.

In valiant hosts my men-at-arms
Eager to battle go,
But Thou hadst not a single blade
To fend Thee from the foe.

Great store of pearls and beaten gold
My bold seafarers bring,
But Thou hadst not a little coin
To pay for Thy lodging.



The trust that Thou hast placed in me,
O may I not betray,
Nor fail to save Thy people from
The fires of Judgment Day!

Be strong and stern, O heart, faint heart—
Stay not, O woman's hand,
Till by this Cross I bear for Thee
I have made clean Thy land!

V

THE MAN WHO COULD NOT DIE

“Nombre de San Martin! who is that up there like a cat?”

“Un gato! Cucarucha en palo!”

“If Alonso de Ojeda hears of your calling him a cockroach on a mast, he will grind your ribs to a paste with a cudgel (os moliesen las costillas a puros palos)!” observed a pale, sharp-faced lad in a shabby doublet. The sailor who had made the comparison glanced at him and chuckled.

“Your pardon—hidalgo. I have been at sea so much of late that the comparison jumped into my mind. Is he a caballero then?”

“One of the household of the Duke of Medina Coeli. He is always doing such things. If he happened to think of flying, he would fly. Every one must be good at something.”

Page 36

The performance which they had just been watching would fix the name of Ojeda very firmly in the minds of those who saw. Queen Ysabel, happening to ascend the tower of the cathedral at Seville with her courtiers and ladies, remarked upon the daring and skill of the Moorish builders. Everywhere in the newly conquered cities of Granada were their magnificent domes and lofty muezzin towers, often seeming like the airy minarets of a mirage. The next instant Alonso de Ojeda had walked out upon a twenty-foot timber projecting into space two hundred feet above the pavement, and at the very end he stood on one leg and waved the other in the air. Returning, he rested one foot against the wall and flung an orange clean over the top of the tower. He was small, though handsome and well-made, and he had now shown a muscular strength of which few had suspected him.

It was natural that the sailor should be interested in the people of the court, for he had business there. The Admiral of the Indies was making his arrangements for his second voyage, and he had desired Juan de la Cosa to meet him at Seville. As the pilot stood waiting for the Admiral to come out from an interview with Fonseca he had a good look at many of the persons who were to join in this second expedition.

“There will be no unlocking the jail doors to scrape together crews for this fleet, I warrant you,” thought the old sailor exultantly as he stood in the shadow of the Giralda watching Castile parade itself before the new hero. Here were Diego Colon, a quiet-looking youth, the youngest brother of the Admiral; Antonio de Marchena the astronomer, a learned monk; Juan Ponce de Leon, a nobleman from the neighborhood of Cadiz with a brilliant military record; Francisco de las Casas with his son Bartolome; and the valiant young courtier whom all Seville had seen flirting with death in mid-air.

“Oh, it was nothing,” La Cosa heard Ojeda say when Las Casas made some kindly compliment on his daring. “I will tell you,” he added in a lower voice, pulling something small out of his doublet, “I have a sure talisman in this little picture of the Virgin. The Bishop gave it to me, and I always carry it. In all the dangers one naturally must encounter in the service of such a master as mine, it has kept me safe. I have never even been wounded.”

The Duke of Medina Coeli was in fact a stern master in the school of arms. He was always at the front in the wars just concluded between Spaniard and Moor, and where he was, there he expected his squires to be. There was no place among the youths whose fathers had given him charge of their military training, for a lad with a grain of physical cowardice. Ojeda moreover had a quick temper and a fiery sense of honor, and it really seemed to savor of the miraculous that he had escaped all harm. At any rate he had reached the age of twenty-one with unabated faith in the little Flemish painting.

“These youngsters—” the veteran seaman said to himself as he looked at the straight, proud, keen-faced squires and youthful knights marching along the streets of the



temporary capital, “now that the Moors are vanquished what won’t they do in the Indies! I think the golden days must be come for Christians. And shall you be a soldier also, my lad?” he asked of the sharp-faced boy, who still stood near him.



Page 37

“My father says not. He wants me to be a lawyer,” said the youngster indifferently. Then he slipped away as some companions of his own age, or a little older, came by, and one said enviously,

“Where have you been, Hernan’ Cortes? Lucky you were not with us. My faith—” the speaker wriggled expressively, “we caught a drubbing!”

“Told you so,” returned the lad addressed, with cool unconcern. “Why can’t you see when to let go the cat’s tail?”

“He has a head on him, that one,” the seaman chuckled. “There is always one of his sort in every gang of boys. But that young gallant Ojeda! A fine young fellow, and as devoted as he is brave.” Juan de la Cosa had conceived at first sight an admiration and affection for Ojeda which was to last as long as they both should live.

The fleet that stately sailed from Cadiz on September 25, 1493, was a very different sight from the three shabby little caravels that slipped down the Tinto a year and a half before. The Admiral now commanded fourteen caravels and three great carracks or store-ships, on board of which were horses, mules, cattle, carefully packed shoots of grape-vines and sugar-cane, seeds of all kinds, and provisions ready for use. The fleet carried nearly fifteen hundred persons,—three hundred more than had been arranged for, but the enthusiasm in Spain was boundless. It carried also the embittered hatred of Fonseca. The Bishop, having been the Queen’s confessor, naturally became head of the Department of the Indies in order to forward with all zeal the conversion of the native races. But when he tried to assert his authority over the Admiral and appealed to Fernando and Ysabel to support him, he was told mildly but firmly that in the equipment and command of the fleet Colon’s judgment was best. This royal snub Fonseca never forgave, and he was one of those persons who revenge a slight on some one else rather than the one who inflicted it. It was also his nature never to forgive any one for succeeding in an undertaking which he himself had prophesied would fail.

All seemed in order on the morning of the embarkation. At this time of year storms were unlikely, and there was no severity of climate to be feared. Half Castile and Aragon had come to see the expedition off. The young cavaliers’ heads were filled with visions of rich dukedoms and principalities in the golden empire upon whose coast the discovered islands hung, like pendants of pearl and gold upon the robe of a monarch.

The first incident of the voyage was not, however, romantic. The fleet touched at the Canary Islands to take on board more animals—goats, sheep, swine and fowls, for the Admiral had seen none of these in any of the islands he had visited. In fact the people had no domestic animal whatever except their strange dumb dogs. The cavaliers, glad of a chance to stretch their legs in a space a little greater than the deck of a crowded ship, strolled about discussing past and future with large freedom.



Page 38

Ojeda was asking Juan de la Cosa about the nature of the country. It seemed to him the ideal field for a man of spirit and high heart. How glorious a conquest would it be to abolish the vile superstitions of the barbarians and set up the altars of the true faith!

The pilot was a little amused and somewhat doubtful; he knew something of savages, and Ojeda and the priests on board did not. It was not, he suggested, always easy to convert stubborn heathen. A pig was a small animal, but Ojeda would remember that to the Moslem it was as great an object of aversion as a lion.

“Ho!” said Ojeda superbly, “that is quite—” He was interrupted by a blow that knocked his legs out from under him and landed him on the ground in a sitting position with his hat over his eyes.

“Who did that?” he cried, leaping to his feet, hand on sword.

“Only a pig, my lord,” the sailor answered choking with half-swallowed laughter. It was a pig, which the sailors had goaded to such a state of desperation that it had bolted straight into the group as a pig will, and was now galloping away, pursued by a great variety of maledictions and persons. “They have got the creature now,” he added, “You are not hurt?” for Ojeda was actually pale with indignation and disgust.

“No,” sputtered the youth, “but that pig—that p-pig—” He looked around him with an eye which seemed to challenge any beholder of whatever condition, to laugh and be instantly run through. Fortunately most of those on the wharf had been too much occupied to see Ojeda fall before the pig, and just then the trumpets blew, and all hastened to get back on board ship.

When an expedition is composed largely of hot-headed youths trained to the use of arms, each of whom has a code of honor as sensitive as a mimosa plant and as prickly as a cactus, the lot of their commanders is not happy. It may have been Ojeda’s treasured talisman which saved him from several sudden deaths during the following weeks, but Juan de la Cosa privately believed it was partly the memory of the pig. The young man had what might in another time and civilization have developed into a sense of humor. It would not do for a hero with the world before him to get himself sent back to Spain because of some trivial personal quarrel.

On reaching Hispaniola the adventurers found plenty of real occupation awaiting them. The little colony which the Admiral had left at Navidad on his first voyage had been wiped out. The natives timidly explained that a fierce chief from the interior, Caonaba, had killed or captured all the forty men of the garrison and destroyed their fort. Colon was obliged to remodel all his plans at a moment’s notice. Instead of finding a colony well under way, and in control of the wild tribes or at least friendly with them, he found the wreck of a luckless attempt at settlement, and the kindly native villagers turned aloof and suspicious, and living in dread of a second raid by Caonaba. He chose a site for a

second settlement on the coast, where ships could find a harbor, not far from gold-bearing mountains which the natives described and called Cibao. This sounded rather like Cipangu.



Page 39

Ojeda led an exploring party into the mountains, and found gold nuggets in the beds of the streams. In March a substantial little town had been built, with a church, granary, market-square, and a stone wall around the whole. The Admiral then organized an expedition to explore the interior.

On March 12, 1494, Colon with his chief officers went out of the gate of the settlement, which had been named for the Queen, at the head of four hundred men, many of whom were mounted, and all armed with sword, cross-bow, lance or arquebus. With casques and breastplates shining in the sun, banners flying, pennons fluttering, drums and trumpets sounding, they presented a sight which should have brought ambassadors from any monarch of the Indies who heard of their approach. But although a multitude of savages came from the forest to see, no signs of any such capital as that of the Great Khan appeared. At the end of the first day's march they camped at the foot of a rocky mountain range with no way over it but a footpath, winding over rocks and through dense tropical jungles. There appeared to be no roads in the country.

But this was not an impossible situation to the young Spanish cavaliers, for in the Moorish wars it had often been necessary to construct a road over the mountains. A number of them at once volunteered for the service, and with laborers and pioneers, to whom they set an example by working as valiantly as they were ready to fight, they made a road for the little army, which was named in their honor El Puerto de los Hidalgos, the Gentlemen's Pass. When they reached the top of this steep defile and could look down upon the land beyond they saw a vast and magnificent plain, covered with forests of beautiful trees, blossoming meadows and a network of clear lakes and rivers, and dotted here and there with thatch-roofed villages. Near the top of the pass a spring of cool delicious water bubbled out in a glen shaded by palms and one tall and handsome tree of an unknown variety, with wood so hard that it turned the ax of a laborer who tried to cut a chip of it. Colon gave the plain the name of the Vega Real or Royal Plain.

Of all the events, exploits and intrigues of those first years in the Spanish Indies, no one historian among those who accompanied the expedition ever found time to write. Where all was so new, and every man, whether priest, cavalier, soldier, sailor, clerk or artisan, had his own reasons and his own aims in coming to this land of promise, nothing went exactly according to anybody's plans. The Admiral was soon convinced that in Hispaniola at least no civilized capital existed. To their amazement and amusement the Spaniards found that the savages feared their horses more than their weapons. It was discovered after a while that horse and rider were at first supposed to be one supernatural animal. When the white men dismounted the people fled in horror, believing that the ferocious beasts were going to eat them.



Page 40

It became evident that with the fierce chief Caonaba to reckon with, military strength and capacity would be the only means of holding the country. The commander could not count on patriotism, religious principle or even self-interest to keep the colonists united. In this tangled situation one of the few persons who really enjoyed himself was Alonso de Ojeda. Instead of spending his time in drinking, quarreling or getting himself into trouble with friendly natives, the young man seemed bent on proving himself an able and sagacious leader of men. A little fortress of logs had been built about eighteen leagues from the settlement, in the mining country, defended on all sides but one by a little river, the Yanique, and on the remaining side by a deep ditch. Gold dust, nuggets, amber, jasper and lapis lazuli had been found in the neighborhood, and it was the Admiral's intention to send miners there as soon as possible, protected by the fort, which he called San Tomas. Ojeda happened to be in command of the garrison, in the absence of his superior, when Caonaba came down from his mountains with an immense force of hostile tribes. The young lieutenant in his rude eyrie, perched on a hill surrounded by the enemy, held off ten thousand savages under the Carib chief for more than a month. Finally the chief, whose people had never been trained in warfare after the European fashion, found them deserting by hundreds, tired of the monotony of the siege. Ojeda did not merely stand on the defensive. He was continually sallying forth at the head of small but determined companies of Spaniards, whenever the enemy came near his stronghold. He never went far enough from his base to be captured, but killed off so many of the best warriors of Caonaba that the chief himself grew tired of the unprofitable undertaking and withdrew his army. During the siege provisions ran short, and when things were looking very dark a friendly savage slipped in one night with two pigeons for the table of the commander. When they were brought to Ojeda, in the council chamber where he was seated consulting with his officers, he glanced at the famine-pinched faces about him, took the pigeons in his hands and stroked their feathers for an instant.

"It is a pity," he said, "that we have not enough to make a meal. I am not going to feast while the rest of you starve," and he gave the birds a toss into the air from the open window and turned again to his plans. When some one reported the incident to the Admiral his eyes shone.

"I wish we had a few more such commanders," he said.

Caonaba's next move was to form a conspiracy among all the caciques of Hispaniola, to join in a grand attack against the white men and wipe them out, as he had wiped out the little garrison at Navidad. A friendly cacique, Guacanagari, who had been the ally of the Admiral from the first, gave him information of this plot, and the danger was seen by Colon's acute mind to be desperate indeed. He had only

Page 41

a small force, torn by jealousy and private quarrels, and a defensive fight at this stage of his enterprise would almost surely be a losing one. The territory of Caonaba included the most mountainous and inaccessible part of the island, where that wily barbarian could hold out for years; and as long as he was loose there would be no safety for white men. To the Admiral, who was just recovering from a severe illness, the prospect looked very gloomy.

Pedro the Vizcayan cabin-boy, who was his confidential servant, was crossing the plaza one day with a basket of fruit, when Alonso de Ojeda stopped him to inquire after his master's health.

"His health," said Pedro, "would improve if I had Caonaba's head in this basket. I wish somebody would get it."

Ojeda laughed, showing a flash of white teeth under his jaunty mustachios. Then he grew thoughtful. "Wait a moment, Pedro," he said. "Will you ask the Admiral if he can see me for a few minutes, this morning?"

When Ojeda appeared Colon detected a trace of excitement in the young man's bearing, and tactfully led the conversation to Caonaba. He frankly expressed his perplexity.

"Have you a plan, Ojeda?" he asked with a half smile. "It has been my experience, that you usually have."

Ojeda felt a thrill of pleasure, for the Admiral did not scatter his compliments broadcast. He admitted that he had a plan.

"Let me hear it," said Colon.

But as the youthful captain unfolded his scheme the cool gray eye of the Genoese commander betrayed distinct surprise. It seemed only yesterday that this youngster had been a little monkey of a page in the great palace of the Duke of Medina Coeli, when he was entertained there, on arriving in Spain.

"You see," Ojeda concluded, "I have observed in fighting these people that if their leader is killed or captured, they seem to lose their heads completely. I think that with a dozen men I can get Caonaba and bring him in. If I do not—the loss will not be very great."

"I should not like to lose you," said the Admiral, with his hand on the young man's shoulder. "Go, if you will,—but do not sacrifice your own life if you can help it."



Ojeda had faith in his talisman, and he also believed that if any man could go into Caonaba's territory and come back alive, he was that man. He knew that he himself, in the place of the chief, would respect a man whom he had not been able to beat.

With ten soldiers he rode up into the mountains, his blood leaping with the wild joy of an adventure as great as any in the Song of the Cid. To be sure, Caonaba would not in his mountain camp have any such army as when he surrounded the fort, for then he commanded whole tribes of allies. In case of coming to blows Ojeda believed that he and his men with their superior weapons could cut their way out. Still, the odds were beyond anything that he had ever heard of.



Page 42

He found the Carib chief, and began by trying diplomacy. He said that his master, the Guamaquima or chief of the Spaniards, had sent him with a present. Would he not consent to make a visit to the colony, with a view of becoming the Admiral's ally and friend? If he would, he should be presented with the bell of the chapel, the voice of the church, the wonder of Hispaniola.

Caonaba had heard that bell when he was prowling about the settlement, and the temptation to become its owner was great. He finally agreed to accompany Ojeda and his handful of Spaniards back to the coast. But when they were ready to start, the force of warriors in Caonaba's escort was out of all proportion to any peaceful embassy. Ojeda turned to his original plan.

He proposed that Caonaba, after bathing in the stream at the foot of the mountain, and attiring himself in his finest robe, should put on the gift the Spanish captain had brought, a pair of metal bracelets, and return to his followers mounted with Ojeda on his horse. The chief's eyes glittered as he saw the polished steel of the ornaments Ojeda produced. He knew that nothing could so impress his wild followers with his power and greatness as his ability to conquer all fear of the terrible animals always seen in the vanguard of the white men's army. He consented to the plan, and after putting on his state costume, and being decorated with the handcuffs, he cautiously mounted behind the young commander, and his followers, in awe and admiration, beheld their cacique ride.

[Illustration: "HE PROPOSED THAT CAONABA SHOULD PUT ON THE GIFT THE SPANISH CAPTAIN HAD BROUGHT."—Page 78]

Ojeda, who was a perfect horseman, made the horse leap, curvet and caracole, taking a wider circuit each time, until making a long sweep through the forest the two disappeared from the view of the Carib army altogether. Ojeda's own men closed in upon him, bound Caonaba hand and foot, behind their leader, and thus the chief was taken into the Spanish settlement. The conspiracy fell to pieces and the colony was saved.

Caonaba showed no respect to Colon or any one else in the camp while a prisoner there, except Ojeda. When Ojeda entered he promptly rose to his feet. They had many conversations together, and Caonaba, who evidently rather admired the stratagem by which he had been captured, agreed with his captor that Ojeda was The Man Who Could Not Die.

NOTE

The career of Alonso de Ojeda is one of the most picturesque and adventurous in early Spanish-American history, and his character is typical of the young Spanish cavalier of



the age just following the discovery of America. The episodes here used, with many others quite as dramatic, are described at length in Irving's "Life of Columbus."

THE ESCAPE

Why do you come here, white men, white men?
Why do you bend the knee
When your priests before you, singing, singing,
Lift the cross, the cross of tree?



Page 43

Flashing in the sunlight, rainbows waking,
Move your mighty oars keeping time.
Sailors heave your anchors, chanting, chanting
Some strange and mystic rime.

Pearls and gold we bring you, feathers of our wild birds,
Glowing in the sunshine like flowers.
Houses we will build you, food and clothing find you,
You shall share in all that is ours.

Why do you frighten us, white men, white men?
Can you not be friends for a day?
Souls are like the sea-birds, flying, flying,
Borne by the sea-wind away.

Why do you chain us in the mines of the mountains?
Why do you hunt us with your hounds?
We who were so free, are we evermore to be
Prisoned in your narrow hateful bounds?

One escape is left us, white men, white men,—
You cannot forbid our souls to fly
To the stars of freedom, far beyond the sunset,—
We whom you have captured can die!

VI

LOCKED HARBORS

“But of what use is a King’s patent,” said Hugh Thorne of Bristol, “if the harbors be locked?”

The Italian merchant glanced up from his papers and smiled, which was all the answer the Englishman seemed to expect, for he stormed on, “Here have we better fleeces than Spain, better wheat than France, finer cattle than the Netherlands, the tin of Cornwall, the flax of Kent and Durham, and our people starve or live rudely because of the fettering of our trade.”

“T is a sad misfortune,” said the merchant. “In a world so great as this there is surely room for all to work and all to get reward for their labor. But so long as the English merchant guilds wear away their time and substance in fighting one another I fear ’t will be no better.”



Thorne flung his cloak about him with an impatient gesture. "That's true," he answered, "the Spaniards hold by Spain, and all the Hanse merchants by one another, but our English go every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost. I speak freely to you, friend, because you have cast in your lot with us West Country folk and are content to be called John Cabot."

The other smiled again, his quick childlike smile, and went with his guest to the door. When he entered again his small private room a dark-eyed boy of five was crawling out from under the table.

"Dad," he inquired solemnly, "vat is a locked harbor?"

John Cabot laughed and swung his little son to his shoulder. "That is a great question for a little brain," he said fondly. "But see thee here; suppose I put thee in the chest and shut the lid and turn the key; thou art locked in and canst not get out—so! But now I put thee out of door and set the bandog to guard it; thou art locked out though the door be wide open, seest thou? And when I forbid thee to pick up



Page 44

the plums that fall on the grass from the Frenchman's damson tree, they are as safe as if I locked them in the dresser here, are they not? So 't is when the King forbids his people to send their goods to some harbor; it is the same as if a great chain were stretched across that harbor with a great lock upon it. Now run and play with Ludovico and Santo, Sebastiano mio, and be glad thou art free of a pleasant garden."

But Sebastian still hung back, his dark head rubbing softly against his father's shoulder. "When I am a great merchant," he announced, "the King will let me send my ships all over the world."

John Cabot stroked the wavy dark hair with a lingering, tender touch. "God grant thee thy wish, little one," he said. And Sebastian, with a shout in answer to a call from the sunny out-of-door world, scampered away.

John Cabot, who had been born in Genoa, married while a merchant in Venice, and had now lived for many years in Bristol, felt sometimes that the life of a trader was like that of a player at dice. And the dice were often loaded.

He was a good navigator, or he would not have been a true son of the Genoese house of Caboto—Giovanni Caboto translated meant John the Captain, and in a city full of sea-captains a man must know more than a little of the sea to win that title. He had made a place for himself in Venice as Zuan Gaboto, and now he was a known and respected man in the second greatest seaport of England, with a house in the quarter of Bristol known as "Cathay," the only part of the city where foreigners were allowed to live. It had its nickname from the fact that the foreign trade of Bristol was largely with the Orient.

English trade in those days was hampered by a multitude of restrictions. There were monopolies, there were laws forbidding the export of this and that, or the making of goods by any one outside certain guilds, there were arrangements favoring foreign traders who had got their foothold during the War of the Roses,—when kings needed money from any source that would promise it. The Hanse merchants at the Steelyard alone controlled the markets of more than a hundred towns. Their grim stone buildings rose like a fort commanding London Bridge, and they paid less both in duties and customs than English merchants did. They employed no English ships, and could underbuy and undersell the English manufacturer and the English trader. Their men were all bachelors, with no families to found or houses to keep up in England. The farmer might get half price for his wool and pay more than one price for whatever he was obliged to buy. There was plenty of private exasperation, but no open fighting, against this ruling of the London markets by Hamburg, Luebeck, Antwerp and Cologne. Cabot's clear head and wide experience plainly showed him the enormous waste of

such a system, but he did not see how to unlock the harbors. Neither, at present, did the King, whose shrewd brain was at work on the problem.



Page 45

Henry Tudor had the thrift of a youth spent in poverty, and the turn for finance inherited from Welsh ancestors, but his kingdom was not rich, and his throne not over-secure. He was prejudiced against doing anything rash, both by nature and by the very limited income of the crown. He had given an audience to Bartholomew Columbus while the older brother was still haunting the court of Castile with his unfulfilled plans, and had gone so far as to tell the Genoese captain to bring his brother Christopher to England that he might talk with him. Had it not been for Queen Isabella's impulsive decision England instead of Spain might have made the lucky throw in the great game of discovery. But by the time Bartholomew could get the message to his brother the matter had been settled and the expedition was already taking shape. Henry VII. always kept one foot on the ground, and until he could see some other way to bring wealth into the royal treasury he let the monopolies go on.

In 1495 he took a chance. He gave to John Cabot and his sons a license to search "for islands, provinces or regions in the eastern, western or northern seas; and, as vassals of the King, to occupy the territories that might be found, with an exclusive right to their commerce, on paying the King a fifth part of the profits."

It will be noted that this license did not say anything about the southern ocean. Already troops of Spanish cavaliers were pouring into the seaports, eager to make discoveries by the road of Columbus, and Spain would regard as unfriendly any attempt to send English ships in that direction. Whatever could be got from the Spanish territories Henry would try another way of getting. The year before he had arranged to have Prince Arthur, the heir to his throne, marry the fourth daughter of the King of Aragon, Catherine, then a little Princess of eleven. Prince Arthur died while still a boy, and Catherine became the first wife of Henry, afterward Henry VIII. With a Spanish Princess as queen of England, there might be an alliance between the two countries. That would be better than quarreling with Spain over discoveries which were at best uncertain. If Cabot really found anything valuable in the northern seas the move might turn out to be a good one. It would make England a more powerful member of the Spanish alliance, without taking anything which Spain appeared to value.

In May, 1497, properly furnished with provisions and a few such things as might show what England had to barter, the little *Matthew* sailed from Bristol under the command of John Cabot with his nineteen-year-old son Sebastian and a crew of eighteen—nearly all Englishmen, used to the North Atlantic. The King's permission was for five ships, but the wise Cabot had heard something of the hardships of the first expeditions to Hispaniola, and preferred to keep within his means, and sail with men whom he could trust.



Page 46

But on this voyage they found locked harbors not closed by the order of any King but by natural causes,—harbors without inhabitants or means of supporting life, and so far north as to be blocked by ice for half the year. They sailed seven hundred leagues west and came at last to a rocky wooded coast. Now in all the books of travel in Asia, mention had been made of an immense territory ruled by the Grand Cham of Tartary, whose hordes had nearly overrun Eastern Europe in times not so very long ago. The adventures of Marco Polo the Venetian, in a great book sent to Cabot by his wife's father, had been the fairy-tale of Sebastian and his brothers from the time they were old enough to understand a story. In this book it was written how Marco Polo and his companions passed through utterly uninhabited wilds in the Great Khan's empire, and afterward came to a region of barbarians, who robbed and killed travelers. These fierce people lived on the fruits and game of the forest, cultivating no fields; they dressed in the skins of wild animals and used salt for money. Could this be the place? If so it behooved the little party of explorers to be careful. As yet, nobody dreamed that any mainland discovered by sailing westward from northern Europe could be anything but Asia.

Cautiously they sailed along the rugged shore, but not a human being was to be seen. It was the twenty-fourth of June, when by all accounts the people of any civilized country should be coasting along from port to port fishing or engaged in traffic. The sun blazed hot and clear, but the inquisitive noses of the crew scented no cinnamon, cloves or ginger in the air. All of these, according to Marco Polo, were in the wilderness he crossed, and also great rivers. On crossing one of these rivers he had found himself in a populous country with castles and cities. Were there no people on this desolate shore—or were they lying in wait for the voyagers to land, that they might seize and kill them and plunder the ship?

One thing was certain, the air of this strange place made them all more thirsty than they ever had been in England, and their water-supply had given out. Sebastian and a crew of the younger men tumbled into a boat, cross-bow and cutlass at hand, and went ashore to fill the barrels, while John Cabot kept an anxious eye on the land. Sebastian himself rather relished the adventure.

They found a stream of delicious water,—pure, cold and clear as a fountain of Eden. Among the rocks they found creeping vines with rather tasteless, bright red berries, in the woods little evergreen herbs with leaves like laurel and scarlet spicy berries, dark green mossy vines with white berries—but no spice-trees. The forest in fact was rather like Norway, according to Ralph Erlandsson, who was a native of Stavanger. Sebastian, who was ahead, presently came upon signs of human life. A sapling, bent down and held by a rude contrivance of deerhide



Page 47

thong and stakes, was attached to a noose so ingeniously hidden that the young leader nearly stepped into it. He took it off the tree and looked about him. A minute later, from one side and to the rear, a startled exclamation came from Robert Thorne of Bristol, who had stepped on a similar snare and been jerked off his feet. This was quite enough. The party retreated to the ship. On the way back they saw trees that had been cut not very long since, and Sebastian picked up a wooden needle such as fishermen used in making nets, yet not like any English tool of that sort.

[Illustration: "A SAPLING, BENT DOWN, WAS ATTACHED TO A NOOSE INGENIOUSLY HIDDEN."—Page 87]

They saw nothing more of the kind, although they sailed some three hundred leagues along the coast, nor did they see any sort of tilled land. This certainly could not be Cipangu or Cathay with their seaports and gilded temples. Whatever else it was, it was a land of wild people, savage hunters. John Cabot left on a bold headland where it could not fail to be seen, a great cross, with the flag of England and the Venetian banner bearing the lion of Saint Mark.

There was wild excitement in Bristol when it was known that the little *Matthew* had come safely into port, after three months' voyaging in unknown seas. August of that year found the two Cabots at Westminster with their story and their handful of forest trophies, and the excited and suspicious Spanish Ambassador was framing a protest to the King and a letter to Ferdinand and Isabella.

Henry VII. fingered the wooden needle, pulled the rawhide thong meditatively through his fingers, and ate a little handful of the wintergreen berries and young leaves. Their pungent flavor wrinkled his long nose. This was certainly not any spice that came from the Indies.

"This country you found," he remarked at last, "is not much like New Spain."

"Nay, Sire," answered John Cabot simply.

"And I understand,"—the King put the collection of curiosities back into the wallet that had held them, "that this represents one fifth at least of the gains of the voyage."

Cabot bowed. As a matter of fact there had been no profits.

"My lord,"—the King handed the wallet over to the uneasy Ambassador, who had been invited to the conference, "you have heard what our good Captain says. If, as you say, Spain claims this landfall, we willingly make over to you our—ahem!—share of the emolument." And the Spaniard, looking rather foolish, saw nothing better to do than to bow his thanks and retire from the presence.

The King turned again to the Cabots.



Page 48

“Nevertheless,” he went on meditatively, “we will not be neglectful of you. In another year, if it is still your desire to engage in this work, you may have—” a pause—“ten ships armed as you see fit, and manned with whatever prisoners are not confined for—high treason. Fish, I think you said, abound in those waters? Bacalao—er—that is cod, is it not? Now it seems to me that our men of Bristol can go a-fishing on those banks without interference from the Hanse merchants, and we shall be less dependent on—foreign aid, for the victualing of our tables. And there may be some way to Asia through these Northern seas—in which case our brother of Spain may not be so nice in his scruples about trespass. The Spice Islands are not his but Portugal’s. And for your present reward,—” the King reached for his lean purse and waggled his gaunt foot in its loose worn red shoe “this, and the title of Admiral of your new-found land.”

He dropped some gold pieces into the hand of John Cabot. In the accounts of his treasurer for that year may be seen this item:

“10th August, donation of L10 to him that found the new isle.”

In May of the next year another voyage was undertaken by Sebastian, John Cabot having died. This time there was a small fleet from Bristol with some three hundred men. Sebastian sailed so far north as to be stopped by seas full of icebergs, then turning southward discovered the island of Newfoundland, landed further south on the mainland, and went as far toward the Spanish possessions as the great bay called Chesapeake. Meanwhile shoals of little fishing boats, from Bristol, Brittany, Lisbon, Rye, and the Vizcayan ports on the north of Spain, crept across the gray seas to fish for cod. They held no patent and carried no guns, but they made a floating city off the Grand Banks for a brief season, settling their own disputes. The people at home found salt fish good cheap and wholesome. When Sebastian told the Bristol folk that the fish were so thick in these new seas that he could hardly get his ships through, they would not believe it. But when Robert Thorne and a dozen others had seen the little caplin, the fish which the cod feeds upon, swimming inshore by the acre, crowded by the cod behind them, and by seal, shark and dogfish hunting the cod, when cod were caught and salted down and shown in Bristol, four and five feet long, then Bristol swallowed both story and cargo and blessed the name of Cabot.

Sebastian Cabot shook the dust of Bristol off his restless feet more than once in the years that followed. Within five years after his voyage to the Arctic regions he was cruising about the Caribbean. In 1517 he was at the entrance of the great bay on the north coast of Labrador. In 1524 he was in the service of Spain, and coasting along the eastern shores of South America ascended the great river which De Solis had named Rio de la Plata, came within sight of the mountains of Peru. But for orders from Spain, where Pizarro



Page 49

had secured the governorship of that land, Cabot might have been its conqueror. In 1548, after some years spent in Spain as pilot major, he came back to England, where he was appointed to the position of superintendent of naval affairs. It was his work to examine and license pilots, and make charts and maps, and some ten years later he died, having founded the company of Merchant Adventurers in 1553. This company was entitled to build and send out ships for discovery and trade in parts unknown. By uniting merchant traders in one body, governed by definite rules, and backed by their combined capital, it broke the monopoly of the Hanseatic League and finally drove the Hanse merchants out of England. Sebastian Cabot was its first governor, holding the office until he died, and has rightly been called the father of free trade. He had unlocked the harbors of the world to his adopted country, England.

NOTE

The rules drawn up by Cabot for the merchant adventurers, to be read publicly on board ship once a week, are interesting as showing the character of the man and the great advance made in welding English trade into a company to be guided by the best traditions. For the first time captains were required to keep a log, and this one thing, by putting on record everything seen and noted by those who sailed strange waters, made an increasing fund of knowledge at the service of each navigator. Some of the points in the instructions are as follows:

7. "That the merchants and other skilful persons, in writing, shall daily write, describe and put in memorie the navigation of each day and night, with the points and observations of the lands, tides, elements, altitude of the sunne, course of the moon and starres, and the same so noted by the order of the master and pilot of every ship to be put in writing; the captain-general assembling the masters together once every weeke (if winde and weather shall serve) to conferre all the observations and notes of the said ships, to the intent it may appeare wherein the notes do agree and wherein they dissent, and upon good debatement, deliberation and conclusion determined to put the same into a common ledger, to remain of record for the companie; the like order to be kept in proportioning of the cardes, astrolabes, and other instruments prepared for the voyage, at the charge of the companie.

12. "That no blaspheming of God, or detestable swearing, be used in any ship, or communication of ribaldrie, filthy tales, or ungodly talk to be suffered in the company of any ship, neither dicing, tabling, nor other divelish games to be permitted, whereby ensueth not only povertie to the players, but also strife, variance, brauling, fighting and oftentimes murther.



26. "Every nation and region to be considered advisedly, and not to provoke them by any distance, laughing, contempt, or such like; but to use them with prudent circumspection, with all gentleness and courtesie."



Page 50

These and other instructions form an ideal far beyond anything found in the merchant shipping of any other land at that time, and the wisdom which inspired them undoubtedly laid the foundation of the fine and noble tradition which formed the best officers of the navy not yet born. There was no British navy in the modern sense until a hundred years after Cabot's day. In time of war the King impressed all suitable ships into his service, if they were not freely offered by private owners. In time of peace the monarch was a ship-owner like any other, and such a thing as a standing navy was not thought of. Hence the brave, generous, and courteous merchant adventurer, when such a man was abroad, was the upholder of the honor of his country as well as the upbuilder of her commerce.

GRAY SAILS

Gray sails that fill with the winds of the morning,
Out upon the Channel or the bleak North sea,
Neither cross nor fleur-de-lis goes to your adorning,—
Arctic frost and southern gale your tirewomen shall be.
Yet when you come home again—home again—home again,
Gray sails turn to silver when the keel runs free.

Gray sails of Plymouth, 'ware the wild Orcades,
Gray sails of Lisbon, 'ware the guns of Dieppe.
Cross-bows of Genoa, 'ware the wharves of Gades,—
You that sail the Spanish Seas may neither trust nor sleep.
Yet when you come home again—home again—home again,
You shall make the covenant for Kings to keep!

Gray sails are crowding where the sea-fog sleeping
Masks the faces of the folk that throng and traffic there.
When the winds are free again and the cod are leaping,
All the tongues of Pentecost wake the laughing air.
And when they come home again—home again—home again,
They shall bring their freedom for the world to share!

VII

LITTLE VENICE

"Translators," observed Amerigo Vespucci, "are frequently traitors. Now who is to be surety that yonder interpreter does not change your words in repeating them?"



Alonso de Ojeda touched the hilt of his poniard. "This," he said. "Toledo steel speaks all languages."

The Florentine's black eyebrows lifted a little, but he did not pursue the subject. Ojeda was not the sort of man likely to be convinced of anything he did not believe already, and Vespucci was having too good a time to waste it in argument.



Page 51

This middle-aged, shrewd-looking individual had for half his life been chained to the desk, for he had been many years a clerk in the great merchant houses of the Medici. Until he was forty years old he had hardly gone outside his native city. In the latter half of the fifteenth century each Italian city was a little world in itself, with its own standards, customs and traditions. The fact that Vespucci spent most of his leisure and all of his spare ducats in the collection and study of maps and globes and works on geography, was regarded as a proof of mild insanity. When he paid one hundred and thirty gold pieces for a particularly fine map made by Valsequa in 1439, even his intimate friend Soderini called him a fool. Vespucci was himself an expert mapmaker. This may have been a reason why, about 1490, the Medici sent him to Barcelona to look after their interests in Spain. In Seville he secured a position as manager in the house of Juanoto Berardi, who fitted out ships for Atlantic voyages. In 1497 he himself sailed for the newly discovered islands of the West, and spent more than a year in exploration. This taste of travel seemed to have whetted his appetite for more, for he was now acting as astronomer and geographer in the expedition which Ojeda had organized and Juan de la Cosa fitted out, to the coast which Colon had discovered and called *Tierra Firme*. In the seven years since the first voyage of the great Admiral it had become the custom to have on board, for expeditions of discovery, a person who understood astronomy, the use of the astrolabe and navigation in general, and the making of charts and maps. Vespucci was exactly that sort of man. However queer it might seem to the young Ojeda to find in a clerk forty years old such a fresh and youthful delight in travel, both he and La Cosa knew that they had in him a valuable assistant. It was generally understood that he meant to write a book about it all.

Vespucci was in fact thinking of his future book when he made that speech about translators. He was planning to write the book not in Latin, as was usual, but in Italian, making if necessary another copy in Latin.

The party had sailed from Puerto Santa Maria on May 20, 1499, taking with them a chart which Bishop Fonseca, head of the Department of the Indies, furnished. It had been the understanding when Colon received the title of Admiral of the Indies that no expedition should be sent out without his authority. This understanding Fonseca succeeded in persuading the King and Queen to take back, and another order was issued, to the effect that no independent expedition was to go out without the royal permission. This, practically, meant Fonseca's leave. The Bishop signed the permit for Ojeda's undertaking with double satisfaction. He was doing a favor for his friend, Bishop Ojeda, cousin to this young man, and he was aiming a blow at the hated Genoese Admiral, whose very chart he was turning over to the young explorer.



Page 52

All sorts of stories had been set afloat about the unfitness of the Admiral to hold such an important office. Fonseca had managed to influence the Queen so far against him that one Bobadilla had been sent to Hispaniola with power to depose Colon and treat him as a criminal,—so cunningly were his instructions framed. When the great discoverer was actually thrown into prison and sent to Spain manacled like a felon, it might have added a few drops of bitterness to his reflections if he had known what Ojeda was doing. This youth, whom he had trusted and liked, was now looking forward to the conquest of the very region which the Admiral had discovered, and using what was supposed to be the Admiral's private chart to guide him.

It is not likely, however, that the fiery and impatient Ojeda gave any thought to the feelings of the older man. Juan de la Cosa was a leader in the expedition, many sailors were enlisted, who had served in former voyages of discovery, and above all, Fonseca approved. Ojeda would never have dreamed of setting up any personal opinion contrary to the views of the Church.

In twenty-four days the fleet arrived upon a coast which no one on board had ever seen. It was in fact two hundred leagues further to the south than Paria, where the Admiral had touched. The people were taller and more vigorous than the Arawaks of Hispaniola, and expert with the bow, the lance and the shield. Their bell-shaped houses were of tree-trunks thatched with palm leaves, some of them very large. The people wore ornaments made of fish-bones, and strings of white and green beads, and feather headdresses of the most gorgeous colors. The interpreter told Ojeda that the Spaniards' desire of gold and pearls was very puzzling to these simple folk, who had never considered them of any especial value. In a harbor called Maracapana the fleet was unloaded and careened for cleaning. Under the direction of Ojeda and La Cosa a small brigantine was built. The people brought venison, fish, cassava bread and other provisions willingly, and seemed to think the Spaniards angels. At least, that was the version of their talk which reached Ojeda. It was here that Amerigo Vespucci made that remark about translators. He had not studied accounts of Atlantic voyages for the last few years without drawing a few conclusions regarding the nature of savages. When it was explained that the natives had neighbors who were cannibals, and that they would greatly value the strangers' assistance in fighting them, Vespucci came very near making a suggestion. He finally made it to Juan de la Cosa instead of to Ojeda. The old pilot chuckled wisely.

"I've got past warning my young gentleman of danger ahead," he said good-naturedly. "He can do without fighting just as well as a fish can do without water. If I die trying to get him out of some scrape he has plunged into head-first, it will be no more than I expect."



Page 53

Ojeda was, in fact, spoiling for adventure, and joyfully set sail in the direction of the Carib Islands. Seven coast natives were on board as guides, and pointed out the island inhabited by their especial enemies. The shore was lined with fierce-faced savages, painted and feathered, armed with bows and arrows, lances and darts and bucklers. Ojeda launched his boats, in each of which was a paterero, or small cannon, with a number of soldiers crouching down out of sight. The armor of the Spaniards protected them from the Indian arrows, while the cotton armor of the savages and their light shields were no defense against cannon-balls or crossbow-bolts.

When the barbarians leaped into the sea and attacked the boats the cannon scattered them, but they rallied and fought more fiercely on land. The Spaniards won that day's battle, but the dauntless islanders were ready to renew the fight next morning. With his fifty-seven men Ojeda routed the whole fighting force of the tribe, made many prisoners, plundered and set fire to the villages, and returned to his ships. A part of the spoil was bestowed on the seven friendly natives. Ojeda, who had not received so much as a scratch, anchored in a bay for three weeks to let his wounded recover. There were twenty-one wounded and one Spaniard had been killed.

Sailing westward along the coast the fleet presently entered a vast gulf like an inland sea, on the eastern side of which was a most curious village. Ojeda could hardly believe the evidence of his own eyes. Twenty large cone-shaped houses were built on piles driven into the bottom of the lake, which in that part was clear and shallow. Each house had its drawbridge, and communicated with its neighbors and with the shore by means of canoes gliding along the water-ways between the piles. The interpreters said it was called Coquibacoa.

"That is no proper name for so marvelous a place," said Ojeda after he had tried to pronounce the clucking many-syllabled word. "Is it like anything you have seen, Vespucci?"

The Italian had been comparing it with a similar village he had seen on his first voyage, on a part of the coast called Lariab. He had an instinct, however, that it would not be well to mix his own discoveries with those of the present expedition.

"It is rather like Venice," he said demurely.

"That is the name for it," cried Ojeda in high delight,— "Venezuela—Little Venice!"

"It would be interesting," observed Vespucci, "to know what names they are giving to us. How they stare!"

The people of the village on stilts were evidently as much astonished at the strangers as the strangers were at them. They fled into their houses and raised the draw-bridges. The men in a squadron of canoes which came paddling in from the sea were also

terrified. But this did not last long. The warriors went into the forest and returned with sixteen young girls, four of whom they brought to



Page 54

each ship. While the white men wondered what this could mean, several old crones appeared at the doors of the houses and began a furious shrieking. This seemed to be a signal. The maidens dived into the sea and made for the shore, and a storm of arrows came from the canoemen. The fight, however, was not long, and the Spaniards won an easy victory, after which they had no further trouble. They found a harbor called Maracaibo, and twenty-seven Spaniards at the earnest request of the natives were entertained as guests among the inland villages for nine days. They were carried from place to place in litters or hammocks, and when they returned to the ships every man of them had a collection of gifts—rich plumes, weapons, tropical birds and animals—but no gold. The monkeys and parrots were very amusing, but they did not make up, in the minds of some of the crew, for the gold which had not been found.

Ojeda returned from an exploring journey one day with a ruffled temper. “A gang of poachers,” he sputtered,—“rascally Bristol traders. We shall have to teach these folk their place.”

“What really happened?” Vespucci inquired privately of Juan de la Cosa. The old mariner’s eyes twinkled.

“It was funny. You see, we were coming down to the shore, ready to return to the ships, when we spied an English ship and some sailors on the beach, dancing after they’d caught their fish and eaten ’em. Up marches our young caballero with hand on hilt and asks whose men they are. But they answered him in a language he can’t understand, d’ye see, and after some jabbering he makes them understand that he wants to go on board to see their captain. I went along, for I’d no mind to leave him alone if there should be trouble.

“So soon as I set eyes on the captain I knew him for a chap I’d seen years ago in Venice. He did me a good turn there, too, though he was but a lad. I knew he was a Bristol man, but I hadn’t expected to see him or his ship so far from home. He could talk Spanish nearly as well as you do.

“‘What are you doing here?’ asks our worshipful commander.

“‘Looking at the sky,’ said the other man, cool as a cucumber. ‘I think we are going to have a storm.’

“‘Don’t bandy words with me,’ says Ojeda. ‘You are trespassing on my master’s dominions.’



“Your master is the Admiral of the Indies, no?’ says the stranger, and that pretty near shut our young gentleman’s mouth for a minute, for between you and me I think he knows that Colon has not been well treated. But he only got the more furious.

“Do you insult me?’ says he, and whips out his Toledo blade and bends it almost double, to show the quality.



Page 55

“Wait a minute, my young hornet,’ says the captain—he wasn’t much more than a boy, himself,—‘didn’t your master the Duke of Medina Coeli teach you better than to irritate a man on the deck of his own ship? Mine can sail two leagues to your one, and I’m just leaving for home, so, unless you would like to go with me, perhaps you will let this conversation end without any more pointed remarks. If I chose, you know, I could drop you overboard in sight of your men, to swim ashore. My guns would stave your longboat all to pieces. But I’ve stayed long enough to give the lads a chance to have a good meal and a bit of fun—nothing’s better than dancing, for the spirits, dad always said it was better than either fighting or dicing on shipboard. Before we part, though, I’m going to give you one piece of advice. Don’t stir up these coast natives too often. If you do, they’ll eat you. They use poisoned arrows in some of these parts, and there’s no cure for that but a red-hot iron.’

“The caballero’s temper is like gunpowder—it flashes up in a second, or not at all. He must ha’ seen that the captain meant him kindness. Anyway, he slips his sword back in the scabbard and says cool as you please,

“Senor, pardon my hasty conclusion. You have of course a perfect right to look at the sky, and to dance, if that is your diversion. I should be extremely sorry to interfere with your departure. But you will understand that when a commander in the service of the sovereigns of Aragon and Castile finds intruders within their territory it is his duty to make it his affair. I thank you for your warning. Adios,’ and he makes a little stiff bow and goes over the side, me after him. I looked back just as I went over the rail, and the skipper was watching me, and I may be mistaken but I believe he winked. I tell you, our little captain can do things that would get him run through the body if he were any other man.”

Vespucci smiled thoughtfully. But this incident may have had something to do with his later decision to part company with Ojeda. Vespucci continued to explore the coast, and Ojeda sailed northward to the islands, where he kidnaped some Indians for slaves. When he returned to Cadiz the young adventurer found to his intense disgust that after all expenses were paid there remained but five hundred ducats to be divided among fifty-five men. This was all the more mortifying because, two months before, Pedro Alonso Nino, a captain of Palos, and Christoval Guerra of Seville, had come in from a trading voyage in the Indies with the richest cargo of gold and pearls ever seen in Cadiz.

Vespucci wrote his book some years later, and as it was the first popular account of the new Spanish possessions and was written in a lively and entertaining style it had a great reputation. It gave to the natives of the country the name which they have ever since borne—Indians. A German geographer who much admired the work suggested that an appropriate mark of appreciation would be to name the new continent America, after Vespucci, and this was done. Vespucci described all that he saw and some things

of which he heard, using care and discretion, and if he suspected that the captain of the Bristol ship was Sebastian Cabot, later pilot-major of Spain, he did not say so.



Page 56

NOTE

Amerigo Vespucci has been unjustly accused of endeavoring to steal the glory of Columbus, but there is no evidence that he ever contemplated anything of the kind. It was a German geographer's suggestion that the continent be named America.

THE GOLD ROAD

O the Gold Road is a hard road,
And it leads beyond the sea,—
Some follow it through the altar gates
And some to the gallows tree.
And they who squander the gold they earn
On kin-folk ill to please
Go soon to the grave, but he toils in the grave—
The miner upon his knees.

The Gold Road is a dark road—
No bird by the wayside sings,
No sun shines into the canons deep,
No children's laughter rings.
They are slaves who delve in the stubborn rocks
For the pittance their labor brings.
Their bread is bitter who toil for their own,
But they starve who toil for Kings.

The Gold Road is a small road,—
A man must tread it alone,
With none to help if he faint or fall,
And none to hear his groan.
The weight of gold is a weary weight
When we toil for the sake of our own—
But our masters are branding our hearts and souls
With a Christ that is carved in stone!

VIII

THE DOG WITH TWO MASTERS

"They fight among themselves too much. They need the man with the whip."

"Bough! wough!"



“Yar-r-rh! arrh!—agh!”

A spirited and entertaining dog-fight was going on just outside the house of the governor of Darien. The deep sullen roar of Balboa’s big hound Leoncico was as unmistakable as the snarling, snapping, furious bark of Cacafuego, who belonged to the Bachelor Enciso. The two hated each other at sight, months ago. Now they were having it out. The man with the whip evidently came on the scene, for there was a final crescendo of barks, yelps and growls, followed by silence.

Pizarro’s remark, however, did not refer to the dogs but to the settlers, who had been rioting over the governorship of the colony. The outcome of this disturbance had been the practical seizure of the office of captain-general by Vasco Nunez de Balboa. Pizarro himself, and Juan de Saavedra, to whom he addressed his comment, had supported Balboa. Saavedra did not commit himself further than to answer, with a shrug, “Balboa can use the whip on occasion, we all know that. Ah, here he comes now.”

Page 57

The man and the dog would have attracted attention anywhere, separately or together. The man was well-made and vigorous, with red-brown hair and beard, and clear merry eyes, a leader who would rather lead than command. The dog was of medium size but very powerful, tawny in color with a black muzzle, and the scars on his compact body recorded many battles, not with other dogs but with hostile Indians. He had been his master's body-guard in several fights, and Balboa sometimes lent him to his friends, the dog receiving the same share of plunder that would have been due to an armed man. Leoncico is said to have brought his captain in this way more than a thousand crowns.

"You called him off, eh, General?" Saavedra asked, bending to stroke the terrible head. He and Vasco Nunez had been friends for years; in fact it was Saavedra who had managed the smuggling of Balboa on board the ship in a cask, to escape his creditors, when the expedition set out. They were intimate, as men are intimate who are different in character but alike in feeling and tradition. Pizarro was an outsider and knew it.

"Yes; Enciso's dog would be better for a whipping, perhaps, but I had no mind to make the Bachelor any more an enemy than he is. Pizarro,—" he turned to the soldier of fortune, with a frank smile, "I have work for you to do. It is dangerous, but I know that you do not care for that. Pick out six good men, and be ready to see if there is any truth in those stories about the Coyba gold mines."

Pizarro's black brows unbent. Nothing could have suited him better than just these orders. He was, like Balboa, a native of the province of Estremadura in Spain, and being shut out by his low birth from advancement in his own land, had come to the colonies in the hope of gaining wealth and position by the sword. His reckless courage, iron muscle, and a certain cold stubbornness had given him the reputation of an able man, but though nearly ten years older than Balboa, he had never held any but a subordinate position. He had nearly made up his mind that his chance would never come. These hidalgos wanted all the glory as well as all the power for themselves. He could not see why Balboa should turn the possible discovery of a rich new province over to him, but if the gold should be there, Pizarro would get it. He bowed, thanked the general, and took his leave.

"General," said Saavedra, "I never like to put my neck in a noose, but if you were only Vasco Nunez I would ask you why you made exactly that choice."

Balboa laughed and pulled the ears of Leoncico, who had laid his head in full content on his master's knee. "I am always Vasco Nunez to you, *amigo*," he said easily, "as you very well know. Pizarro is a bulldog for bravery, and he has a head on his shoulders. Also he is ambitious, and this will give him a chance to win renown."

"And keeps him out of mischief for the time being," put in Saavedra dryly.



Page 58

Balboa laughed again. "Why do you ask me questions when you know my mind almost as well as I do? You see, now that Enciso is about to go, we shall have some freedom to do something besides quarrel among ourselves. Gold is an apology for whatever one does, out here. If there is as much of it as they say, in this Coyba, the King may be able to gild the walls of another salon, and if he puts Pizarro's portrait in it in the place of honor I shall not weep over that. There is glory enough for all of us, who choose to earn it."

Pizarro and his men had not gone ten miles from Darien before they ran into an ambush of Indians armed with slings. The seven Spaniards charged instantly, and actually put the enemy to flight, then beat a quick retreat. Every man of them despite their body armor had wounds and bruises, and one was left disabled upon the field. Balboa met them as they limped painfully in. His quick eye took in the situation.

"Only six of you? Where is Francisco Hernan?"

"He was crippled and could not walk," answered Pizarro sulkily; he saw what was coming. Balboa's eyes blazed.

"What! You—Spaniards—ran away from savages and left a comrade to die? Go back and bring him in!"

Pizarro turned in silence, took his men back over the road just traversed, and brought Hernan safely in.

This was one of the many incidents by which the colony learned the mettle of the new captain-general. Under his direction exploration of the neighboring provinces was undertaken. Balboa with eighty men made a friendly visit to Comagre, a cacique who could put three thousand fighting men in the field. Comagre and his seven sons entertained the white men in a house larger and more like a palace of the Orient than any they had before seen. It was one hundred and fifty paces long by eighty paces broad, the lower part of the walls built of logs, the floors and upper walls of beautiful and ingenious wood-work. The son of this cacique presented to Balboa seventy slaves, captives taken by himself, and golden ornaments weighing altogether four thousand ounces. The gold was at once melted into ingots, or bars of uniform size, for purposes of division. One-fifth of it was weighed out for the Crown, the rest divided among the members of the expedition. The young cacique stood by watching with scornful curiosity as the Spaniards argued and squabbled over the allotment. Suddenly he struck up the scales with his fist, and the shining treasure tumbled over the porch floor like spilt corn.

"Why do you quarrel over this trash?" he asked. "If this gold is so precious to you that you leave your homes, invade the land of peaceable nations and endure desperate perils, I will tell you where there is plenty of it."

Page 59

The Spaniards' attention was instantly caught and held. The young Indian went on, with the same careless contempt, "You see those mountains over there? Beyond them is a great sea. The people who dwell on the border of that sea have ships almost as big as yours, with sails and oars as yours have. The streams in their country are full of gold. The King eats from golden dishes, for gold is as common there as iron is among you,"—he glanced at the cumbrous armor and weapons of his guests. Indeed the panoply of the Spaniards, made necessary by the constant possibility of attack, and the weight of their cross-bows and other weapons, was a source of continual wonder to the light and nimble Indians, and of much weariness and suffering to themselves. Many in time adopted the quilted cotton body armor of the natives, and used pikes when they could in place of the musketoun, which was like a hand-cannon.

This was not the first time that Balboa and many of the others had heard of the Lord of the Golden House, but no one else had told the story with such boldness. The young cacique said that to invade this land, a thousand warriors would be none too many. He offered to accompany Balboa with his own troops, if the white men would go.

Here indeed was an enterprise with glory enough for all. Balboa returned to Darien and began preparations. Valdivia, the regidor of the colony, had been sent to Hispaniola for provisions, but the supply he brought back was absurdly small. One of the serious difficulties encountered by all the first settlers in the New World was this matter of provisioning the camps. For the Indians the natural fruits and produce of the country were sufficient, and they seldom laid up any great store. The small surplus of any one chief was soon exhausted by a large body of guests. Moreover, the country had no cattle, swine, fowls, goats, no domestic food animals whatever, no grain but the maize. The supply of meat and grain was thus very small until Spanish planters could clear and cultivate their estates. On the march the troops could and did live off the country with less trouble.

Balboa decided to send Valdivia back to Hispaniola for more supplies. He also sent by him a letter to Diego Colon, son of the great Admiral and governor of the island, explaining his need for more troops in view of what he had just learned about a new and wealthy kingdom not far away. He frankly requested the Governor to use his influence with the King to make this discovery possible without delay.

Weeks passed, and Valdivia did not come back. Provisions again became scarce. Then a letter from Balboa's friend Zamudio, who had gone to Spain in the same ship with the Bachelor Enciso, in order to defend Balboa's course. Everything, it seemed, had gone wrong. The King had listened to the eloquence of the Bachelor, and would probably send for Balboa to come to Spain to answer criminal charges. It was said that he meant to send out as governor of Darien, in the place of Balboa, an old and wily courtier, one of Fonseca's favorites, named Pedro Arias de Avila, and usually called Pedrarias.



Page 60

“That,” said Balboa, handing the letter over to Saavedra to read, “seems to mean that the fat has gone into the fire.”

“What shall you do?”

“If the King’s summons arrives,” said Balboa reflectively, “I think I will be on the top of that mountain range looking for the sea the cacique spoke of.”

“I will go at once and make my preparations,” assented the other. “Did you know that Pizarro has adopted that dog—the Spitfire—Enciso’s brute?”

“Has the dog adopted him?” laughed Balboa, extracting a thorn with the utmost care from the paw of Leoncico.

“That is a shrewd question. You know I have a theory that a man is known by his dog. This beast seems to have changed character when he changed masters. When Enciso had him he was little more than a puppy, and then he was thievish and cowardly. Now he will attack an Indian as savagely as Leoncico himself. Pizarro must have put the iron into him.”

“Pizarro can,” said Balboa carelessly. “He does it with his men. I think there is more in that fellow than we have supposed. We shall see—this expedition will be a kind of test.”

Saavedra, as he went to his own quarters, wondered whether Balboa were really as unconscious and unsuspecting as he seemed.

“Like dog, like master,” he said to himself. “Cacafuego shifted collars as easily as any mongrel does—as readily as Pizarro himself would. I think that Leoncico, left here without Balboa, would die. Neither a dog or a man has any business with two masters. I wonder whether in the end we shall conquer this land, or find that the land has conquered us?”

Balboa set forth with one hundred and ninety picked men and a few bloodhounds. Half the company remained on shore at Coyba to guard the brigantine and canoes, and with the others Balboa began the ascent of the range of mountains from whose heights he hoped to view the sea.

In no other time and country have discoverers encountered the obstacles and dangers which confronted the Spaniards who first explored Central America. Precipitous mountains, matted jungles, barren deserts, deep and swift streams, malarious bogs, and hostile natives often armed with poisoned weapons, all were in their way, and they had to make their overland journeys on foot, fully armed and often in tropical heat. Even when accompanied by Indians familiar with the country, they could count on little or nothing in the way of game or other provisions. Balboa’s friendly ways with the natives had secured him Indian guides and porters, but it was difficult work, even so. In



four days they traveled no more than ten leagues, and it took them from the sixth to the twenty-fifth of September to cover the ground between the coast of Darien and the foot of the last mountain they must climb. One-third of the men had been sent back from time to time, because of illness and exhaustion. The party remained for the night in the village of Quaraqua at the foot of the mountain, and at dawn they began their ascent, hoping to reach the summit before the hottest time of the day. About ten o'clock they came out of the thick forest on a high and airy slope of the mountain, and the Indians pointed out a hill, from which they said the sea was visible.



Page 61

Then Balboa commanded the others to rest, while he went alone to the top.

“And this,” muttered Pizarro to the man next him, “is the man who is always saying that there is enough glory for all!”

Saavedra’s quick ear caught the remark. He smiled rather satirically. He, and he alone, knew the true reason for this action of Balboa’s.

“Juan,” the commander had said to him while they were wading through their last swamp, “when we are somewhere near the summit I shall go on alone. I want no one with me when I look down the other side of that range. Whether I see a mere lake, which these savages may call a sea, or—something greater, I am not sure I shall be able to command my feelings. I will not be a fool before the men.”

Balboa’s heart was thumping as he climbed, more with excitement than exertion. No one but Saavedra had so much as an inkling of the importance his success or failure would have for him personally. The whole of his future lay on the unknown other side of that hill. He shut his eyes as he reached the top—then opened them upon a glorious view.

A vast blue sea sparkled in the sunshine, only a few leagues away. From the mountain top to the shore of this great body of water sloped a wild landscape of forest, rock, savanna and winding river. Balboa knelt and gave thanks to God.

Then he sprang to his feet and beckoned to his followers, who rushed up the hill, the great hound Leoncico bounding far ahead. When all had reached the summit Father Andreas de Varo, motioning them to kneel, began the chant of *Te Deum Laudamus*, in which the company joined. The notary of the expedition then wrote out a testimonial witnessing that Balboa took possession of the sea, all its islands and surrounding lands, in the name of the sovereign of Castile; and each man signed it. Balboa had a tall tree cut down and made into a cross, which was planted on the exact spot where he had stood when he first looked upon the sea. A mound of stones was piled up for an additional monument, and the names of the sovereigns were carved on neighboring trees. Then Balboa, leading his men down the southern slope of the mountain, sent out three scouting parties under Francisco Pizarro, Juan de Escaray and Alonso Martin to discover the best route to the shore. Martin’s party were first to reach it, after two days’ journey, and found there two large canoes. Martin stepped into one of them, calling his companions to witness that he was the first European who had ever embarked upon those waters; Blas de Etienza, who followed, was the second. They reported their success to Balboa, and with twenty-six men the commander set out for the sea-coast. The Indian chief Chiapes, whom Balboa had fought and then made his ally, accompanied the party with some of his followers. On Michaelmas they reached the shore of a great bay, which in honor of the day was christened Bay de San Miguel. The tide was out, leaving a beach half a league wide covered with mud, and the Spaniards

sat down to rest and wait. When it turned, it came in so fast that some who had dropped asleep found it lapping the bank at their feet, before they were fairly roused.

Page 62

Balboa stood up, and taking a banner which displayed the arms of Castile and Leon, and the figure of the Madonna and Child, he drew his sword and marched into the sea. In a formal speech he again took possession, in the names of the sovereigns, of the seas and lands and coasts and ports, the islands of the south, and all kingdoms and provinces thereunto appertaining. These rights he declared himself ready to maintain “until the day of judgment.”

While another document was receiving the signatures of the members of the expedition, Saavedra, who was standing near the margin of the bay, took up a little water in his hand and tasted it. It was salt.

In the excitement of actually reaching the coast of so broad and beautiful a sea, no one had happened to think of finding out whether the water was fresh or salt. This discovery made it certain that they had found, not a great inland lake, but the ocean itself.

Pizarro scowled; he wished that he had not missed this last chance of fame. Since he had discovered nothing it was not likely that his name should be mentioned in Balboa’s report to the King, at all. But Balboa, high in expectation of the change which this fortunate adventure would make in his career, went on triumphantly exploring the neighboring country, gaining here and there considerable quantities of gold and pearls. Saavedra, who had inherited an estate in Spain just before the expedition started, and expected on his return to Darien to go home to look after it, watched Pizarro with growing distrust and anxiety.

“I think you are ready to accuse him of witchcraft,” said Balboa lightly when Saavedra hinted at his suspicions. “You have not given me one positive proof that the man is anything but a rather sulky, unhappy brute who has had ill luck.”

“He is ill-bred, I tell you,” said Saavedra stubbornly. “He is making up to the Indians, and that is not like him. We shall have trouble there yet.”

Balboa laughed and went to his hut, there to fling himself into a hammock and take a much-needed nap. Saavedra, coming back in the twilight, spied an Indian creeping through the forest toward a window in the rear of the hut. He was about to challenge the man when there was a yelp from the bushes, and Cacafuego leaped upon the prowler and bore him to earth, tearing savagely at his throat and receiving half a dozen wounds from the arrows the Indian carried in his hand and in his belt. He had been trained by Pizarro to fly at an Indian, and made no distinctions. Within an hour or two the poison in the arrow-points began to take effect, and the dog died. Whether he had been prowling about in search of food—for Pizarro kept him hungry with a view to making his temper more touchy—or was looking for his old enemy Leoncico, no one would ever know. Balboa looked grave and said nothing.

“The dog is dead—that is all that is absolutely certain,” said Saavedra grimly. “I wish it had been his master.”



Page 63

NOTE

It is recorded that when Pizarro met Balboa with the order for his arrest Balboa thus addressed him: "It is not thus, Pizarro, that you were wont to greet me!" Pizarro's jealousy and ill-will are evident in the recorded facts, though he does not appear to have been actually guilty of treachery to his general.

COLD O' THE MOON

Alone with all the stars that rule mankind
Ruy Faleiro sought to read the fate
Of his close friend—now by the King's rebuke
Sent stumbling out of Portugal to seek
His fortune on the sea-roads of the world.
But when Faleiro read the horoscope
It seemed to point to glory—and a grave
Beyond the sunset.

When Magalhaens heard
The prophecy, he smiled, and steadfastly
Held on his way to that young Emperor,
The blond shy stripling with the Austrian face,
And in due time was Admiral of the Fleet
To sail the seas that lay beyond the world.

Mid-August was it when the fleet set forth,
December, when in that Brazilian bay,
Santa Lucia, they dropped anchor,—then
Set up a little altar on the beach
And knelt at Mass in that gray solitude.

Carvagio the pilot knew the place,
And said the folk were kindly,—brown, straight-haired,
Wore feather mantles, used no poisoned flints,
And only ate man's flesh on holidays.
Whereat a little daunted, not with fear,
The mariners met them running to the shore,
Bought swine of them, and plantains, cassava,
And for one playing card, the king of clubs,
The wild men gave six fowls! There were brown roots
Formed like the turnip, chestnut-like in taste
And called patata in ship-Spanish—cane



Wherefrom is made the sugar and the wine
Of Hispaniola, and the pineapple
That was like nectar to their sea-parched throats.
And thus they feasted and were satisfied.

Like an enchanted Eden seemed the land,
For birds on dazzling many-colored wings
Made the trees blossom—parrots red, green, blue,
Humming-birds like live jewels in the air,
Strange ducks with spoon-shaped bills,—and overhead
Like some fantastic frieze of living gold,
The little yellow monkeys leaped and swung
Chattering of Setebos in their unknown tongue.

The old men lived beyond their sevenscore years—
Or so the people said. They made canots
Of logs that they carved out with heated stones.
They slept in hammacs, woven cotton swings.
Their chiefs were called cacichas—you may find
All this put down in the thrice precious book
Written by Pigafetta of Vicenza
For a queen's pleasure when the voyage was done.



Page 64

Then from that shore they sailed, and southward bent,
And as the long days lengthened, till the nights
Were but star-circled midnight intervals,
They wondered of what race and by what seas
They should find kings at the antipodes.

Where a great river flowed into the sea
They found sea-lions,—on another isle
Strange geese, milk-white and sable, with no wings,
Who swam instead of flying, and they called
The place the Isle of Penguins.

Then they found
A desolate harbor called San Juliano,
Where the fierce flame of mutiny broke forth,
Spaniard on Portuguese turned treacherously
Till in the red midwinter sunrise towered
The place of execution, and an end
Was made of the two traitors. Outward flashed the sail
And left the sea-birds there to tell the tale.

Beyond there lay a bleak and misty shore,
And in the fog a wild gigantic form
White-haired, a savage, called a greeting to them.
Friendly the huge men were, and took these men,
Bearded and strange, for kinfolk of their god,
Setebos, from his home beyond the moon,
And from their great shoes filled with straw for warmth
Magalhaens named them men of Patagonia.

Westward they steered, and buffeted by winds,
They found a narrow channel, where the fleet
Halted for council. One returned to Spain
Laden with falsehood and with mutiny.
On sailed the others valiantly, their hearts
Remembering their Admiral's haughty words
Flung at his craven captain, "I will see
This great voyage to the end, though we should eat
The leather from the yards!" And thus they reached
The end of that strait path of Destiny,
And saw beyond the shining Western Sea.

Northward the Admiral followed that long coast
Past Masafuera—then began his flight



Across the great uncharted shining sea.
And surely there was never stranger voyage.
The winds were gentle toward him, and no more
The dreadful laughter of the tempest shrilled,
Or down upon them pounced the hurricane.
Therefore Magalhaens, giving thanks to God,
Named it Pacific, and the lonely sea.
Still bore him westward where his heart would be.

Alone with all the stars of Christendom
He set his course,—if he had known his fate
Would he have stayed his hand? Before the end
Fate the old witch, who often loves to turn
A man's words on him, kept the ships becalmed
Even to thirst and famine; when instead
They fed on leather, gnawed wood, and ate mice
As did the Patagonian giants, when
They begged such vermin for a savage feast.
Then Fate, her jest outworn, blew them to shore

Page 65

On the green islands called the Isles of Thieves,
And brought them to more islands—and still more,
A kingdom of bright lands in sunny seas.
Here did the Admiral land, and raise the Cross
Above that heathen realm,—and here went down
In battle for strange allies in strange lands.

So ended his adventure. Yet not so,
For the Victoria, faithful to his hand
That laid her charge upon her, southward sailed
Around the Cape and westward to Seville.
El Cano brought her in, and her strange tale
Told to the Emperor. “And the Admiral said,”
He ended, “that indeed these heathen lands
God meant should all be Christian, for He set
A cross of stars above the southern sea,
A passion-flower upon the southern shore,
To be a sign to great adventurers.
These be two marvels,—and upon the way
We gained a kingdom, but we lost a day!”

IX

WAMPUM TOWN

“Elephants’ teeth?”

“A fair lot, but I am sick of the Guinea coast. The Lisbon slavers get more of black ivory than we do of the white.”

The good Jean Parmentier, who asked the question, and the youth called Jean Florin, who answered it, were looking at a stanch weather-beaten little cargo-ship anchored in the harbor of Dieppe. She had been to the Gold Coast, where wild African chiefs conjured elephants’ tusks out of the mysterious back country and traded them for beads, trinkets and gay cloth. In Dieppe this ivory was carved by deft artistic fingers into crucifixes, rosaries, little caskets, and other exquisite bibelots. African ivory was finer, whiter and firmer than that of India, and when thus used was almost as valuable as gold.



But within the last ten years the slave trade had grown more profitable than anything else. A Portuguese captain would kidnap or purchase a few score negroes, take them, chained and packed together like convicts, to Lisbon or Seville and sell them for fat gold moldores and doubloons. The Spanish conquistadores had not been ten years in the West Indies before they found that Indian slavery did not work. The wild people, under the terrible discipline of the mines and sugar plantations, died or killed themselves. Planters of Hispaniola declared one negro slave worth a dozen Indians.

“I do not wonder that the cacique Hatuey told the priest that he would burn forever rather than go to a heaven where Spaniards lived,” said Jean Florin. “To roast a man is no way to change his religion.”

“Some of our folk in Rochelle are of that way of thinking,” agreed Captain Parmentier dryly. “What say you to a western voyage?”

“Not Brazil? Cabral claims that for Portugal.”

“No; the northern seas—the Baccalaos. Of course codfish are not ivory, and it is rough service, but Aubert and some of the others think that there may be a way to India. Sebastian Cabot tried for it and found only icebergs, but Aubert says there is a gulf or strait somewhere south of Cabot’s course, that leads westward and has never been explored.”



Page 66

"I am tired of the Guinea trade," the youth repeated; "Cape Breton at any rate is not Spanish."

"Not yet," said Jean Parmentier with emphasis.

Thus it came about that when Aubert, in 1508, poked the prow of his little craft into open water to the west of the great island off which men fished for cod, there stood beside him a young man who had been learning navigation under his direction, and was now called Jean Verassen. His real name was Giovanni Verrazzano, but nobody in Dieppe knew who the Florentine Verazzani might be, and during his apprenticeship there he had been known as Florin—the Florentine. In his boyhood the magnificent Medici, the merchant princes, had ruled Florence. After the fall of Constantinople he had seen the mastery of the sea pass from Venice to Lisbon. When he left Florence he followed the call of the sea-wind westward until now he had cast his lot with the seafarers of northern France, the only bit of the Continent that was outside the shadow of the mighty power of Spain. That shadow was growing bigger and darker year by year. The heir to the Spanish throne, Charles, grandson of Ferdinand and Isabella, would be emperor of Germany, ruler of the Netherlands, King of Aragon, Castile, Granada and Andalusia, and sovereign of all the Spanish discoveries in the West; and no one knew how far they might extend. France might have to fight for her life.

Meanwhile Norman and Breton fishermen went scudding across the North Atlantic every year, like so many petrels. Honfleur, Saint Malo, La Rochelle and Dieppe owed their modest prosperity to the cod. Bacalao, codfish or stockfish, all its names referred to the beating of the fish while drying, with a stick, to make it more tender; it was cheaper and more plentiful than any other fish for the Lenten tables and fast-days of Europe. The daring French captains found the fishing trade a hard life but a clean one.

From the fishermen Aubert and Verrazzano had learned something of the nature of the country. Bears would come down to steal fish from under the noses of the men. Walrus and seal and myriads of screaming sea-gulls greeted them every season. The natives were barbarous and unfriendly. North of Newfoundland were two small islands known as the Isles of Demons, where nobody ever went. Veteran pilots told of hearing the unseen devils howling and shrieking in the air. "Saint Michael! tintamarre terrible!" they said, crossing themselves. The young Florentine listened and kept his thoughts to himself. He had never seen any devils, but he had seen men go mad in the hot fever-mist of African swamps, thinking they saw them.

Aubert was not sure whether this was an inlet, a strait or a river behind the great barren island. When he had sailed westward for eighty leagues the water was still salt. The banks had drawn closer together and rude fortifications appeared on the heights. Canoes put forth from the wooded shores and surrounded the sailing ship. They were filled with copper-colored warriors of threatening aspect.

Page 67

The French commander did not like what he saw. He was not provisioned for a voyage around the world, and if these waters were the eastern entrance to a strait he might emerge upon a vast unknown ocean. If on the other hand he was at the mouth of a river, to ascend it might result in being cut off by hostile savages, which would be most unpleasant. A third consideration was that the inhabitants were said to live on fish, game, and berries, none of which could be secured, either peaceably or by fighting, in an enemy's country. Making hostages of seven young savages who climbed his bulwarks without any invitation, he put about and sailed away. During the following year the seven wild men were exhibited at Rouen and elsewhere.

Aubert had made sure of one thing at least; the land to the west was not in the least like the rich islands which the Spanish held in the tropics. Except in the brief season when the swarming cod filled the seines of the fishermen, it yielded no wealth, not even in slaves, for the fierce and shy natives would be almost uncatchable and quite impossible to tame.

Francis of Angouleme, the brilliant, reckless and extravagant young French King, was hard pushed to get money for his own Court, and was not interested in expeditions whose only result might be glory. He jested over the threatening Spanish dominion as he did over everything else. Italian dukedoms were overrun by troops from France, Spain, Austria and Switzerland, and Francis welcomed Italian artists, architects and poets to his capital. When the plague attacked Paris he removed to one of the royal chateaux in the country or paid visits to great noblemen like his cousin Charles de Bourbon. It was in 1522 at Moulins, the splendid country estate of the Duc de Bourbon, that the monarch met a captain of whom he had heard a great deal—all of it gratifying. He had in mind a new enterprise for this Verrazzano.

During the last seven or eight years Verrazzano, like many other captains, had been engaged in the peculiar kind of expedition dubbed piracy or privateering according to the person speaking. France and Spain were neither exactly at peace nor openly at war. The Florentine had gone out upon the high seas in command of a ship fitted out and armed at his own risk, and fought Spanish galleons wherever he met them. This helped to embarrass the King of Spain in his wars abroad. Galleons eastward bound were usually treasure-ships. The colonial governors, planters, captains and common soldiers took all the gold they could get for themselves, and the gold, silver and pearls that went as tribute to the royal master in Spain had to run the gauntlet of these fierce and fearless sea-wolves. The wealth of the Indies was really a possession of doubtful value. It attracted pirates as honey draws flies. When these pirates turned a part of their spoils over to kings who were not friendly to Spain, it was particularly exasperating.



Page 68

Francis had asked Verrazzano to come to Moulins because, from what he had heard, it seemed to him that here was a man who could take care of himself and hold his tongue, and he liked such men. The experience reminded the Florentine of the great days of the Medici. Charles de Bourbon's palace at Moulins was fit for a king. Unlike most French chateaux, which were built on low lands among the hunting forests, it stood on a hill in a great park, and was surrounded with terraces, fountains, and gardens in the Italian style. Moreover its furniture was permanent, not brought in for royal guests and then taken away. The richness and beauty of its tapestries, state beds, decorations, and other belongings was beyond anything in any royal palace of that time. The duke's household included five hundred gentlemen in rich suits of Genoese velvet, each wearing a massive gold chain passing three times round the neck and hanging low in front; they attended the guests in divisions, one hundred at a time.

The feasting was luxurious, and many of its choice dishes were supplied by the estate. There were rare fruits and herbs in the gardens, and a great variety of game-birds and animals in the park and the forest. But there were also imported delicacies—Windsor beans, Genoa artichokes, Barbary cucumbers and Milan parsley. The first course consisted of Medoc oysters, followed by a light soup. The fish course included the royal sturgeon, the dorado or sword-fish, the turbot. Then came heron, cooked in the fashion of the day, with sugar, spice and orange-juice; olives, capers and sour fruits; pheasants, red-legged partridges, and the favorite roast, sucking-pig parboiled and then roasted with a stuffing of chopped meats, herbs, raisins and damson plums. There were salads of fruit,—such as the King's favorite of oranges, lemons and sugar with sweet herbs,—or of herbs, such as parsley and mint with pepper, cinnamon and vinegar. For dessert there were Italian ices and confectionery, and the Queen's favorite plum, Reine Claude, imported from Italy; the white wine called Clairette-au-miel, hypocras, gooseberry and plum wines, lemonade, champagne. There was never a King who could appreciate such artistic luxury more deeply than Francis I. This may be one reason for his warm welcome of Verrazzano, who seemed to be able to increase the wealth of his country and his King.

"I have had a very indignant visit from the Spanish ambassador," said Francis when they were seated together in a private room. "He says that there has been piracy on the high seas, my Verrazzano."

The Italian met the laughing glance of the King with a somber gleam in his own dark eyes. "Does one steal from a robber?" he asked. "Not a quill of gold-dust nor an ingot of silver nor a seed-pearl comes honestly to Spain. It is all cruelty, bribery, slavery. Savonarola threatened Lorenzo de' Medici with eternal fires, prince as he was, for sins that were peccadilloes beside those of Spanish governors."



Page 69

“There is something in what you say,” assented Francis lightly. “If we get the treasure of the Indies without owning the Indies we are certainly rid of much trouble. I never heard of Father Adam making any will dividing the earth between our brother of Spain and our brother of Portugal. Unless they can find such a document—” the laughing face hardened suddenly into keen attention, “we may as well take what we can get where we can find it. And now about this road to India; what have you to suggest?”

Verrazzano outlined his plans in brief speech and clear. The proposed voyage might have two objects; one, the finding of a route to Asia if it existed; the other, the discovery of other countries from which wealth might be gained, in territory not yet explored. Verrazzano pointed out the fact that, as the earth was round, the shortest way to India ought to be near the pole rather than near the equator, yet far enough to the south to escape the danger of icebergs.

“Very well then,”—the King pondered with finger on cheek. “Say as little as possible of your preparations, use your own discretion, and if any Spaniards try to interfere with you —” the monarch grinned,—“tell them that it is my good pleasure that my subjects go where they like.”

The Spanish agents in France presently informed their employer that the Florentine Verrazzano was again making ready to sail for regions unknown. Perhaps he did not himself know where he should go; at any rate the spies had not been able to find out.

Two months later news came that before Verrazzano had gone far enough to be caught by the squadron lying in wait for him, he had pounced on the great carrack which had been sent home by Cortes loaded with Aztec gold. In convoying this prize to France he had caught another galleon coming from Hispaniola with a cargo of gold and pearls, and the two rich trophies were now in the harbor of La Rochelle, where the audacious captain was doubtless making ready for another piratical voyage.

Verrazzano made a second start a little later, but was driven back by a Biscay storm. Finally, toward the end of the year 1523, he set out once more with only one ship, the *Dauphine*, out of his original fleet of four, and neither friend nor foe caught a glimpse of him during the voyage. In March, 1524, having sailed midway between the usual course of the West Indian galleons and the path of the fishers going to and from the Banks of Newfoundland, he saw land which he felt sure had not been discovered either by ancient or modern explorers.

It was a low shore on which the fine sand, some fifteen feet deep, lay drifted into hillocks or dunes. Small creeks and inlets ran inland, but there seemed to be no good harbor. Beyond the sand-dunes were forests of cypress, palm, bay and other trees, and the wind bore the scent of blossoming trees and vines far out to sea. For fifty leagues the *Dauphine* followed the coast southward, looking for a harbor,



Page 70

for Verrazzano knew that pearl fisheries and spices were far more likely to be found in southern than in northern waters. No harbor appeared. The daring navigator knew that if he went too far south he ran some risk of encountering a Spanish fleet, and that after his getting two of the most valuable cargoes ever sent over seas, they would be patrolling all the tropical waters in the hope of catching him. He turned north again.

On the shore from time to time little groups of savages appeared moving about great bonfires, and watching the ship. They wore hardly any clothing except the skin of some small animal like a marten, attached to a belt of woven grass; their skins were russet-brown and their thick straight black hair was tied in a knot rather like a tail.

“One thing is certain,” said young Francois Parmentier cheerfully, “these folk have never seen Spaniards—or Portuguese. Even on the Labrador the people ran from us, after Cortereale went slave-stealing there.”

Verrazzano smiled. Young Parmentier was always full of hope and faith. A little later the youth volunteered to be one of a boat’s crew sent ashore for water, and provided himself with a bagful of the usual trinkets for gifts. The surf ran so high that the boat could not land, and Francois leaped overboard and swam ashore. Here he scattered his wares among the watching Indians, and then, leaping into the waves again, struck out for the boat. But the surf dashed him back upon the sand into the very midst of the natives, who seized him by the arms and legs and carried him toward the fire, while he yelled with astonishment and terror.

Verrazzano was if anything more horrified than Francois himself; this was the son of his oldest friend. The Indians were removing his clothing as if they were about to roast him alive. But it appeared presently that they only wished to dry his clothes and comfort him, for they soon allowed him to return to the boat, seeing this was his earnest desire, and watched him with the greatest friendliness as he swam back.

No strait appeared, but at one point Verrazzano, landing and marching into the interior with an exploring party, found a vast expanse of water on the other side of what seemed a neck of land between the two seas, about six miles in width. If this were the South Sea, the same which Balboa had seen from the Isthmus of Darien, so narrow a strip of land was at least as good or better than anything possessed by Spain. Verrazzano continued northward, and found a coast rich in grapes, the vines often covering large trees around which the natives kept the ground clear of shrubs that might interfere with this natural vineyard. Wild roses, violets, lilies, iris and many other plants and flowers, some quite unknown to Europe, greeted the admiring gaze of the commander. His quick mind pictured a royal garden adorned with these foreign shrubs and herbs, the wainscoting and furniture to be made by French and Italian joiners from these endless leagues of timber, the stately churches and castles which might be built by skilful



masons from the abundant stone along these shores. Here was a province which, if it had not gold, had the material for many luxuries which must otherwise be bought with gold, and his clear Italian brain perceived that ingots of gold and silver are not the only treasure of kings.



Page 71

At last the *Dauphine* came into a harbor or lake three leagues in circumference, where more than thirty canoes were assembled, filled with people. Suddenly Francois Parmentier leaped to his feet and waved his cap with a shout.

“Now what madness has taken you?” queried Verrazzano.

“I know where we are, that’s all. This is Wampum Town,—L’Anorme Berge—the Grand Scarp. This is one of their great trading places, Captain. Father heard about it at Cape Breton from some south-country savages.”

“And what may wampum be?” asked Verrazzano coolly.

“T is the stuff they use for money—bits of shell made into beads and strung into a belt. There is an island in this bay where they make it out of their shell-fish middens—two kinds—purple and white. On my word, this big chief has on a wampum belt now!”

This was interesting information indeed, and the natives seemed prepared to traffic in all peace and friendliness. Verrazzano found upon investigation that on the north of this bay a very large river, deep at the mouth, came down between steep hills. Afterward, following the shore to the east, he discovered a fine harbor beyond a three-cornered island. Here he met two chiefs of that country, a man of about forty, and a young fellow of twenty-four, dressed in quaintly decorated deerskin mantles, with chains set with colored stones about their necks. He stayed two weeks, refitting the ship with provisions and other necessaries, and observing the place. The crew got by trading and as gifts the beans and corn cultivated by the people, wild fruits and nuts, and furs. Further north they found the tribes less friendly, and at last came so near the end of their provision that Verrazzano decided to return to France. He reached home July 8, 1524, after having sailed along seven hundred leagues of the Atlantic coast.

[Illustration: “The natives seemed prepared to traffic in all peace and friendliness”—*Page 132*]

Francis I. was in the thick of a disastrous war with Spain, and had not time just then to consider further explorations. The war was not fairly over when a Cadiz warship, in 1527, caught Verrazzano and hanged him as a pirate.

NOTE

The not unnatural conclusion of Verrazzano that what he saw was an ocean or a great inland sea led to extraordinary misconceptions in the maps and charts of the time. It was not until the early part of the seventeenth century that the region was actually explored, by Newport and Smith, and found to be only Chesapeake Bay.



THE DRUM

I wake the gods with my sullen boom—
I am the Drum!
They wait for the blood-red flowers that bloom
In the heart of the sacrifice, there in the gloom
With terror dumb—
I sound the call to his dreadful doom—
I am the Drum!



Page 72

I was the Serpent, the Sacred Snake—
Wolf, bear and fox
By the silent shores of river and lake
Tread softly, listening lest they wake
My voice that mocks
The rattle that falling bones will make
On barren rocks.

My banded skin is the voice of the Priest—
I am the Drum!
I sound the call to the War-God's feast
Till Tezcatlipoca's power hath ceased
And the White Gods come
Out of the fire of the burning East—
Hear me, the Drum!

X

THE GODS OF TAXMAR

If the Fathers of the Church had ever been on the other side of the world, they would have made new rules for it.

So thought Jeronimo Aguilar, on board a caravel plying between Darien and Hispaniola. It was a thought he would hardly have dared think in Spain.

He was a dark thin young friar from the mountains near Seville. In 1488 his mother, waiting, as women must, for news from the wars, vowed that if God and the Most Catholic Sovereigns drove out the Moors and sent her husband home to her, she would give her infant son to the Church. That was twenty-four years ago, and never had the power of the Church been so great as it now was. When the young Fray Jeronimo had been moved by fiery missionary preaching to give himself to the work among the Indians, his mother wept with astonishment and pride.

But the Indies he found were not the Indies he had heard of. Men who sailed from Cadiz valiant if rough and hard-bitted soldiers of the Cross, turned into cruel adventurers greedy for gold, hard masters abusing their power. The innocent wild people of Colon's island Eden were charged by the planters with treachery, theft, murderous conspiracy, and utter laziness. With a little bitter smile Aguilar remembered how the hidalgo, who would not dig to save his life, railed at the Indian who died of the work he had never learned to do. It was not for a priest to oppose the policy of the Church and the Crown, and very few priests attempted it, whatever cruelty they might see. Aguilar half imagined that the demon gods of the heathen were battling against the

invading apostles of the Cross, poisoning their hearts and defeating their aims. It was all like an evil enchantment.

These meditations were ended by a mighty buffet of wind that smote the caravel and sent it flying northwest. Ourakan was abroad, the Carib god of the hurricane, and no one could think of anything thereafter but the heaving, tumbling wilderness of black waves and howling tempest and hissing spray. Valdivia, regidor of Darien, had been sent to Hispaniola by Balboa, the governor, with important letters and a rich tribute of gold, to get supplies and reinforcements for the colony. Shipwreck would be disastrous to Balboa and his people as well as to the voyagers.



Page 73

Headlong the staggering ship was driven upon Los Viboros, (The Vipers) that infamous group of hidden rocks off Jamaica. She was pounded to pieces almost before Valdivia could get his one boat into the water, with its crew of twenty men. Without food or drink, sails or proper oars, the survivors tossed for thirteen dreadful days on the uncharted cross-currents of unknown seas. Seven died of hunger, thirst and exposure before the tide that drifted northwest along the coast of the mainland caught them and swept them ashore.

None of them had ever seen this coast. Valdivia cherished a faint hope that it might be a part of the kingdom of walled cities and golden temples, of which they had all heard. There were traces of human presence, and they could see a cone-shaped low hill with a stone temple or building of some kind on the top. Natives presently appeared, but they broke the boat in pieces and dragged the castaways inland through the forest to the house of their cacique.

That chief, a villainous looking savage in a thatched hut, looked at them as if they had been cattle—or slaves—or condemned heretics. What they thought, felt or hoped was nothing to him. He ordered them taken to a kind of pen, where they were fed. So great is the power of the body over the mind that for a few days they hardly thought of anything but the unspeakable joy of having enough to eat and drink, and nothing to do but sleep. The cacique visited the enclosure now and then, and looked them over with a calculating eye. Aguilar was haunted by the idea that this inspection meant something unpleasant.

All too soon the meaning was made known to them. Valdivia and four other men who were now less gaunt and famine-stricken than when captured, were seized and taken away, to be sacrificed to the gods.

It was the custom of the Mayas of Yucatan to sacrifice human beings, captives or slaves for choice, to the gods in whose honor the stone pyramids were raised. When the victim had been led up the winding stairway to the top, the central figure in a procession of priests and attendants, he was laid upon a stone altar and his heart was cut out and offered to the idol, after which the body was eaten at a ceremonial feast. The eight captives who remained now understood that the food they had had was meant merely to fatten them for future sacrifice. Half mad with horror, they crouched in the hot moist darkness, and listened to the uproar of the savages.

A strong young sailor by the name of Gonzalo Guerrero, who had done good service during the hurricane, pulled Jeronimo by the sleeve, "What in the name of all the saints can we do, Padre?" he muttered. "Jose and the rest will be raving maniacs."

Aguilar straightened himself and rose to his feet where the rays of the moon, white and calm, shone into the enclosure. Lifting his hands to heaven he began to pray.



All he had learned from books and from the disputations and sermons of the Fathers fell away from him and left only the bare scaffolding, the faith of his childhood. At the familiar syllables of the Ave Maria the shuddering sailors hushed their cries and oaths and listened, on their knees.



Page 74

This was a handful of castaways in the clutch of a race of man-eaters who worshiped demons. But above them bent the tender and pitiful Mother of Christ who had seen her Son crucified, and Christ Himself stood surrounded by innumerable witnesses. Among the saints were some who had died at the hands of the heathen, many who had died by torture. The poor and ignorant men who listened were caught up for the moment into the vision of Fray Jeronimo and regained their self-control. When the prayer was ended Gonzalo Guerrero sprang up, and rallied them to furious labor. Under his direction and Aguilar's they dug and wrenched at their cage like desperate rats, until they broke away enough of it just to let a man's body through. Aguilar was the last to go. He closed the hole and heaped rubbish outside it, as rubbish and branches had been piled where they were used to sleep, to delay as long as possible the discovery of their escape. They got clear away into the depths of the forest.

But for men without provisions or weapons the wilderness of that unknown land was only less dreadful than death. Trees and vines barren of fruit, streams where a huge horny lizard ate all the fish—El Lagarto he was called by the discoverers,—no grain or cattle which might be taken by stealth—this was the realm into which they had been exiled. When they ventured out of the forest, driven by famine, they were captured by Acan Xoo, the cacique of another province, Jamacana. Here they were made slaves, to cut wood, carry water and bear burdens. Water was scarce in that region. There had been reservoirs, built in an earlier day, but these were ruined, and water had to be carried in earthen jars. The cacique died, and another named Taxmar succeeded him. Year after year passed. The soul of one worn-out white man slipped away, followed by another, and another, until only Aguilar and Guerrero were left alive.

Taxmar sent the sailor as a present to a friend, cacique of Chatemal, but kept Aguilar for himself, watching his ways.

The cacique was a sagacious heathen of considerable experience, but he had never seen a man like this one. Jeronimo was now almost as dark as an Indian and had not a scrap of civilized clothing, yet he was unlike the other white men, unlike any other slave. He had a string of dried berries with a cross made of reeds hung from it, which he sometimes appeared to be counting, talking to himself in his own language. Taxmar had once seen a slave from the north who had been a priest in his own country and knew how to remember things by string-talk, knotting a string in a peculiar fashion; but he was not like this man. When the white slave saw the crosses carved on their old walls he had eagerly asked how they came there, and Taxmar gathered that the cross had some meaning in the captive's own religion. He never lied, never stole, never got angry, never tattled of the other slaves, never disobeyed orders, never lost his temper. Taxmar could not remember when he himself had ever been restrained by anything but policy from taking whatever he wanted. Here was a man who could deny himself even food at times, when he was not compelled to. Taxmar could not understand.



Page 75

What he did not know was, that when he had escaped from the cannibals Aguilar had made a fresh vow to keep with all strictness every vow of his priesthood, and to bear his lot with patience and meekness until it should be the will of God to free him from the savages. He had begun to think that this freedom would never be his in his lifetime, but a vow was a vow. He no more suspected that Taxmar was taking note of his behavior, than a man standing in front of the lion's cage at the menagerie can translate the thoughts behind the great cat's intent eyes.

Taxmar began to try experiments. He invented temptations to put in the way of his slave, but Aguilar generally did not seem to see them. One day the Indians were shooting at a mark. One came up to Aguilar and seized him by the arm.

"How would you like to be shot at?" he said. "These bowmen hit whatever they aim at—if they aim at a nose they hit a nose. They can shoot so near you that they miss only by the breadth of a grain of corn—or do not miss at all."

Aguilar never flinched, although from what he knew of the savages he thought nothing more likely than his being set up for a San Sebastian. He answered quietly,

"I am your slave, and you can do with me what you please. I think you are too wise to destroy one who is both useful and obedient."

The suggestion had been made by the order of Taxmar, and the answer was duly reported to him.

It took a long time to satisfy the chief that this man who seemed so extraordinary was really what he seemed. He came at last to trust him wholly, even making him the steward of his household and leaving him to protect his women in his absence. Finding the chief thus disposed, Aguilar ventured a suggestion. Guerrera had won great favor with his master by his valor in war. Aguilar was shrewd enough to know that though it was very pleasant to have his master's confidence, if anything happened to Taxmar he might be all the worse off. The only sure way to win the respect of these barbarians was by efficiency as a soldier. Taxmar upon request gave his steward the military outfit of the Mayas—bow and arrows, wicker-work shield, and war-club, with a dagger of obsidian, a volcanic stone very hard and capable of being made very keen of edge, but brittle. Jeronimo when a boy had been an expert archer, and his old skill soon returned. He also remembered warlike devices and stratagems he had seen and heard of. Old soldiers chatting with his father in the purple twilight had often fought their battles over again, and nearly every form of military tactics then known to civilized armies had been used in the war in Granada. Naturally the young friar had heard more or less discussion of military campaigns in Darien. His suggestions were so much to the point that Taxmar had an increased respect for the gods of that unknown land of his. If they could do so much for this slave, without even demanding any offerings, they must be very different from the gods of the Mayas.



Page 76

In reply to Taxmar's questions, Aguilar, who now spoke the language quite well, endeavored to explain the nature of his religion. Not many of the Spaniards who expected to convert the Indians went so far as this. If they could by any means whatever make their subjects call themselves Christians and observe the customs of the Church, it was all they attempted. Taxmar was not the sort of person to be converted in that informal way. He demanded reasons. If Aguilar advised him against having unhappy people murdered to bribe the gods for their help in the coming campaign, he wished to know what the objection was, and what the white chiefs did in such a case. The idea of sacrificing to one's god, not the lives of men, but one's own will and selfish desires, was entirely new to him.

While Jeronimo was still wrestling with the problem of making the Christian faith clear to one single Indian out of the multitudes of the heathen, a neighboring cacique appeared on the scene,—jealous, angry and suspicious. He had heard, he said, that Taxmar sought the aid of a stranger, who worshiped strange gods, in a campaign directed against his neighbors. He wished to know if Taxmar considered this right. In his own opinion this stranger ought to be sacrificed to the gods of the Mayas after the usual custom, or the gods would be angry,—and then no one knew what would happen.

Aguilar thought it possible that Taxmar might reply that the conduct of an army was no one's business but the chief's. That would be in line with the cacique's character as he knew it. He did not expect that any chief in that ancient land would dare to defy its gods openly.

Taxmar did not meet the challenge at once. His deep set opaque black eyes and mastiff-like mouth looked as immovable as the carving on the basalt stool upon which he sat. The cacique thought he was impressed, and concluded triumphantly,

"Who can resist the gods? Let the altar drink the blood of the stranger; it is sweet to them and they will sleep, and not wake."

"I shall do nothing of the kind," said Taxmar, the clicking, bubbling Maya talk dropping like water on hot stones. "When a man serves me well, I do not reward him with death. My slave's wisdom is greater than the craft of Coyotl, and if his gods help me it is because they know enough to do right."

The other chief went home in rage and disappointment and offended dignity.

No one, who has not tried it, can imagine the sensation of living in a hostile land, removed from all that is familiar. Until his captivity began Aguilar had never been obliged to act for himself. He had always been under the authority of a superior. He had questioned and wondered, seen the injustice of this thing and that, but only in his own mind. When everything in his past life had been swept away at one stroke, his faith

alone was left him in the wrecked and distorted world. He had never dreamed that Taxmar was learning to respect that faith.



Page 77

The neighboring cacique now joined Taxmar's enemies with all his army, and the councilors took alarm and repeated the suggestion that Aguilar should be sacrificed to make sure of the help of the gods. Taxmar again spoke plainly.

"Our gods," he said, "have helped us when we were strong and powerful and sacrificed many captives in their honor. This man's gods help him when he is a slave, alone, far from his people, with nothing to offer in sacrifice. We will see now what they will do for my army."

In the battle which followed, the cacique adopted a plan which Aguilar suggested. That loyal follower was placed in command of a force hidden in the woods near the route by which the enemy would arrive. The hostile forces marched past it, and charged upon the front of Taxmar's army. It gave way, and they rushed in with triumphant yells. When they were well past, Aguilar's division came out of the bushes and took them in the rear. At the same instant Taxmar and his warriors faced about and sprang at them like a host of panthers. There was a great slaughter, many prisoners were taken, among them the cacique himself and many men of importance; and Taxmar made a little speech to them upon the wisdom of the white man's gods.

In the years that passed the captive's hope of escape faded. Once he had thought he might slip away and reach the coast, but he was too carefully watched. Even if he could get to the sea from so far inland, without the help of the natives, he could not reach any Spanish colony without a boat. There were rumors of strange ships filled with bearded men, whose weapons were the thunder and the lightning. Old people wagged their heads and recalled a prophecy of the priest Chilam Cambal many years ago, that a white people, bearded, would come from the east, to overturn the images of the gods, and conquer the land.

Hernando de Cordova's squadron came and went; Grijalva's came and went; Aguilar heard of them but never saw them. At last, seven long years after he came to Jamacana, three coast Indians from the island of Cozumel came timidly to the cacique with gifts and a letter. The gifts were for Taxmar, to buy his Christian slaves, if he had any, and the letter was for them.

Hernando Cortes, coming from Cuba with a squadron to discover and conquer the land ruled by the Lord of the Golden House, had stopped at Cozumel and there heard of white men held as captives somewhere inland. He had persuaded the Indians to send messengers for them, saying that if the captives were sent to the sea-coast, at the cape of Cotoche, he would leave two caravels there eight days, to wait for them.

While Aguilar read this letter the Indians were telling of the water-houses of the strangers, their sharp weapons, their command of thunder and lightning, and the wonderful presents they gave in exchange for what they wanted. Aguilar's account of the squadron was even more complete. He described the dress of the Spaniards, their

weapons and their manner of life without having seen them at all, and the Indians, when asked, said it was so.



Page 78

Taxmar's acute mind was adjusting itself to this event, which was not altogether unexpected. He had heard more than Aguilar had about the previous visits of the Spaniards to that coast. He asked Aguilar if he thought that the strange warriors would accept him, their countryman, as ambassador, and deal mildly with Taxmar and his people, if they let him go. Aguilar answered that he thought they would.

Now freedom was within his grasp, and only one thing delayed him. He could not leave his comrade Guerrero behind. The sailor had married the daughter of a chief and become a great man in his adopted country. Aguilar sent Indian messengers with the letter and a verbal message, and waited.

Guerrero had never known much about reading, and he had forgotten nearly all he knew. He understood, however, that he could now return to Spain. Before his eyes rose a picture of the lofty austere sierras, the sunny vineyards, the wine, so unlike pulque, the bread, so unlike flat cakes of maize, the maidens of Barcelona and Malaga, so very different from tattooed Indian girls. And then he surveyed his own brawny arms and legs, and felt of his own grotesquely ornamented countenance.

To please the taste of his adopted people he had let himself be decorated as they were, for life,—with tattooed pictures, with nose-ring, with ear-rings of gold set with rudely cut gems and heavy enough to drag down the lobe of the ear. He would cut a figure in the streets of Seville. The little boys would run after him as if he were a show. He grinned, sighed mightily, and sent word to Aguilar that he thought it wiser to stay where he was. Aguilar set out for the coast with the Cozumel Indians, but this delay had consumed all of the eight days appointed, and when they reached Point Cotoche the caravels had gone.

But a broken canoe and a stave from a water-barrel lay on the beach, and with the help of the messengers Aguilar patched up the canoe, and with the board for a paddle, made the canoe serve his need. Following the coast they came to the narrowest part of the channel between the mainland and Cozumel, and in spite of a very strong current got across to the island. No sooner had they landed when some Spaniards rushed out of the bushes, with drawn swords. The Indians were about to fly in terror, but Aguilar called to them in their own language to have no fear. Then he spoke to the Spaniards in broken Castilian, saying that he was a Christian, fell on his knees and thanked God that he had lived to hear his own language again.

The Spaniards looked at this strange figure in absolute bewilderment. He was to all appearance an Indian. His long hair was braided and wound about his head, he had a bow in his hand, a quiver of arrows on his back, a bag of woven grass-work hung about his neck by a long cord. The pattern of the weaving was a series of interwoven crosses. Cortes, giving up hope of rescuing any Christian captives, had left



Page 79

the island, but one of his ships had sprung a leak and he had put back. When he saw an Indian canoe coming he had sent scouts to see what it might be. They now led Jeronimo Aguilar and his Indian companions into the presence of the captain-general and his staff. Aguilar saluted Cortes in the Indian fashion, by carrying his hand from the ground to his forehead as he knelt crouching before him. But Cortes, when he understood who this man was, raised him to his feet, embraced him and flung about his shoulders his own cloak. Aguilar became his interpreter, and thus was the prophecy fulfilled concerning the gods of Taxmar.

[Illustration: "CORTES FLUNG ABOUT HIS SHOULDERS HIS OWN CLOAK."—Page 146]

NOTE

The story of Jeronimo Aguilar follows the actual facts very closely. The account of his adventures will be found in Irving's "Life of Columbus" and other works dealing with the history of the Spanish conquests.

A LEGEND OF MALINCHE

O sorcerer Time, turn backward to the shore
Where it is always morning, and the birds
Are troubadours of all the hidden lore
Deeper than any words!

There lived a maiden once,—O long ago,
Ere men were grown too wise to understand
The ancient language that they used to know
In Quezalcoatl's land.

Though her own mother sold her for a slave,
Her own bright beauty as her only dower,
Into her slender hands the conqueror gave
A more than queenly power.

Between her people and the enemy—
The fierce proud Spaniard on his conquest bent—
Interpreter and interceder, she
In safety came and went.



And still among the wild shy forest folk
The birds are singing of her, and her name
Lives in that language that her people spoke
Before the Spaniard came.

She is not dead, the daughter of the Sun,—
By love and loyalty divinely stirred,
She lives forever—so the legends run,—
Returning as a bird.

Who but a white bird in her seaward flight
Saw, borne upon the shoulders of the sea,
Three tiny caravels—how small and light
To hold a world in fee!

Who but the quezal, when the Spaniards came
And plundered all the white imperial town,
Saw in a storm of red rapacious flame
The Aztec throne go down!

And when the very rivers talked of gold,
The humming-bird upon her lichened nest
Strange tales of wild adventure never told
Hid in her tiny breast.

The mountain eagle, circling with the stars,
Watched the great Admiral swiftly come and go
In his light ship that set at naught the bars
Wrought by a giant foe.



Page 80

Dull are our years and hard to understand,
We dream no more of mighty days to be,
And we have lost through delving in the land
The wisdom of the sea.

Yet where beyond the sea the sunset burns,
And the trees talk of kings dead long ago,
Malinche sings among the giant ferns—
Ask of the birds—they know!

XI

THE THUNDER BIRDS

“Glory is all very well,” said Juan de Saavedra to Pedro de Alvarado as the squadron left the island of Cozumel, “but my familiar spirit tells me that there is gold somewhere in this barbaric land or Cortes would not be with us.”

Alvarado's peculiarly sunny smile shone out. He was a ruddy golden-haired man, a type unusual in Spaniards, and the natives showed a tendency to revere him as the sun-god. Life had treated him very well, and he had an abounding good-nature.

“It will be the better,” he said comfortably, “if we get both gold and glory. I confess I have had my doubts of the gold, for after all, these Indians may have more sense than they appear to have.”

“People often do, but in what way, especially?”

“*Amigo*, put yourself in the place of one of these caciques, with white men bedeviling you for a treasure which you never even troubled yourself to pick up when it lay about loose. What can be more easy than to tell them that there is plenty of it somewhere else—in the land of your enemies? That is Pizarro's theory, at any rate.”

Saavedra laughed. “Pizarro is wise in his way, but as I have said, Cortes is our commander.”

“What has that to do with it?”

“If you had been at Salamanca in his University days you wouldn't ask. He never got caught in a scrape, and he always got what he was after.”

“And kept it?”



“Is that a little more of Pizarro’s wisdom? No; he always shared the spoils as even-handedly as you please. But if any of us lost our heads and got into a pickle he never was concerned in it—or about it.”

“He will lose his, if Velasquez catches him. Remember Balboa.”

“Now there is an example of the chances he will take. Cortes first convinces the Governor that nobody else is fit to trust with this undertaking. Cordova failed; Grijalva failed; Cortes will succeed or leave his bones on the field of honor. No sooner are we fairly out of harbor than Velasquez tries to whistle us back. He might as well blow his trumpets to the sea-gulls. All Cortes wanted was a start. You will see—either the Governor will die or be recalled while we are gone, or we shall come back so covered with gold and renown that he will not dare do anything when we are again within his reach. Somebody’s head may be lost in this affair, but it will not be that of Hernan’ Cortes.”

The man of whom they were speaking just then approached, summoning Alvarado to him. Saavedra leaned on the rail musing.



Page 81

"Sometimes," he said to himself, "one hastens a catastrophe by warning people of it, but then, that may be because it could not have been prevented. Cortes is inclined to make that simple fellow his aide because they are so unlike, and so, I suspect, are others. At any rate I have done my best to make him see whose leadership is safest."

The fleet was a rather imposing one for those waters. There were eleven ships altogether, the flagship and three others being over seventy tons' weight, the rest caravels and open brigantines. These were manned by one hundred and ten sailors, and carried five hundred and fifty-three soldiers, of whom thirty-two were crossbowmen and thirteen arquebusiers. There were also about two hundred Indians. Sixteen horses accompanied the expedition, and it had ten heavy cannon, four light field-guns, called falconets, and a good supply of ammunition. The horses cost almost more than the ships that carried them, for they had been brought from Spain; but their value in such an undertaking was great.

Hernando Cortes had come out to Cuba when he was nineteen, and that was fifteen years ago. Much had been reported concerning an emperor in a country to the west, who ruled over a vast territory inhabited by copper-colored people rich in gold, who worshiped idols. Cortes had observed that Indian tribes, like schoolboys, were apt to divide into little cliques and quarreling factions. If the subject tribes did not like the Emperor, and were jealous of him and of each other, a foreign conqueror had one tool ready to his hand, and it was a tool that Cortes had used many times before.

The people of this coast, however, were not at all like the gentle and childlike natives Colon had found. From the rescued captive Aguilar, the commander learned much of their nature and customs. On his first attempt to land, his troops encountered troops of warriors in brilliant feathered head-bands and body armor of quilted white cotton. They used as weapons the lance, bow and arrows, club, and a curious staff about three and a half feet long set with crosswise knife-blades of obsidian. Against poisoned arrows, such as the invaders had more than once met, neither arquebus nor cannon was of much use, and body armor was no great protection, since a scratch on hand or leg would kill a man in a few hours. After some skirmishing and more diplomacy, at various points along the coast, Cortes landed his force on the island which Grijalva had named San Juan de Ulloa, from a mistaken notion that Oloa, the native salutation, was the name of the place. The natives had watched the "water-houses," as they called them, sailing over the serene blue waters, and this tribe, being peaceable folk, sent a pirogue over to the island with gifts. There were not only fruits and flowers, but little golden ornaments, and the Spanish commander sent some trinkets in return. In endeavoring to talk with them Cortes became aware of an unusual



Page 82

piece of luck. Aguilar did not understand the language of these folk. But at Tabasco, where Cortes had had a fight with the native army, some slaves had been presented to him as a peace-offering. Among them was a beautiful young girl, daughter of a Mexican chief, who after her father's death had been sold as a slave by her own mother, who wished to get her inheritance. During her captivity she had learned the dialect Aguilar spoke, and the two interpreters between them succeeded in translating Cortes's Castilian into the Aztec of Mexico from the first. The young girl was later baptized Marina. There being no "r" in the Aztec language the people called her Malintzin or Malinche,—Lady Marina, the ending "tzin" being a title of respect. She learned Castilian with wonderful quickness, and was of great service not only to Cortes but to her own people, since she could explain whatever he did not understand.

Cortes learned that the name of the ruler of the country was Moteczuma. His capital was on the plateau about seventy miles in the interior. This coast province, which he had lately conquered, was ruled by one of his Aztec governors. Gold was abundant. Moteczuma had great store of it. Cortes decided to pitch his camp where afterward stood the capital of New Spain.

The friendly Indians brought stakes and mats and helped to build huts, native fashion. From all the country round the people flocked to see the strange white men, bringing fruit, flowers, game, Indian corn, vegetables and native ornaments of all sorts. Some of these they gave away and some they bartered. Every soldier and mariner turned trader; the place looked like a great fair.

On Easter Day the Aztec governor arrived upon a visit of ceremony. Cortes received him in his own tent, with all courtesy, in the presence of his officers, all in full uniform. Mass was said, and the Aztec chief and his attendants listened with grave politeness. Then the guests were invited to a dinner at which various Spanish dishes, wines and sweetmeats were served as formally as at court. After this the interpreters were summoned for the real business of the day.

The Aztec nobleman wished to know whence and why the strangers had come to this country. Cortes answered that he was the subject of a monarch beyond seas, as powerful as Moteczuma, who had heard of the Aztec Emperor and sent his compliments and some gifts. The governor gracefully expressed his willingness to convey both to his royal master. Cortes courteously declined, saying that he must himself deliver them. At this the governor seemed surprised and displeased; evidently this was not in his plan. "You have been here only two days," he said, "and already demand an audience with the Emperor?" Then he expressed his astonishment at learning that there was any other monarch as great as Moteczuma, and sent his attendants to bring a few gifts which he himself had chosen for the white chief.

Page 83

These tributes consisted of ten loads, each as much as a man could carry, of fine cotton stuff, mantles of exquisite feather-work, and a woven basket full of gold ornaments. Cortes expressed his admiration and appreciation of the gifts, and sent for those he had brought for Moteczuma. They consisted of an arm-chair, richly carved and painted, a crimson cloth cap with a gold medal bearing the device of San Jorge and the dragon, and some collars, bracelets and other ornaments of cut glass. To the Aztec, who had never seen glass, these appeared wonderful. He ventured the remark that a gilt helmet worn by one of the Spanish soldiers was like the casque of their god Quetzalcoatl, and he wished that Moteczuma could see it. Cortes immediately sent for the helmet and handed it to the chief, with the suggestion that he should like to have it returned full of the gold of the country in order to compare it with the gold of Spain. Spaniards, he said, were subject to a complaint affecting the heart, for which gold was a remedy. This was not entirely an invention of the commander's fertile brain. Many physicians of those days did regard gold as a valuable drug; but only Cortes ever thought of making use of the theory to get the gold.

During this polite and interesting conversation Cortes observed certain attendants busily making sketches of all that they saw, and on inquiry was told that this "picture-writing" would give the Emperor a far better idea of the appearance of the strangers than words alone. Upon this the Spanish general ordered out the cavalry and artillery and put them through their evolutions on the beach. The cannon, whose balls splintered great trees, and the horsemen, whose movements the Aztecs followed with even more terror than those of the gunners, made a tremendous impression. The artists, though scared, stuck to their duty, and the strange and terrible beasts, and the thunder-birds whose mouths breathed destruction, were drawn for the Emperor to see. After this the governor, assuring Cortes that he should have whatever he needed in the way of provisions until further orders were received from the Emperor, made his adieux and went home.

Then began a diplomatic game between Cortes and the Emperor and the various chiefs of the country. The couriers of the imperial government, who traveled in relays, could take a message to the capital and return in seven or eight days. In due time two ambassadors arrived from Moteczuma, with gifts evidently meant to impress the strangers with his wealth and power. The embassy was accompanied by the governor of the province and about a hundred slaves. Some of these attendants carried burning censers from which arose clouds of incense; others unrolled upon the ground fine mats on which to place the presents.



Page 84

Nothing like this had ever been offered to a Spanish conqueror, even by Moors, to say nothing of Indians. There were two collars of gold set with precious stones; a hundred ounces of gold ore just as it came from the mines; a large alligator's-head of gold; six shields covered with gold; helmets and necklaces of gold. There were birds made of green feathers, the feet, beaks and eyes of gold; a box of feather-work upon leather, set with a gold plate weighing seventy ounces; pieces of cloth curiously woven with feathers, and others woven in various designs. Most gorgeous of all were two great plates as big as carriage wheels, one of gold and one of silver, wrought with various devices of plants and animals rather like the figures of the zodiac. The wildest tales of the most imaginative adventurer never pictured such magnificence. If Moteczuma's plan had been to induce the strangers to respect his wishes and go home without visiting his capital, it was a complete failure. After this proof of the wealth and splendor of the country Cortes had no more idea of leaving it than a hound has of abandoning a fresh trail. When the envoys gave him Moteczuma's message of regret that it would not be possible for them to meet, Cortes replied that he could not think of going back to Spain now. The road to the capital might be perilous, but what was that to him? Would they not take to the Emperor these slight additional tokens of the regard and respect of the Spanish ruler, and explain to him how impossible it would be for Cortes to face his own sovereign, with the great object of his voyage unfulfilled? There was nothing for the embassy to do but to take the message.

While waiting for results, Cortes received a visit from some Indian chiefs of the Totonacs, a tribe lately conquered by the Aztecs. Their ruler, it seemed, had heard of the white cacique and would like to receive him in his capital. Cortes gave them presents and promised to come. In the meantime his own men were quarreling, and both parties were threatening him. The bolder spirits announced that if he did not make a settlement in the country, with or without instructions from the governor of Cuba who had sent him out, they would report him to the King. The friends of Velazquez accused Cortes of secretly encouraging this rebellion, and demanded that as he had now made his discovery, he should return to Cuba and report.

Cortes calmly answered that he was quite willing to return at once, and ordered the ships made ready. This caused such a storm of wrath and disappointment that even those who had urged it quailed. Seeing that the time was ripe, the captain-general called his followers together and made a speech. He declared that nobody could have the interests of the sovereigns and the glory of the Spanish race more at heart than he had. He was willing to do whatever was best. If they, his comrades, desired to return to Cuba he would go directly. But if they were ready to join him, he would found a colony in the name of the sovereigns, with all proper officers to govern it, to remain in this rich country and trade with the people. In that case, however, he would of course have to resign his commission as captain-general of an expedition of discovery.



Page 85

There was a roar of approval from the army at this alluring suggestion. Before most of them fairly knew what they were about they had voted to form a colony under the royal authority, elected Cortes governor as soon as he resigned his former position, and seen the new governor appoint a council in proper form, to aid in the government.

“I knew it,” said Saavedra to himself as he went back, alone, to his quarters. “Just as people have made up their minds they have got him between the door and the jamb, he is somewhere else. When he resigned his commission he slipped out from under the government of Cuba, and that has no authority over him. He has appointed a council made up of his own friends, and now he can hang every one of the Velasquez party if they make any trouble. But they won’t.”

They did not. Cortes sent his flagship to Spain with some of his especial friends and some of his particular enemies on board, the enemies to get them out of his way, the friends to defend him to the King against their accusations. He founded a city which he named Villa Rica de Vera Cruz, the Rich Town of the True Cross. Then, as the next step toward the invasion of the country, he proceeded to play Indian politics.

First he accepted the invitation of the chief of the Totonacs, and Moteczuma, hearing of it, sent the tax-gatherers to collect tribute and also to demand twenty young men and women to sacrifice to the gods as an atonement for having entertained the strangers. Cortes expressed lively horror, and advised the chief of the Totonacs to throw the tax-gatherers into prison. Then he secretly rescued them and telling them how deeply he regretted their misfortunes as innocent men doing their duty to their ruler, he sent them on board his own ships for safe-keeping. When the Emperor heard what had happened he was enraged against the Totonacs. If they wished to escape his vengeance now their only chance was to become allies of Cortes.

Thus within a few days after landing, the commander had got all of his own followers and a powerful native tribe so bound up with his fortunes that they could not desert him without endangering their own skins. He now suggested to two of the pilots that they should report five of the ships to be in an unseaworthy condition from the borings of the teredos—in those days sheathing for hulls had not been invented, and the ship-worm was a constant danger, in tropical waters especially. At the pilots’ report Cortes appeared astonished, but saying that there was nothing to do but make the best of it, ordered the ships to be dismantled, the cordage, sails and everything that could be of use brought on shore, and the stripped hulls scuttled and sunk. Then four more were condemned, leaving but one small ship.



Page 86

There was nearly a riot in the army, marooned in an unknown and unfriendly land. Cortes made another speech. He pointed out the fact that if they were successful in the expedition to the capital they would not need the ships; if they were not, what good would the ships do them when they were seventy leagues inland? Those who dared not take the risk with him could still return to Cuba in the one ship that was left. "They can tell there," he added in a tone which cut the deeper for being so very quiet, "how they deserted their commander and their friends, and patiently wait until we return with the spoils of the Aztecs."

An instant of breathless silence followed, then somebody shouted. A hundred voices took up the cry,—

"To Mexico! To Mexico!"

Of the adventures, the fighting, the wonderful sights and the narrow escapes of the march to the capital, Bernal Diaz, who was with the army, wrote afterward in bulky volumes. On the seventh day of November, 1519, the compact little force of Spaniards, little more than a battalion in all, with their Indian allies from the provinces which had rebelled against the Emperor, came in sight of the capital. The moment at which Cortes, at the head of his followers, rode into the city of Mexico is one of the most dramatic in all history. Nothing in any novel of adventure compares with it in amazing contrast or tragic possibilities. The men of the Age of Cannon met the men of the Age of Stone. The mighty Catholic Church confronted a nation of snake-worshipping cannibals. The sons of a race that lived in hardy simplicity, a race of fighters, had come into a capital where life was more luxurious than it was in Seville, Paris or Rome—a heathen capital rich in beauty, wealth and all the arts of a barbarian people.

The city had been built on an island in the middle of a salt lake, reached by three causeways of masonry four or five miles long and twenty or thirty feet wide. At the end near the city each causeway had a wooden drawbridge. There were paved streets and water-ways. The houses, built around large court-yards, were of red stone, sometimes covered with white stucco. The roofs were encircled with battlements and defended with towers. Often they were gardens of growing flowers. In the center of the city was the temple enclosure, surrounded by an eight-foot stone wall. Within this were a score of teocallis, or pyramids flattened at the top, the largest, that of the war-god, being about a hundred feet high. Stone stairs wound four times around the pyramid, so that religious processions appeared and disappeared on their way to the top. On the summit was a block of jasper, rounded at top, the altar of human sacrifice. Near by were the shrines and altars of the gods. Outside the temple enclosure was a huge altar, or embankment, called the tzompantli, one hundred and fifty-four feet long, upon which the skulls of innumerable victims were arranged. The doorways and walls everywhere were carved with

Page 87

the two symbols of the Aztec religion—the cross and the snake. Among the birds in the huge aviary of the royal establishment were the humming-birds which were sacred to one of the most cruel of the gods, and in cages built for them were the rattlesnakes also held sacred. Flowers were everywhere—in garlands hung about the city, in the hands of the people, on floating islands in the water, in the gardens blazing with color.

The Spanish strangers were housed in a great stone palace and entertained no less magnificently than the gifts of the Emperor had led them to expect. The houses were ceiled with cedar and tapestried with fine cotton or feather work. Moteczuma's table service was of gold and silver and fine earthenware. The people wore cotton garments, often dyed vivid scarlet with cochineal, the men wearing loose cloaks and fringed sashes, the women, long robes. Fur capes and feather-work mantles and tunics were worn in cold weather; sandals and white cotton hoods protected feet and head. The women sometime used a deep violet hair-dye. Ear-rings, nose-rings, finger-rings, bracelets, anklets and necklaces were of gold and silver.

Moteczuma himself, a tall slender man about forty years old, came to meet them in a palanquin shining with gold and canopied with feather-work. As he descended from it his attendants laid cotton mats upon the ground that he might not soil his feet. He wore the broad girdle and square cloak of cotton cloth which other men wore, but of the finest weave. His sandals had soles of pure gold. Both cloak and sandals were embroidered with pearls, emeralds, and a kind of stone much prized by the Aztecs, the chalchivitl, green and white. On his head he wore a plumed head-dress of green, the royal color. When Cortes with his staff approached the building set apart for their quarters, Moteczuma awaited them in the courtyard. From a vase of flowers held by an attendant he took a massive gold collar, in which the shell of a certain crawfish was set in gold and connected by golden links. Eight golden ornaments a span long, wrought to represent the same shell-fish, hung from this chain. Moteczuma hung the necklace about the neck of Cortes with a graceful little speech of welcome.

[Illustration: "Moteczuma awaited them in the courtyard"—Page 162]

The Aztec Emperor was making the best of a situation which he did not like at all. In other Mexican cities Cortes had ordered the idols cast headlong down the steps of the teocalli, the temples cleansed, and a crucifix wreathed in flowers to be set up in place of the red altar stained with human blood. He was attended by some seven thousand native allies from tribes considered by the Aztecs as wild barbarians. His daring behavior and military successes had all been reported to Moteczuma by the picture-writing of his scribes. There was a tradition among the Aztecs that some day white bearded strangers would come, destroy the worship of the old gods of blood and terror, and restore the worship of the fair god Quetzalcoatl. Before the white men landed there had been earthquakes, meteors and other omens. Would the old gods destroy the

invaders and all who joined them, or was this the great change which the prophets foretold? Who could say?



Page 88

In the beautiful, terrible city Cortes moved alert and silent, courteous to all, every nerve as sensitive to new impressions as a leaf to the wind. He knew that strong as the priesthood of the fierce gods undoubtedly was, there was surely an undercurrent of rebellion against their cruelty and their unlimited power. In a fruitless attempt to keep the Spaniards out of the city by the aid of the gods, three hundred little children had been sacrificed. If Cortes failed to conquer, by peaceful means or otherwise, nothing was more certain than that he and all of his followers not killed in the fighting would be butchered on the top of those terrible pyramids sooner or later. Yet he looked about him and said, under his breath,

“This is the most beautiful city in the world.”

“And you think we shall win it for the Cross and the King?” asked Saavedra in the same quiet tone.

“We must win,” said Cortes, with a spark in his eyes like the flame in the heart of a black opal. “There is nothing else to do.”

NOTE

In the spelling of the Aztec Emperor’s name Cortes’ own form is used,—“Moteczuma,” instead of the commoner “Montezuma.” One must read Prescott’s “Conquest of Mexico” for even an approximately adequate account of this extraordinary campaign.

MOCCASIN FLOWER

Klooskap’s children, the last and least,
Bidden to dance at his farewell feast,
Under the great moon’s wizard light,
Over the mountain’s drifted white,
The Winag’mesuk, the wood-folk small,
Came to the feasting the last of all!

Magic snowshoes they wore that night,
Woven of frostwork and sunset light,
Round and trim like the Master’s own,—
Their lances of reed, with a point of bone,
Their oval shields of the woven grass,
Their leader the mighty Kaktugwaas.

The Winag’mesuk, the forest folk,
They fled from the words that the white man spoke.
They were so tired, they were so small,



They hardly could find their way back at all,
Yet bravely they rallied with shield and lance
To dance for Klooskap their Snowshoe Dance!

Light and swift as the whirling snow
They leaped and fluttered aloft, aloft,
Silent as owls in the white moonlight
They pounced and grappled in mimic fight.
When they chanted to Klooskap their last farewell
He laid on the forest a fairy spell.

From Little Thunder, from Kaktugwaas,
He took the buckler of woven grass,
The lance of reed with a point of bone,
The rounded footgear like his own,
And bade them grow there under the pines
While the snowdrifts melt and the sunlight shines!



Page 89

The sagamore pines are dark and tall
That guard the Norumbega wall.
When the clear brooks dance to the flute of spring,
And veery and catbird of Klooskap sing,
The Winag'mesuk for one short hour
Come back for their token of Klooskap's power—
Moccasin Flower!

XII

GIFTS FROM NORUMBEGA

"What shall I bring thee then, from the world's end, Reine Margot?" asked Alain Maclou. The small girl in the deep fireside recess of a Picardy castle-hall considered it gravely.

"There should be three gifts," she said at last, "for so it always is in Mere Bastienne's stories. I will have the shoes of silence, the girdle of fortune, and diamonds from Norumbega. Tell me again about Norumbega."

"Nay, little one, I must go, to see after the lading of the ship. Fare thee well for this time," and the young man bent his tall head above the hand of his seven-year-old lady. The graceful, quick-witted and imaginative child had been his pet and he her loyal servant these three years. It was understood between them that she was really the Queen of France, barred from her throne by the Salic Law that forbade any woman to rule that country in her own right. Some day he was to discover for her a kingdom beyond seas, in which she alone should reign. Of all the tales, marvelous, fanciful or tragic, which he or her old nurse had told her, she liked best the legend of Norumbega, the city in the wilderness which no explorer had ever found. Wherever French, Breton or English fishermen had become at all familiar with the Indians they heard of a city great and populous, with walls of stone, ruled by a king richer than any of their chiefs, but no two stories agreed on the location. Some had heard that it was an island, west of Cape Breton; others that it was on the bank of a great river to the southward. Maclou had seen at a fair one of the Indians brought to France ten years before in the *Dauphine*, and spoken to him. According to this Indian the chief town of his people was on an island in the mouth of a river where high gray walls of rock arose, longer and statelier than the walls of Dieppe. In describing these walls the Indian did not indeed say that they encircled the city, but no Frenchman could have imagined rock palisades built for any other purpose. On the other hand Maclou knew a pilot who had been caught in a storm and blown down the coast southwest from the fisheries, and he and his crew had seen, from ten or twelve leagues out at sea, white and shining battlements on the crest of a mountain far inland. When they asked their Indian guides what city it was the slaves trembled and showed fear, and declared that none of their people ever

went there. Had only one man seen the glittering walls it might have been a vision, but they had all seen.



Page 90

If Norumbega really existed, the expedition of Jacques Cartier in 1535 seemed likely to find it. He had made a voyage the year before with two ships and a hundred and twenty men, of whom Maclou had been one. Not being prepared to remain through the winter, they had been obliged to turn back before they had done more than discover a magnificent bay which Cartier named the Bay of Chaleur on account of the July heat, and a squarish body of water west of Cape Breton which seemed to be marked out on their map as the Square Gulf. Now the veteran of Saint Malo had instructions to explore this gulf and see whether any strait existed beyond it which might lead to Cathay. On general principles he was to find out how great and of what nature the country was. The maps of the New World were fairly complete in their outline of the southern continent and islands discovered by Spain; it was hoped that this expedition might give an equally definite outline to the northern coast. Cartier had on his previous voyage caught two young Indians who had come from far inland to fish, and brought them back to France. They had since learned enough Breton to make themselves understood, and from what they said it seemed to Cartier that there might be a far greater land west of the fisheries than the mapmakers had supposed. The King, on the other hand, was inclined to hope that the lands already found were islands, among which might be the coveted route to Cathay. Maclou bent his brows over the map and pondered. If Norumbega were found it would be the key to the situation, for the people of a great inland city would know, as the people of Mexico did, all about their country. Did it exist, or was it a fairy tale, born of mirage or a lying brain?

On Whitsunday the sixteenth of May, Carrier and his men went in solemn procession to the Cathedral Church of Saint Malo, confessed themselves, received the sacrament, and were blessed by the Bishop in his robes of state, standing in the choir of the ancient sanctuary. On the following Wednesday they set sail with three ships and one hundred and ten men. Cartier had been careful to explain to the King that it would be of no use to send an expedition to those northern shores unless it could live through the winter on its own supplies. The summer was brief, the winter severe, and there was no possibility of living on the country while exploring it. As such voyages went, the three ships were well provisioned. Late in July they came through the Strait of Belle Isle, and on Saint Laurence's Day, August 10, found themselves in a small bay which Cartier named for that saint. Rounding the western point of a great island the little fleet came into a great salt water bay.

Page 91

“I believe,” said Cartier to Maclou as the flagship sailed gaily on over the sunlit sparkling waves, “that this must be the place from which all the whales in the world come.” The great creatures were spouting and diving all around the fleet, frolicking like unwieldy puppies. Every one was alert for what might be discovered next. None were more lively and full of pleased expectation than the two Indian youths. Captives had been taken by the white men before, but none had ever returned. Their people were undoubtedly mourning them as dead, but would presently see them not only alive but fat and happy. They had crossed the great waters in the white men’s canoe, and lived in the white men’s villages, and learned their talk. They had been christened Pierre and Kadoc, French tongues finding it hard to pronounce their former names.

Cartier called them to him and began to ask questions. He learned that the northern coast of the gulf, along which they were sailing, was that of a land called Saghwenay, in which was found Cagnetdaze, called by the white men copper. This gulf led to a great river called Hochelaga. They had never heard of any one going all the way to the head of it, but the old men might remember. What the name of the country to the south of the gulf was, Cartier could not make out. It sounded something like Kanacdajikaouah. “Kaou-ah” meant great, or large, and Cartier finally set down the rest of the word as Canada, as nearly as the French alphabet could spell out the gutturals.

The youths in fact belonged to a tribe in the great confederacy of the Kanonghsionni, the People of the Long House—or rather the lengthened house, Kanonsa being the word for house, and “ionni” meaning lengthened or extended.[1] Five tribes, many generations ago, had united under the leadership of the great Ayonhwatha—“he who made the wampum belt.”[2] They had adopted weaker tribes when they conquered them, exactly as, upon the marriage of a daughter, the father built an addition to his house for the newly wedded couple. The captives had picked up the Breton patois rather easily, but there was nothing in France which was at all like an Iroquois bark house, and they had to use the Indian word for it. Maclou, who had been studying the native language at odd times during the voyage, found that it had no b, f, m, or v, and on the other hand it had some noises which were not in any Breton, French or English words, though the Indian “n” was rather like the French “nque.”

Some fifteen leagues from the salt gulf the water became so fresh that Cartier finally gave up the idea that the channel he had entered might be a strait. It was still very wide, and if it really was a river it was the biggest he had ever seen. Three islands now appeared, opposite the mouth of a swift and deep river which came from the northern territory called Saghwenay. Cartier sailed up this river for some distance, finding high steep hills on both sides, and then continued up the great river to find the chief city of the wilderness empire, if it was an empire.



Page 92

No sign had been seen of Norumbega. Presently the keen expectant eye of Cartier caught sight of something which went far to shake his faith in that romantic citadel. It was a bold headland on the right, which would certainly have been chosen by any civilized king in Europe as a site for a fortress. Those mighty cliffs would almost make other defenses needless. Yet the heights were occupied by nothing more than a wooden village, which the interpreters called Stadacona, saying that their chief, Daghnacona, was its ruler. Shouts arose from the water's edge as some one among the excited Indians recognized on the deck of a great winged canoe their own lost countrymen. The interpreters answered with joyous whoops. A dozen canoes came paddling out, filled with young warriors, and a rapid interchange of guttural Indian talk went on between Pierre and Kadoc and their kinfolk. The enthusiasm rose to a still higher pitch when strings of beads of all colors were handed down to the Indians in the canoes, and presently Daghnacona himself appeared to welcome the white men to his country, with dignified Indian eloquence and an escort of twelve canoes. This was clearly a good place to stop and refit the ships. Cartier took his fleet into a little river not far away, and prepared to learn all he could of the country before going on.

The information he got from Daghnacona was not encouraging. This was not, it appeared, the chief town of the country. That was many miles up the river, and was called Hochelaga. It would not be safe for the white men to go there. Their ships might be caught between ice-floes, and the falling snow would blind and bewilder them. Cartier glanced at the blue autumn sky and smiled. No one is quicker than an Indian to read faces. Daghnacona saw that the white chief intended to go, all the same.

Cartier decided to leave the larger ships where they were, and proceed up the great river to Hochelaga with a forty-ton pinnace, two boats, and about fifty men. Early in the morning, before he was quite ready to start, a canoe came down stream, in which were three weird figures resembling the devils in a medieval miracle-play. Their faces were jet black, they were clothed in hairy skins, and on their heads were great horns. As they passed the ships they kept up a monotonous and appalling chant, and as their canoe touched the beach all three fell upon their faces. Indians, rushing out of the woods, dragged them into a thicket, and a great hubbub followed, not a word of which was understood by the white men, for the Indian interpreters were there with the rest. Presently the interpreters appeared on the beach yelling with fright.

"Pierre! Kadoc!" the annoyed commander called from his quarter-deck, "what is all this hullabaloo about?"

"News!" gasped Pierre. "News from Canghyenye! He says white men not come to Hochelaga!" And Kadoc chimed in eagerly, "Not go! Not go!"

"Coudouagny?" Cartier repeated to Maclou, completely mystified. "Who can that be?"



Page 93

Further questioning drew out information which sounded as if Coudouagny, or Canyengye, were a tribal god. In reality this was the word for “elder brother.” In that region it was applied to the Tekarihokens, the eldest of the five nations in the league of the Long House. They were afterward dubbed by their enemies the Mohawks or man-eaters, and the fear for the white men’s safety which the interpreters expressed may very well have been quite genuine.

But the Breton captain had not come across the Atlantic to give up his plans for fear of an Indian god, if it was a god, and his reply to the warning was to the effect that Coudouagny must be a numskull. More seriously he explained to the interpreters that although he had not himself spoken with the God of his people his priests had, and he fully trusted in the power of his God to protect him. The party set forth at the appointed time.

In about two weeks they reached the greatest Indian town that any of them had ever seen. It was not the walled city of the Norumbega legend, but both Maclou and Cartier had ceased to expect anything of that kind. The Indian guides had said that the town was near, and all were dressed in their best. A thousand Indians, men, women and children, were on the shore to receive them, and the commander at the head of his little troop marched into Hochelaga to pay their respects to the chief.

The Indian city was inhabited by several thousand people, living in wigwams about a hundred and fifty feet long by fifty wide, built of bark over a frame of wood, and arranged around a large open space. The whole was surrounded by a stockade of three rows of stakes twelve or fifteen feet high. The middle row was set straight, the other two rows five or six feet from it and inclining toward it like wigwam-poles. The three rows, meeting at the top, were lashed to a ridgepole. Half way down and again at the bottom cross-braces were fastened diagonally, making a strong wall. Around the inside, near the top, was a gallery reached by ladders, on which were piles of stones to be thrown at invaders. Instead of being square, or irregular with many angles and outstanding towers, like a French walled town, it was perfectly round.

The interpreters afterward explained that each of the houses was occupied by several families, as the head of each house shared his shelter with his kinfolk. When a daughter was married she brought her husband home, as a rule, and her father added an apartment to his house by the simple device of taking out the end wall of bark and building on another section. Each household had its own stone hearth, the smoke escaping through openings in the roof. A common passage-way led through the middle of the house. On the sides were rows of bunks covered with furs. Weapons hung on the walls, and meat broth or messes of corn and beans simmered fragrantly in their kettles. Some of these long houses held fifty or sixty people each, and there were over fifty of them in all. In that climate, with warlike neighbors, the advantage of such an organized community over scattered single wigwams was very great. All around were

cleared fields dotted with great yellow pumpkins, where corn and beans had grown during the past summer.



Page 94

To the sons of Norman and Breton peasants it was evident that these fields had not been cultivated for centuries, like those of France, any more than the wall around Hochelaga was the work of stone-masons toiling under generations of feudal lords. If this were the chief city of these people, they had no Norumbega. But it was very picturesque in its sylvan barbaric way, among the limitless forests of scarlet and gold and crimson and deep green, which stretched away over the mountains. Upon the rude cots in the wigwams as they passed, Cartier's men saw rich and glossy furs of the silver fox, the beaver, the mink and the marten, which princesses might be proud to wear. Curious bead-work there was also on the quivers, pouches, moccasins and belts of these wild people, done in white and purple shell beads made and polished by hand and not more than a quarter of an inch long and an eighth of an inch thick. These were sewn in patterns of animals, birds, fishes and other things not unlike the emblems of old families in France. Belts of these beads were worn by those who seemed to be the chief men of Hochelaga. Porcupine quills were also used in embroidery and head-bands.

The people thronged into the open central space, which was about a stone's throw across, some carrying their sick, some their children, that the strangers might touch them for healing or for good fortune. The old chief, who was called Agouhana, was brought in, helpless from paralysis, upon a deerskin litter. When Cartier understood that his touch was supposed to have some mysterious magic he rubbed the old man's helpless limbs with his own hands, read from his service-book the first chapter of the Gospel of Saint John and other passages, and prayed that the people who listened might come to know the true faith. Then, after beads, rings, brooches and other little gifts had been distributed, the trumpets blew, and the white men took their leave. Before they returned to their boats the Indians guided them to the top of the hill which rose behind the town, from which the surrounding country could be seen. Cartier named it Montreal—the Royal Mountain.

[Illustration: "CARTIER READ FROM HIS SERVICE-BOOK."—Page 176]

It was now the first week in October, and the rapids in the river above Hochelaga blocked further exploration with a sailing vessel. As for going on foot, that was out of the question with winter so near. The party returned to Stadacona and went into winter quarters. While they had been gone their comrades had built a palisaded fort beside the little river where the ships lay moored. They were hardly settled in this rude shelter before snow began to fall, and seemed as if it would go on forever, softly blanketing the earth with layer on layer of cold whiteness. It was waist-deep on the level; the river was frozen solid; the drifts were above the sides of the ships, and the ice was four inches thick on the bulwarks. The glittering armor of the ice incased masts, spars, ropes, and fringed every line of cordage with icicles of dazzling brightness. Never was such cold known in France. Maclou thought, whimsically, while his teeth chattered beside the fire, of a tale he had once told Marguerite of the palace of the Frost King. That fierce

monarch, and not the guileless Indian chief, was the foe they would have to fight for this kingdom.

Page 95

Their provisions were those of any ship sent on a voyage into unknown lands in those days—dried and salted meat and fish, flour and meal to be made into cakes or porridge, dried pease, dried beans. For a time the Indians visited them, in the bitterest weather, but in December even this source of a game supply was cut off, for they came no more. The dreaded scurvy broke out, and before long there were hardly a dozen of the whole company able to care for the sick. Besides the general misery they were tormented by the fear that if the savages knew how feeble they were the camp might be attacked and destroyed. Cartier told those who had the strength, to beat with sticks on the sides of their bunks, so that prowling Indians might believe that the white men were busy at work.

But the wild folk were both shrewder and more friendly than the French believed. Their medicine-men told Cartier one day that they cured scurvy by means of a drink made from the leaves and bark of an evergreen. Squaws presently came with a birch-bark kettle of this brew and it proved to have such virtues that the sick were cured of scurvy, and in some cases of other diseases which they had had for years. Cartier afterward wrote in his report that they boiled and drank within a week all the foliage of a tree, which the Indians called aneda or tree of life, as large as a full-grown oak.[3] Many had died before the remedy was learned, and when the weather allowed the fleet to sail for home, there were only men enough for two of the ships. The Indians had told of other lands where gold and rubies were found, of a nation somewhere in the interior, white like the French, of people with but one leg apiece. But as it was, the country was a great country, and well worth the attention of the King of France. Leaving the cross and the fleur-de-lis to mark the place of their discovery, the expedition sailed for France, and on July 16, 1536, anchored once more in the port of Saint Malo.

“And there is no Norumbega really?” asked little Margot rather dolefully, when the story of the adventure had been told. “And your hair is all gray, here, on the side.”

“None the less I have gifts for thee, little queen, and such as no Queen of France hath in her treasury.” Maclou’s smile, though a trifle grave, had a singular charm as he opened his wallet. Margot nestled closer, her eyes bright with excitement.

The first gift was a little pair of shoes of deer-skin dyed green and embroidered with pearly white beads on a ground of black and red French brocade. They had no heels and no heavy leather soles, and were lined with soft white fur; and they fitted the little maid’s foot exactly.

The second gift was a girdle of the same beads, purple and white, in a pattern of queer stiff sprays. “That,” said Alain Maclou, “is the Tree of Life that cured us all of the sickness.”

The third was a cluster of long slender crystals set in a fragment of rock the color of a blush rose.[4]



Page 96

“’Tis a magic stone, sweetheart. Keep it in the sunshine on thy window-ledge, and when summer is over ’t will be white as snow. Leave it in a snowbank, or in a cellar under wet moss, and ’t will turn again to rose-color. This I have seen. In the winter nights the Frost King hangs his ice-diamonds on every twig and rope and eave, and when they shine in the red sunrise they look like these crystals. And I have seen all the sky from the zenith to the horizon at midnight full of leaping rose-red flames above such a world of ice. ’Tis very beautiful there, Reine Margot, and fit kingdom for a fairy queen.”

Marguerite turned the strange quartz rock about in her small hands with something like awe.

“And the shoes are shoes of silence, for an Indian can go and come in them so softly that even a rabbit does not hear. They were made by a kind old squaw who would take no pay, and a young warrior gave me the wampum belt, and I found the stone one day while I was hunting in the forest, so that all three of thy gifts are really gifts from Norumbega.”

“I think—I’m rather glad it is not a real city,” said Margot with a long breath. “It is more like fairyland, just as it is,—and the Frost King and the terrible sickness are the two ogres, and the good medicine man is a white wizard. It is a very beautiful kingdom, Alain, and I think you are the Prince in disguise!”

NOTES

[1] Kanonghsionni was the name which the Iroquois gave themselves. It appears that at this time they occupied the country along the St. Lawrence held some centuries before by the Ojibways and later, in the time of Champlain, by the Hurons.

[2] Hiawatha is generally said to have founded the league of the Five Nations. Although these nations were united against any attack from outside they were not always free from interior enmities and dissensions, and the Mohawks in particular were objects of the fear and dislike of their neighbors, as the significance of their sobriquet clearly shows.

[3] Aneda is said to be the Iroquois word for spruce. When Champlain’s men were attacked by scurvy in the same neighborhood half a century later, the Iroquois no longer lived there, and this remedy was not suggested.

[4] Rose quartz has this property.



THE MUSTANGS

Bred to the Game of the World as the Kings and the Emperors played it,
Fate and our masters hurled us over the terrible sea.
When the sails of the carracks were furled the Game was the Game that
we made it,—
We that were horses in Spain were gods in a realm to be!

Swift at the word we sped, we fought in the front of the battle,—
Ah, but the wild men fled when they heard us neigh from afar!
The field was littered with dead, cut down like slaughtered cattle
—Ah, but the earth is red where the Conquistadores are!



Page 97

Now does the desert wake and croon of hidalgos coming—
Now for her children's sake she is whetting her sword to slay,
And the armored squadrons break, and our iron-shod hoofs are drumming
On the rocks of the mountain pass—we are free, we are off and away!

Hush—did a man's foot fall in the pasture where we go straying?
Listen—is that the call of a man aware of his right?
Hearken, my comrades all—once more the Game they are playing!
Masters, we come, we come, to be one with you in the fight!

XIII

THE WHITE MEDICINE MAN

“Cavalry without horses, in ships without sailors, built by blacksmiths without forges and carpenters without tools. Now who in Spain will believe that?” commented Cabeca de Vaca.

It was the evening of the twenty-first of September, 1528. Five of the oddest looking boats ever launched on any sea were drawn up on the shore of La Baya de Cavallos, where not a horse was in sight, though there had been twoscore a fortnight ago. On the morrow the one-eyed commander of the Spaniards, Pamfilo de Narvaez, would marshal his ragamuffin expedition into those boats, in the hope of reaching Mexico by sea.

“We shall tell of it when we are grandfathers—if the sea does not take us within a week,” said Andres Dorantes with a sigh. “I think that God does not waste miracles on New Spain.”

“Miracles? It is nothing less than a miracle that this fleet was built,” said Cabeca de Vaca valiantly. And indeed he had some reason for saying so.

Narvaez, with a grant from the King which covered all the territory between the Atlantic and the Rio de los Palmas in Mexico, had staked his entire private fortune on this venture. He had landed in Baya de le Cruz—now Tampa Bay—on the day before Easter. The Indians had some gold which they said came “from the north.” Cabeca, who was treasurer of the expedition, strongly advised against proceeding through a totally unknown country on this very sketchy information. But Narvaez consulted the pilot, who said he knew of a harbor some distance to the west, ordered the ships to meet him there, and with forty horsemen and two hundred and sixty men on foot, struck boldly into the interior.

It was an amazing country. It had magnificent forests and almost impassable swamps, gorgeous tropical flowers and black bogs infested with snakes, alligators and hostile Indians, game of every kind and dense jungles into which it retreated. There seemed to



be no towns, no grain-land and no gold-bearing mountains. The persevering explorers crossed half a dozen large rivers and many small ones, wading when they could, building rafts or swimming when the water was deep. After between three and four months of this, half-starved, shaken with swamp fever, weary and bedraggled, they reached the first harbor they had found upon the coast they followed, but no ships were there. Whether the ships had been wrecked, or put in somewhere only to meet with destruction at the hands of the Indians, they never knew.



Page 98

Narvaez called his officers into consultation, one at a time, as to the best course to pursue in this desperate case. They had no provisions, a third of the men were sick and more were dropping from exhaustion every day, and all agreed that unless they could get away and reach Mexico while some of them could still work, there was very little chance that they would ever leave the place at all. But they had no tools, no workmen and no sailors, and nothing to eat while the ships were a-building, even if they knew how to build them. They gave it up for that night and prayed for direction.

Next day one of the men proved to have been a carpenter, and another came to Cabeza de Vaca with a plan for making bellows of deerskin with a wooden frame and nozzle, so that a forge could be worked and whatever spare iron they had could be pounded into rude tools. The officers took heart. Cross-bows, stirrups, spurs, horse-furniture, reduced to scrap-iron, furnished axes, hammers, saws and nails. There was plenty of timber in the forests. Those not able to do hard work stripped palmetto leaves to use in the place of tow for calking and rigging. Every third day one of the horses was killed, the meat served out to the sick and the working party, the manes and tails saved to twist into rope with palmetto fiber, and the skin of the legs taken off whole and tanned for water bottles. At four different times a selected body of soldiers went out to get corn from the Indians, peaceably if possible, by force if necessary, and on this, with the horse-meat and sometimes fish or sea-food caught in the bay, the camp lived and toiled for sixteen desperate days. A Greek named Don Theodoro knew how to make pitch for the calking, from pine resin. For sails the men pieced together their shirts. Not the least wearisome part of their labor was stone-hunting, for there were almost no stones in the country, and they must have anchors. But at last the boats were finished, of twenty-two cubits in length, with oars of savin (fir), and fifty of the men had died from fever, hardship or Indian arrows. Each boat must carry between forty-five and fifty of those who remained, and this crowded them so that it was impossible to move about, and weighted them until the gunwales were hardly a hand's breadth above the water. It would have been madness to venture out to sea, and they crept along the coast, though they well knew that in following all the inlets of that marshy shore the length of the voyage would be multiplied several times over. When they had been out a week they captured five Indian canoes, and with the timbers of these added a few boards to the side of each galley. This made it possible to steer in something like a direct line toward Mexico.



Page 99

On October 30, about the time of vespers, Cabeca de Vaca, who happened to be in the lead, discovered the mouth of what seemed to be an immense river. There they anchored among islands. They found that the volume of water brought down by this river was so great that it freshened the sea-water even three miles out. They went up the river a little way to try to get fuel to parch their corn, half a handful of raw corn being the entire ration for a day. The current and a strong north wind, however, drove them back. When they sounded, a mile and a half from shore, a line of thirty fathoms found no bottom. After this Narvaez with three of the boats kept on along the shore, but the boat commanded by Castillo and Dorantes, and that of Cabeca de Vaca, stood out to sea before a fair east wind, rowing and sailing, for four days. They never again saw or heard of the remainder of the fleet.

On November 5 the wind became a gale. All night the boats drifted, the men exhausted with toil, hunger and cold. Cabeca de Vaca and the shipmaster were the only men capable of handling an oar in their boat. Near morning they heard the tumbling of waves on a beach, and soon after, a tremendous wave struck the boat with a force that hurled her up on the beach and roused the men who seemed dead, so that they crept on hands and knees toward shelter in a ravine. Here some rain-water was found, a fire was made and they parched their corn, and here they were found by some Indians who brought them food. They still had some of their trading stores, from which they produced colored beads and hawk-bells. After resting and collecting provisions the indomitable Spaniards dug their boat out of the sand and made ready to go on with the voyage.

They were but a little way from shore when a great wave struck the battered craft, and the cold having loosened their grip on the oars the boat was capsized and some of the crew drowned. The rest were driven ashore a second time and lost literally everything they had. Fortunately some live brands were left from their fire, and while they huddled about the blaze the Indians appeared and offered them hospitality. To some of the party this seemed suspicious. Were the Indians cannibals? Even when they were warmed and fed in a comfortable shelter nobody dared to sleep.

But the Indians had no treacherous intentions whatever, and continued to share with the shipwrecked unfortunates their own scanty provision. Fever, hunger and despair, reduced the eighty men who had come ashore, to less than twenty. All but Cabeca and two others who were helpless from fever at last departed on the desperate adventure of trying to find their way overland to Mexico. One of the two left behind died and the other ran away in delirium, leaving Cabeca de Vaca alone, as the slave of the Indians.



Page 100

He discovered presently that he was of little use to them, for though he could have cut wood or carried water, this was squaws' work, and should a man be seen doing it every tradition of the tribe would be upset. He was of no use as a hunter, for he had not the hawk-like sight of an Indian or the Indian instinct for following a trail. He could dig out the wild roots they ate, which grew among canes and under water, but this was laborious and painful work, which made his hands bleed. With tools, or even metal with which to make them, he might have made himself the most useful member of the tribe, but as it was, he was even poorer than the wretched people among whom he lived, for they knew how to make the most of what was in the country, and he had no such training.

The lonely Spaniard studied their language and customs diligently. He found that they made knives and arrows of shell, and clothing of woven fibers of grass and leaves, and deerskin. They went from one part of the country to another according to the food supply. In prickly pear time they went into the cactus region to gather the fruit, on which they mainly lived during the season. When pinon nuts were ripe they went into the mountains and gathered these, threshing them out of the cones to be eaten fresh, roasted, or ground into flour for cakes baked on flat stones. They had no dishes except baskets and gourd-rinds, and their houses were tent-poles covered with hides. When a squaw wished to roast a piece of meat she thrust a sharp stick through it. When she wished to boil it she filled a large calabash-rind with water, put in it the materials of her stew, and threw stones into the fire to heat. When very hot these stones were raked out with a loop of twisted green reed or willow-shoots and put into the water. When enough had been put in to make the water boil, it was kept boiling by changing the cooled stones for hotter ones until the meat was cooked.

Many of the baskets made by the squaws were curiously decorated, and made of fine reed or fiber sewed in coils with very fine grass-thread, so that they were both light and strong. There were cone-shaped carrying-baskets borne on the back with a loop passed around the forehead; in these the squaws carried grain, fruit, nuts or occasionally babies. There were baskets for sifting grain and meal, and a sort of flask that would hold water. The materials were gathered from mountains, valleys and plains over a range of hundreds of miles—grasses here, bark fiber there, dyes in another place, maguey leaves in another, and for black figures in decoration the seed-pods called "cat's claws" or the stems of maiden-hair fern. A design was not copied exactly, but each worker made the pattern in the same general form and sometimes improved on it. There was a banded pattern in a diamond-shaped criss-cross almost exactly like the shaded markings on a rattlesnake-skin. The Indians believed in a goddess or Snake-Mother,



Page 101

who lived underground and knew about springs; and as water was the most important thing in that land of deserts, they showed respect to the Snake-Mother by baskets decorated in her honor. Another design showed a round center with four zigzag lines running to the border. This was intended for a lake with four streams flowing out of it, widening as they flowed; but it looked rather like a cross or a swastika. There was a design in zigzags to represent the lightning, and almost all the patterns had to do in some way with lakes, rivers, rain, or springs.

As the exile of Spain began to know the country he sometimes ventured on journeys alone, without the tribe, to the north, away from the coast. In these wanderings he met with tribes whose language was not wholly strange, but whose customs and occupations were not exactly like those of his own Indians. Once he found a village of deerskin tents where the warriors were painting themselves with red clay, for a dance. He remembered that the squaws, when he came away some days before, were in great lamentation because they had no red paint for their baskets. He took out a handful of shells and found that these Indians were only too pleased to pay for them in red earth, deerskin, and tassels of deer hair dyed red. They would hardly let him go till he promised to come again and bring them more shells and shell beads. This suggested to him a way in which he might make himself of use and value.

Longer and longer journeys he took, trading shells for new dyes, flint arrow-heads, strong basket-reeds, and hides and furs of all sorts, learning more and more of the country as he trafficked. Once he found families living in a house built of stone and mud bricks, in the crevice of a cliff, getting water from a little brook at the base of it, and raising corn and vegetables along the waterside. Their houses had no real doors. They had trap-doors in the roof, reached by a notched tree-trunk inside and one outside. The corn that grew in the little farm at the foot of the cliff was of different colors, red, yellow, blue and white. Each kind was put in a separate basket. Each kind of meal was made separately into thin cakes cooked on a very hot flat stone. A handful of the batter was slapped on with the fingers so deftly that though the cake was thin, crisp and even, the cook never burned herself. The people were always on their guard against roving bands of Indians who lived in tipis, or wigwams, and were likely to attack the cliff-dwellers at any moment.

Cabeza de Vaca became interested in these wandering tribes, and moved north to see what they were like. He found them quite ready to trade with him and extremely curious about his wares. They had hides upon their tipis of a sort he had not seen before, not smooth, but covered with curly brown fur like a big dog's. It was some time before the Spanish trader made out what sort of animal wore such a skin, though he knew



Page 102

at first sight that it must be a very large one. Finally the old medicine man with whom he was talking began to make sketches on the inside of one of the great robes. The Spaniard in his turn made sketches, drawing a horse, a goat, a bear, a wolf, a bull. When he drew the bull the old Indian got excited. He declared that that was very like the animal they hunted, but that their bulls had great humped shoulders like this—he added a high curved line over the back. Cabeca came to the conclusion that it must be some sort of hunchbacked cow, but whatever it was, the curly furry hide was comforting on cold nights. The old Indian told him a few days after that some of the young men had just come in with news of a herd of these great animals moving along one of their trails, and if the white men cared to travel with them he could see them for himself.

It did not take the trader long to make up his mind. He went with the Indians at the slow trot which covers so many miles in a day, and sooner than they had expected, they saw from a little rise in the ground a vast herd of slowly moving animals which at first the white man took for black cattle. But they were not cattle.

There was the huge hump with the curly mane, and there were the short horns and slender, neat little legs which had seemed so out of proportion in the old Indian's sketch. From their point of view they could see the hunters cut out one animal and attack him with their arrows and lances without arousing the fears of the rest. The creatures moved quietly along, grazing and pawing now and then, darkening the plain almost as far as the eye could see. The trader spent several days with the tribe, and when he went south again he had a bundle of hides so large that he had to drag it on a kind of hurdle made of poles. He had helped the Indians decorate some of the hides they had, and whenever he did this he wrote his own name, the date, and a few words, somewhere on the skin.

[Illustration: "THE CREATURES DARKENED THE PLAIN ALMOST AS FAR AS EYE COULD SEE."—Page 191]

"Why do you do this?" asked the medicine man, putting one long bronze finger on the strange marks.

"It is a message," said Cabeca de Vaca. "If any of my own people see it they will know who made the pictures."

The Indian looked at him thoughtfully.

"You are very clever," he said. "You ought to be a medicine-man."

This put another idea into the exile's head. He had seen much of the medicine-men in his wanderings, and had studied their ways. Like most men of his day who traveled



much, he had a rough-and-ready knowledge of medicine and surgery. He had sometimes been able to be of service to sick and wounded Indians, and whether it was their faith in him, or in the virtues of his treatment, his patients usually got well. In comparing notes they found that he often prayed and sang in his own language while watching with them. In the end he gained a great reputation as a sort of combined priest and doctor. He was not too proud to adopt some of the methods of the medicine-men when he found them effective, especially as regards herbs and other healing medicaments, used either in poultices or drinks. From being a poor slave and a burden to his masters, he became their great man.



Page 103

He had been for more than five years among the Indians when another tribe of Indians met with his tribe, perhaps drawn by the fame of the white medicine-man, and among their captives he recognized with joy three of his own comrades—Castillo, Dorantes, and a Barbary negro called Estevanico (Little Stephen). He told them of his experience, and found them glad to have him teach them whatever of the arts of the medicine-man he himself knew. After that, the four friends traveled more or less in company, and persuaded the Indians to go westward, where they thought that there might be a chance of meeting with some of their own people. They finally reached a point at which the Indians explained that they dared not go further, because the tribe which held the country further west was hostile.

“Send to them,” suggested Cabeca, “and tell them we are coming.”

After some argument the Indians sent two women, because women would not be harmed even in the enemy’s country. Then the four comrades set out into the new land.

Among them they knew six Indian dialects, and could talk with the people after a fashion, wherever they went. Even when two tribes were at war, they made a truce, so that they might trade and talk with the strangers. At last Castillo saw on the neck of an Indian the buckle of a sword-belt, and fastened to it like a pendant the nail of a horse-shoe. His heart leaped. He asked the Indian where he got the things. The Indian answered,

“They came from heaven.”

“Who brought them?” asked Cabeca.

“Men with beards like you,” the Indian answered rather timidly, “seated on strange animals and carrying long lances. They killed two of our people with those lances, and the rest ran away.”

Then Cabeca knew that his countrymen must have passed that way. His feelings were a strange mixture of joy and grief.

As they went on they came upon more traces of Spaniards, parties of slave-hunters from the south. Everywhere they themselves were well treated, even by people who were hiding in the mountains for fear of the Christians. When Cabeca told the Indians that he was himself a Christian they smiled and said nothing; but one night he heard them talking among themselves, not knowing that he could understand their talk.

“He is lying, or he is mistaken,” they said. “He and his friends come from the sunrise, and the Christians from the sunset; they heal the sick, the Christians kill the well ones; they wear only a little clothing, as we do, the Christians come on horses, with shining



garments and long lances; these good men take our gifts only to help others who need them; the Christians come to rob us and never give any one anything.”

The next day Cabeca told the Indians that he wished to go back to his own people and tell them not to kill and enslave the natives. He explained to them that this wickedness was not in any way part of his religion, and that the founder of that religion never injured or despised the poor, but went about doing good. When he was sure that there were Spaniards not many miles away, he took Estevanico, leaving the other two Spaniards to rest their tired bones, and with an escort of eleven Indians went out to look for his countrymen.



Page 104

When he found them, they were greatly astonished. Their astonishment did not lessen when he told them how he came to be where he was. He sent Estevanico back to tell the rest of the party to come, and himself remained to talk with Diego de Alcaraz, the leader of the Spanish adventurers, and his three followers. They were slave-hunters, like the other Spaniards. When, five days afterward Estevanico, Castillo and Dorantes came on with an escort of several hundred Indians, all Cabeca's determination and diplomacy were taxed to keep the slavers from making a raid on the confiding natives then and there. To buy Alcaraz off cost nearly all the bows, pouches, finely dressed skins, and other native treasures he had gained by trading or received as gifts. In this collection were five arrowheads of emerald or something very like that stone. It was not in Cabeca de Vaca to break his word to people who trusted him. He had suffered every sort of privation; he had traveled more than ten thousand miles on foot in his six years among the Indians of the Southwest; now he had lost most of his profit from that long exile; but he went back to Spain with faith unbroken and honor clear as a white diamond.

In May, 1536, he and his companions reached Culiacan in the territory of Spain. All the way to the City of Mexico they were feasted and welcomed as honored guests. The account which Cabeca de Vaca wrote of his travels was the first written description of the country now called Texas, Arizona and New Mexico.

NOTE

This story follows closely the "Relacion of Cabeca de Vaca." It illustrates the resourcefulness, bravery and ingenuity of Spanish cavaliers of the heroic age as hardly any other episode does.

LONE BAYOU

De Soto was a gentleman of Spain
In those proud years when Spanish chivalry
From fierce adventure never did refrain,—
Ruler of argosies that ruled the sea,
She looked on lesser nations in disdain,
As born to trafficking or slavery.

In shining armor, and with shot and steel
Abundantly purveyed for their delight,
Banners before whose Cross the foe should kneel,
His company embarked—how great a light
Through men's perversity to stoop and reel
Down through calamity to endless night!



Yet unsubmitive, obdurately bold,
The savages refused to serve their need.
They would not guide the conquerors to their gold,
Nor though cast in the fire like a weed
Or driven by stern compulsion to the fold,
Would they abandon their unhallowed creed.

The forest folk in terror broke and fled
Like fish before the fierce pursuing pike.
The stubborn chiefs as hostages were led—
And in the wilderness, a grisly dyke
Of slaves and captives, lay the heathen dead,
And the black bayou claims all dead alike.



Page 105

Then southward through the haunted bearded trees
The Spaniards fought their way—Maui's fires
Devoured their vestments and their chalices,
Their sacramental wine and bread—the choirs
No longer sang their requiems, and the seas
Lay between them and all their sacred spires.

At last in a lone cabin, where the cane
Hid the black mire before the lowly door,
De Soto died—although they sought to feign
By some pretended magic mirror's lore
That still he lived, a gentleman of Spain,—
And the dread flood rolled onward to the shore!

XIV

THE FACE OF THE TERROR

"Paris is no place in these times for a Huguenot lad from Navarre," said Dominic de Gourgues, of Mont-de-Marsan in Gascony. "His father, Francois Debre, did me good service in the Spanish Indies. One of these days, Philip and his bloodhounds will be pulled down by these young terriers they have orphaned."

"If the Jesuits have their way all Huguenots will be exterminated, men, women and children," said Laudonniere, with a gleam of melancholy sarcasm in his dark pensive eyes. "Life to a Jesuit is quite simple."

"My faith," said Gascon, twisting his mustache, "they may find in that case, that other people can be simple too. But I must be off. I thank you for making a place for Pierre."

In consequence of this conversation, when Ribault's fleet anchored near the River of May, on June 25, 1564, Pierre Debre was hanging to the collars of two of Laudonniere's deerhounds and gazing in silent wonder at the strange and beautiful land.

"The fairest, fruitfulest and pleasantest land in all the world," Jean Ribault had said in his report two years before to Coligny the Great Admiral of France. Live-oaks and cedars untouched for a thousand years were draped in luxuriant grape-vines or wreathed with the mossy gray festoons of "old men's beard." Cypress and pine mingled with the shining foliage of magnolia and palm. From the marsh arose on sudden startled wings multitudes of water-fowl. The dogs tugged and whined eagerly as if they knew that in these vast hunting-forests there was an abundance of game. In this rich land, thus far neglected by the Spanish conquistadores because it yielded neither gold nor silver, surely the Huguenots might find prosperity and peace. Coligny was a

Huguenot and a powerful friend, and if the French Protestants now hunted into the mountains or driven to take refuge in England, could be transplanted to America, France might be spared the horrors of religious civil war.



Page 106

Pierre was thirteen and looked at least three years older. He could not remember when his people and their Huguenot neighbors had not lived in dread of prison, exile or death. When he was not more than ten years old he had guided their old pastor to safety in a mountain cave, and seen men die, singing, for their faith. After the death of his father and mother he had lived for awhile with his mother's people in Navarre, and since they were poor and bread was hard to come by he had run away the year before and found his way to Paris, where Dominic de Gourgues had found him. If the Huguenots had a safe home he might be able to repay the kindness of his cousins. Meanwhile the country, the wild creatures, the copper-colored people and the hard work of landing colonists and supplies were full of interest and excitement for Pierre.

Saturiona, the Indian chief, showed the French officers the pillar which Ribault's party had set up on their previous visit to mark their discovery. The faithful savages had kept it wreathed with evergreens and decked with offerings of maize and fruits as if it were an altar.

Unfortunately not all the colonists were of heroic mind. Most who had left France to seek their fortunes were merchants, craftsman and young Huguenot noblemen whose swords were uneasy in time of peace. French farm-laborers were mainly serfs on Catholic estates, and landowners did not wish to come to the New World. Thus the people of the settlement were city folk with little experience or inclination for cultivating the soil. The Indians grew tired of supplying the wants of so large a number of strangers. Quarrels arose among the French. A discontented group of adventurers mutinied and went off on a wild attempt at piracy. They plundered two ships in the Spanish Indies and were caught by the Spanish governor. The twenty-six who escaped his clutches fled back to the fort, which Laudonniere had built and named Carolina. His faithful lieutenant La Caille arrested them and dragged them to judgment. "Say what you will," said one of the culprits ruefully, "if Laudonniere does not hang us I will never call him an honest man." The four leaders were promptly sentenced to be hanged, but the sentence was commuted to shooting. After that order reigned, for a time.

Some of the tradesmen ranged the wilderness, bringing back feather mantles, arrows tipped with gold, curiously wrought quivers of beautiful fur, wedges of a green stone like beryl. There were reports of a gold mine somewhere in the northern mountains. Ribault did not return with the expected supplies, the Indians had mostly left the neighborhood, and misery and starvation followed, for the game, like the Indians fled the presence of the white men. The Governor began to think of crowding the survivors into the two little ships he had and returning to France.

Matters were in this unsatisfactory state when Captain John Hawkins in his great seven-hundred-ton ship the *Jesus*, with three smaller ones, the *Solomon*, the *Tiger* and the *Swallow*, put in at the River of May for a supply of fresh water. He gave them provisions, and offered readily to take them back to France on his way to England, but this offer Laudonniere declined.



Page 107

“Monsieur Hawkins is a good fellow,” he observed dryly to La Caille, “and I am grateful to him, but that is no reason why I should abandon this land to his Queen, and that is what he is hoping that I may do.”

Others were not so long-sighted. The soldiers and hired workmen raised a howl of wrath and disappointment when they heard that they were not to sail with Hawkins, and openly threatened to desert and sail without leave. Laudonniere answered this threat by the cool statement that he had bought one of the English ships, the *Tiger*, with provisions for the voyage, and that if they would have a little patience they might soon sail for France in their own fleet. Somewhat taken aback they ceased their clamor and awaited a favoring wind. Before it came, Ribault came sailing back with seven ships, plenty of supplies, and three hundred new colonists.

The fleet approached as cautiously as if it were coming to attack the colony instead of relieving it, and Laudonniere, who saw many of his friends among the new arrivals, presently learned that his enemies among the colonists had written to Coligny describing him as arrogant and cruel and charging that he was about to set up an independent monarchy of his own. The Admiral, three thousand miles away, had decided to ask the Governor to resign. Ribault advised him to stay and fight it out, but Laudonniere was sick and disheartened. Life was certainly far from simple when to use authority was to be accused of treason, and not to use it was to foster piracy, and he had had enough of governing colonies in remote jungles of the New World. He was going home.

To most of the colonists, however, Ribault's arrival promised an end of all their troubles. Stores were landed, tents were pitched, and the women and children were bestowed in the most comfortable quarters which could be found for them just then. To his great satisfaction Pierre found among the arrivals his cousin Barbe and her husband, a carpenter, and her three children, Marie, Suzanne and little Rene. The two young girls regarded Cousin Pierre as a hero, especially when they learned that the bearskin on the floor of their palmetto hut had but a few months ago been the coat of a live black bear. It had been caught feasting in the maize-fields of the Indians, by their cousin and another youth, and shot with a crossbow bolt by Pierre. They thought the roast corn and stewed clams of their first meal ashore the most delicious food they had ever tasted, and the three-cornered enclosure in the forest with the wilderness all about it, the most wonderful place they had seen.

Little did these innocent folk imagine what was brewing in Spain. The raid of French pirates upon the Jamaican coast had promptly been reported by the Adelantado of that island. Spanish spies at the French court had carefully noted the movements of Coligny and Ribault. Pedro Menendez de Avila, raising money and men in his native province of Asturia in Spain for the conquest of all Florida, learned with horror and indignation that its virgin soil had already been polluted by heretic Frenchmen.



Page 108

Menendez had in that very year gained permission from the King of Spain to conquer and convert this land at his own cost. In return he was to have free trade with the whole Spanish empire, and the title of Adelantado or governor of Florida for life—absolute power over all of America north of Mexico, for Spain had never recognized any right of France or England in the region discovered by Cabot, Cartier, Verrazzano or others. Menendez was allowed three years for his tremendous task. He was to take with him five hundred men and as many slaves, a suitable supply of horses, cattle, sheep, hogs, and provisions, and sixteen priests, four of whom were to be Jesuits. He had also to find ships to convey this great expedition.

But Menendez had been playing for big stakes all his life. He was only ten years old when he ran away and went to sea on a Barbary pirate ship. While yet a lad he was captain of a ship of his own, fighting pirates and French privateers. He had served in the West Indies and he had commanded fleets. King Philip had never really understood the enormous possibilities of Florida until Menendez explained them to him. The soil was fertile, the climate good, there might be valuable mines, and there were above all countless heathen whom it was the deepest desire of Menendez to convert to the true faith. In this last statement he was as sincere as he was in the others. He expected to do in Florida what Cortes had done in Mexico. Now heresy, the unpardonable sin, burned out and stamped out in Spain, had appeared in the province which he had bound himself at the cost of a million ducats to make Spanish and Catholic. With furious energy he pushed on the work of preparation.

He had assembled in June, 1565, a fleet of thirty-four ships and a force of twenty-six hundred men. Arciniega, another commander, was to join him with fifteen hundred. On June 29 he sailed from Cadiz in the *San Pelayo*, a galleon of nearly a thousand tons, a leviathan for those days. Ten other ships accompanied him; the rest of the fleet would follow later. It was the plan of Menendez to wipe out the garrison at Fort Caroline before Ribault could get there, plant a colony there and one on the Chesapeake, to control the northern fisheries for Spain alone. On the way a Caribbean tempest scattered the ships and only five met at Hispaniola, but Menendez did not wait for the rest. When he reached the Florida coast he sent a captain ashore with twenty men to find out exactly where on that long, lonely shore line the French colony had squatted.

About half past eleven on the night of September 4, the watchman on one of the French ships anchored off shore saw the huge *San Pelayo*, the Spanish banner lifting sluggishly in the slow wind, coming up from the south. Ribault was in the fort, so were most of the troops, and three of the ships were anchored inside the bar. The strange fleet came steadily nearer, the great flagship moved to windward of Ribault's flagship the *Trinity*, and dropped anchor. The others did likewise. Not a word was spoken by friend or foe. The Spanish chaplain Mendoza afterward wrote:



Page 109

“Never since I came into the world did I know such a stillness.”

A trumpet sounded on the *San Pelayo*. A trumpet sounded on the *Trinity*. Menendez spoke, politely.

[Illustration: “GENTLEMEN, WHENCE DOES THIS FLEET COME?”—Page 204]

“Gentlemen, whence does this fleet come?”

“From France.”

“What is it doing here?”

“Bringing soldiers and supplies to a fort of the King of France in this country—where he soon will have many more,” flung back the Breton captain defiantly.

“Are you Catholics or Lutherans?”

This time a score of clear voices reinforced the Captain’s—“Lutherans—Huguenots—the Reformed Faith—The Religion!” And the Captain added, “Who are you yourself?”

“I am Pedro Menendez de Avila, General of the fleet of the King of Spain, Don Felipe the Second, who come hither to hang and behead all Lutherans whom I find by land or sea, according to instructions from his Majesty, which leave me no discretion. These commands I shall obey, as you will presently see. At daybreak I shall board your ships. If I find there any Catholic he shall be well treated. But every heretic shall die.”

The reply to the rolling sonorous ultimatum was a shout of derision.

“Ah, if you are a brave man, don’t put it off till daylight! Come on now and see what you will get!”

Menendez in black fury snapped out a command. Cables were slipped, and the towering black hulk of the *San Pelayo* bore down toward the *Trinity*. But the Breton captain was already leading the little fleet out of danger, and with all sail set, went out to sea, answering the Spanish fire with tart promptness. In the morning Menendez gave up the chase and came back to find armed men drawn up on the beach, and all the guns of the ships inside the bar pointed in his direction. He steered southward and found three ships already unloading in a harbor which he named San Augustin and proceeded to fortify.

In Fort Caroline, Pierre Debre, awakened by the sound of firing, ran down to the beach, where a crowd was gathering. No one could see anything but the flashes of the guns; who or what was attacking the ships there was no way of knowing. The first light of dawn showed the two fleets far out at sea, and Ribault at once ordered the drums to



beat "To arms!" They saw the great galleon approach, hover about awhile, and bear away south. When the French fleet came back later, one of the captains, Cosette, reported that trusting in the speed of his ship he had followed the Spaniards to the harbor where they were now landing and entrenching themselves.

The terror which haunted the future of every Huguenot in France now menaced the New World.

Ribault gave his counsel for an immediate attack by sea, before Menendez completed his defense or received reinforcements. Laudonniere was ill in bed. The fleet sailed as soon as it could be made ready, and with it nearly every able fighting man in the settlement. Pierre, nearly crying with wrath and disappointment, was left among the non-combatants at the fort. In vain did old Challeux the carpenter try to console him. It might be, as Challeux said, that there would be plenty of chances to fight after his beard was grown, but now he was missing everything.



Page 110

That night a terrible storm arose and continued for days. The marshes became a boundless sea; the forests were whipped like weeds in the wind. Where had the fleet found refuge? or had it been hurled to destruction by the rage of wind and sea? Laudonniere, in the driving rain, came from his sick-bed to direct the work on the defenses, which were broken down in three or four places. Besides the four dog-boys, the cook, the brewer, an old cross-bow maker, and the old carpenter, there were two shoemakers, a musician, four valets, fourscore camp-followers who did not know the use of arms, and the crowd of women and children. The sole consolation that could be found in their plight was that in such a storm no enemy would be likely to attack them by sea or land. Nevertheless Laudonniere divided his force into two watches with an officer for each, gave them lanterns and an hour glass for going the rounds, and himself, weak with fever, spent each night in the guard-room.

On the night of the nineteenth the tempest became a deluge. The officer of the night took pity on the drenched and gasping sentries and dismissed them. But on that night five hundred Spaniards were coming from San Augustin through almost impassable swamps, their provisions spoiled and their powder soaked, under the leadership of the pitiless Menendez. The storm had caught Ribault's fleet just as it was about to attack on the eleventh, and Menendez had determined to take a force of Spaniards overland and attack the fort while its defenders were away. With twenty Vizcayan axemen to clear the way and two Indians and a renegade Frenchman, Francois Jean, for a guide, he had bullied, threatened and exhorted them through eight days of wading through mud waist-deep, creeping around quagmires and pushing by main force through palmetto jungles, until two hours before daylight the panting, shivering, sullen men stood cursing the country and their commander, under their breath, in a pine wood less than a mile from Fort Caroline. It was all that Menendez could do to get them to go a rod further. All night, he said, he had prayed for help; their provisions and ammunition were gone; there was nothing to do but to go on and take the fort. They went on.

In the faint light of early morning a trumpeter saw them racing down the slope toward the fort and blew the alarm. "Santiago! Santiago!" sounded in the ears of the half-awakened French as the Spaniards came through the gaps in the defenses and over the ramparts. Fierce faces and stabbing pikes were everywhere. Laudonniere snatched sword and buckler, rallied his men to the point of greatest danger, fought desperately until there was no more hope, and with a single soldier of his guard escaped into the woods. Challeux, chisel in hand, on his way to his work, swung himself over the palisade and ran like a boy. In the edge of the forest he and a few other fugitives paused and looked down upon the enclosure of the fort. It was a butchery.



Page 111

Some of the Huguenots in the woods decided to return and surrender rather than risk the terrors of the wilderness. The Spaniards, they said, were at least men. Six of them did return, and were cut down as they came. Pierre Debre side by side with a few desperate men who had one of the two light cannon the fort possessed, was fighting like a tiger in defense of a corner where a group of women and children were crouching.

When Menendez could secure the attention of his maddened men he gave an order that women, children and boys under fifteen should be spared. This order and the instant's pause it gave came just as the last of the men in Pierre's corner went down before the halberds of the Spaniards. Pierre leaped the palisade and ran for the forest. Looking back, he saw the trembling women and children herded into shelter, but not killed. Fifteen of the captured Huguenots were presently hanged; a hundred and forty-two had been cut down and lay heaped together on the river bank. Pierre plunged into the forest and after days of wandering reached a friendly Indian village. The carpenter and the other fugitives who escaped were taken to France in the two small ships of Ribault's fleet which had not gone to attack the Spanish settlement. Menendez returned at leisure to San Augustin, where he knelt and thanked the Lord.

The fate of the men of Ribault's fleet became known through the letters which the Spaniards themselves wrote in course of time to their friends at home, but chiefly through Menendez's own report to the King. Dominic de Gourgues heard of it from Coligny, and his eyes burned with the still anger of a naturally impetuous man who has learned in stern schools how to keep his temper.

"As I understand it," he said grimly and quietly, "Menendez, in the disguise of a sailor, found Ribault and his men shipwrecked and starving, some in one place, some in another. He promised them food and safety on condition that they should surrender and give up their arms and armor. He separated them into lots of ten, each guarded by twenty Spaniards. When each lot had been led out of sight of the rest he explained that on account of their great numbers and the fewness of his own followers he should be compelled to tie their hands before taking them into camp, for fear they might capture the camp. At the end of the day, when all had reached a certain line which Menendez marked out with his cane in the sand, he gave the word to his murderers to butcher them."

Coligny bowed his noble gray head.

"And he offered them life if they would renounce their religion, whereupon Ribault repeating in French the psalm, 'Lord, remember thou me,' they died without other supplication to God or man. On this account did Menendez write above the heads of those whom he hanged, 'I do this not as to Frenchmen but as to Lutherans.' And no demand for redress has as yet been made?"



“One,” said the Admiral coolly. “A demand was made by Philip of Spain. He has required his brother of France to punish one Gaspe Coligny, sometimes known as Admiral, for sending out a Huguenot colony to settle in Florida.”



Page 112

The Gascon sprang to his feet muttering something between his teeth. "I crave your pardon, my lord," he added with a courteous bow. "I am but a plain rough soldier unused to the ways of courts, but it seems to me that things being as they are, my duty is quite simple." He bowed himself out and left Coligny wondering.

During the following months it was noted that in choosing the men for his coming expedition Gourgues appeared to be unusually select. He sold his inheritance, borrowed some money of his brother, and fitted out three small ships carrying both sails and oars. He enlisted, one by one, about a hundred arquebusiers and eighty sailors who could fight either by land or sea if necessary. He secured a commission from the King to go slave-raiding in Benin, on the coast of Africa. On August 22, 1567, he set sail from the mouth of the Charente.

"I should like to know," said one of the trumpeters, Lucas Moreau, "whether we are really going slave-catching, or not."

"Why do you think we are not?" asked the pilot, to whom he spoke.

"Because I have seen nothing on board that looks like it. Moreover, he was very particular to ask me if I had been in the Spanish Indies, and when he heard that I had been in Florida he took me on at once. I was out there, you know, when you were, two years ago."

"And you would like to go back?" asked the other, gruffly.

"If there were a chance of killing Menendez, yes," answered Moreau with a fierce flash of white teeth.

The trumpeter's guess was a shrewd one. When the tiny fleet reached the West Indies, the commander took his men into his confidence and revealed the true object of his voyage—to avenge the massacre at Fort Caroline. The result proved that he had not misjudged them. Fired by his spirit they became so eager that they wanted to push on at once instead of waiting for moonlight to pass the dangerous Bahama Channel. They came through it without mishap, and at daybreak were anchored at the mouth of a river about fifteen leagues north of Fort Caroline. In the growing light an Indian army in war paint and feathers, bristling with weapons, could be seen waiting on the shore.

"They may think we are Spaniards," said Dominic de Gourgues. "Moreau, if you think they will understand you, it might be well for you to speak to them."

No sooner had the trumpeter come near enough in a small boat for the Indians to recognize him, than yells of joy were heard, for the war party was headed by Satouriona himself, who well remembered him. When Moreau explained that the French had

returned with presents for their good friends there was great rejoicing. A council was appointed for the next day.



Page 113

In the morning Satouriona's runners had scoured the country, and the woods were full of Indians. The white men landed in military order, and in token of friendliness laid aside their arquebuses, and the Indians came in without their bows and arrows. Satouriona met Gourgues with every sign of friendliness, and seated him at his side upon a wooden stool covered with the gray "Spanish moss" that curtained all the trees. In the clearing the chiefs and warriors stood or sat around them, ring within ring of plumed crests fierce faces and watchful eyes. Satouriona described the cruelty of the Spaniards, their abuse of the Indians and the miseries of their rule, saying finally,

"A French boy fled to us after the fort was taken, and we adopted him. The Spaniards wished to get him to kill him, but we would not give him up, for we love the French." He waved his hand, and from the woods at one side came, in full Indian costume, bronzed and athletic, Pierre Debre.

Greatly as he was surprised and delighted, Gourgues dared not show it too plainly, and Pierre had grown almost as self-contained as a veteran of twice his years. When the French commander suggested fighting the Spaniards Satouriona leaped for joy. He and his warriors asked only to be allowed to join in that foray.

"How soon?" asked Gourgues. Satouriona could have his people ready in three days.

"Be secret," the Gascon cautioned, "for the enemy must not feel the wind of the blow." Satouriona assured him that there was no need of that warning, for the Indians hated the Spaniards worse than the French did.

"Pierre," said Gourgues, when he had the lad safe on board ship, "they said you were killed."

"I stayed alive to fight Spaniards," said the boy with a flash of the eye. "Sieur Dominic, there are four hundred of them behind their walls, where they rebuilt our fort. I have hidden in the trees and counted. But you can trust Satouriona. The Spaniards have stolen women, enslaved and tortured men, and killed children, and the tribe is mad with hate."

Twenty sailors were left to guard the ships, Gourgues with a hundred and sixty Frenchmen took up their march along the seashore; their Indian allies slipped around through the forest. With the French went Olotoraca, the nephew of the chief, a young brave of distinguished reputation, a French pike in his hand. The French met their allies not far from the fort, and pounced upon the garrison just as it finished dinner, Olotoraca being the first man up the glacis and over the unfinished moat. The fort across the river began to cannonade the attacking party, who turned four captured guns upon them, and then crossed, the French in a large boat which had been brought up the river, the Indians swimming. Not one Spaniard escaped. Fifteen were kept alive, to be hanged

on the very trees from which Menendez had hanged his French captives, and over them was set an inscription burned with a hot poker on a pine board:



Page 114

“Not as to Spaniards, but as to Traitors, Robbers, and Murderers.”

When not one stone was left upon another in either fort, Dominic de Gourgues bade farewell to his Indian allies, and taking with him the lad so strangely saved from death and exile, went back to France.

NOTE

The full history of this dramatic episode is to be found in Parkman's “The Pioneers of France in the New World.”

THE DESTROYERS

The moon herself doth sail the air
As we do sail the sea,
Where by Saint Michael's Mount we fare
Free as the winds are free.
Our keels are bright with elfin gold
That mocks the tyrant's gaze,
That slips from out his greedy hold
And leaves him in amaze.

White water creaming past her prow
The little *Golden Hynde*
Bears westward with her treasure now—
We'd ship and follow blind,
But that he never did require—
Our Captain hath us bound
Only by force of his desire—
The quarry hunts the hound!

The hunt is up, the hunt is up
To the gray Atlantic's bound,—
The health of the Queen in a golden cup!—
The quarry is hunting the hound!
Like steel the stars gleam through the night
On armored waves beneath,—
As England's honor cold and bright
We bear her sword in sheath!

When that great Empire dies away
And none recall her place,



Men shall remember our work to-day
And tell of our Captain's grace,—
How never a woman or child was the worse
Wherever our foe we found,
Nor their own priests had cause to curse
The quarry that hunted the hound!

XV

THE FLEECE OF GOLD

White fog, the thick mist of windless marshes, masked the Kentish coast. The Medway at flood-tide from Sheerness to Gillingham Reach was one maze of creeks and bends and inlets and tiny bays. Nothing was visible an oar's length overside but shifting cloudy shapes that bulked obscurely in the fog. But although this was Francis Drake's first voyage as master of his own ship, he knew these waters as he knew the palm of his hand. His old captain, dying a bachelor, had left him the weather-beaten cargo-ship as reward for his "diligence and fidelity", and at sixteen he was captain where six years before he had been ship's-boy.

Scores of daring projects went Catherine-wheeling through his mind as he steered seaward through the white enchanted world. In 1561 Spain was the bogy of English seaports, most of whose folk were Protestants. There was no knowing how long the coast-wise trade would be allowed to go on.

Out of the white mist flashed a whiter face, etched with black brows and lashes and a pointed silky beard—the face of a man all in black, whose body rose and dipped with the waves among the marsh grass of an eyot. So lightly was it held that it might have slipped off in the wake of the boat had not Tom Moone the carpenter caught it with a boat-hook. But when they had the man on board they found that he was not dead.



Page 115

Ten minutes before, the young captain would have said that every dead Spaniard was so much to the good, but he had the life-saving instinct of a Newfoundland dog. He set about reviving the rescued man without thinking twice on the subject.

"'T is unlucky," grumbled Will Harvest under his breath. "Take a drowned man from the sea and she get one of us—some time."

"Like enough," agreed his master blithely. "But this one's not drowned—knocked on the head and robbed, I guess. D'you think we might take him to Granny Toothacre's, Tom?"

"I reckon so," returned Tom with a wide grin, "seein' 't is you. If I was the one to ask her I'd as lief do it with a brass kittle on my head. She don't like furriners."

Drake laughed and brought his craft alongside an old wharf near which an ancient farmhouse stood, half-hidden by a huge pollard willow. Here, when he had seen his guest bestowed in a chamber whose one window looked out over the marshes, he stayed to watch with him that night, sending the ship on to Chatham in charge of the mate.

"Now what's the lad up to?" queried Will as they caught the ebbing tide. "D'ye think he'll find out anything, tending that there Spanisher?"

"Not him. He don't worm secrets out o' nobody. But he's got his reasons, I make no doubt. You go teach a duck to swim—and leave Frankie alone," said Moone.

The youth did not analyze the impulse that kept him at the bedside of the injured man, but he felt that he desired to know more of him. The stranger was gaunt, gray and without jewel, gold chain or signet ring to show who he was, but it was the same man who had spoken to him at Gravesend five years ago.

A barge-load of London folk had come down to see the launching of the *Serchthrift*, the new pinnacle of the Muscovy Company, and among them was the venerable Sebastian Cabot. Alms were freely distributed that the spectators might pray for a fortunate voyage, but Frankie Drake was gazing with all his eyes at the veteran navigator. A hand was laid on his shoulder, and a friendly voice inquired,

"Did you get your share of the plunder, my son?"

The lad shook his head a trifle impatiently. "I be no beggar," he answered. "I be a ship's boy."

"Ay," said the man, "and you seek not the Golden Fleece?"

His eyes laughed, and his long fingers played with a strange jewel that glowed like Mars in the midnight of his breast. It was of gold enamel, with a splendid ruby in the center,



and hanging from it a tiny golden ram. Could he mean that? But the crowd surged between them and left the boy wondering. He had never spoken to a Spaniard before.

As the fluttering pulse grew stronger and the man roused from his stupor, disjointed phrases of sinister meaning fell from his lips. No names were used, and much of his talk was in Spanish, but it suggested a foul undercurrent of bribery, falsehood and conspiracy hidden by the bright magnificence of the young Queen's court. The queer fact seemed to be that the speaker appeared himself to be the victim of some Spanish plot. Now why should that be, and he a Spaniard?



Page 116

The young captain turned from the window, into which through the clearing air the moon was shining, to find the stranger looking at him with sane though troubled eyes.

“The *Golden Fleece*?” he asked in English. Drake shook his head.

“You’ve had a bad hurt, sir,” he said, and briefly explained the circumstances.

“Ah,” said the man frowning, and was silent.

“If you would wish to send any word to your friends,—” Drake began, and hesitated.

“I have no friends here, save my servant Sancho. The *Golden Fleece* will sail on Saint James’s Eve for Coruna, and he was to meet me at Dover and return with me to our own country. In Alcala they know what to expect of a Saavedra.”

The last words were spoken with a proud assurance that gave the listener a tingling sense of something high and indomitable. Saavedra’s dark eyes were searching his face.

“I fear I trespass on your kindness,” he added courteously, “and that I have talked some nonsense before I came to myself.”

“Nothing of any account, sir,” answered the lad quickly. “Mostly it was Spanish—and I don’t know much o’ that. You’ll miss your ship if she sails so soon, but you’re welcome here so long as you like to stay.”

“I thank you,” said the Spaniard in a relieved tone, adding half to himself, “No friends—but one cannot break faith—even with an enemy.”

He dropped asleep almost at once after swallowing the cordial which Drake held to his lips. The moon came up over the flooded meadows that were all silvery lights and black shadow like a fairy realm. The lad had never spent a night like this, even when he had seen his master die.

When the pearl and rose of a July morning overspread the sky he descended, to splash and spatter and souse his rough brown head in a bucket of fresh-drawn water, and wheedle the old dame into a good humor.

“What ye hate and fear’s bound to come to ye, sooner or later,” Granny Toothacre grumbled as she stirred her savory broth, “My old man said so and I never beleft it—here be I at my time o’ life harborin’ a Spanisher.”

“Ah, now, mother,”—Drake laid a brown hand coaxingly on her old withered one,—“you’ll take good care of him for me, and we’ll share the ransom.”



“Ransom,” the old woman muttered, looking after the straight, sturdy young figure as it strode down to the wharf, “not much hope o’ that. Not but what he’s a grand gentleman,” she admitted, turning the contents of her saucepan into her best porringer. “He don’t give me a rough word no more than if I was a lady.”

Drake spent all his leisure during the next fortnight with the Spaniard, whose recovery was slow but steady. It was tacitly understood that the less said of the incident which had left him stunned and half-drowned the better. If those who had sought to kill him knew him to be alive, they might try again.



Page 117

The young seaman had never known a man like this before. In his guest's casual talk of his young days one could see as in a mirror the Spain of a half-century since, with its audacious daring, its extravagant chivalry and its bulldog ferocity.

"They have outgrown us altogether, these young fellows," he said once with his quaint half-melancholy smile. "When the King and Queen rode in armor at the head of their troops in Granada, our cavaliers dreamed of conquering the world—now it has all been conquered."

"Not England," Drake put in quickly.

"Not England—I beg your pardon, my friend. But we have grown heavy with gold in these days—and gold makes cowards."

"It never made a coward o' me," laughed the lad. "Belike it'll never have the chance."

Through the shadows the old ship's-lantern cast in the rude half-timbered room seemed to move the wild figures of that marvellous pageant of conquest which began in 1492. Saavedra spoke little of himself but much of others—Ojeda, Nicuesa, Balboa, Cortes, Alvarado, Pizarro. In his soft slow speech they lived again, while by the stars outside, unknown uncharted realms revealed themselves. This man used words as a master mariner would use compass and astrolabe.

"Those days when we followed Balboa in his quest for the South Sea," he ended, "were worth it all. Gold is nothing if it blinds a man to the heavens. You too, my son, may seek the Golden Fleece in good time. May the high planets fortify you!"

What room was left for a knight-errant in the Spain of to-day, ruling by steel and shot and flame and gold? It must be rather awful, the listener reflected, to see your own country go rotten like that in a generation. Yet there was no bitterness in the old hidalgo's tranquil eyes. "I have been a fool," he said smiling, "but somehow I do not regret it. The wound from a poisoned arrow can be seared with red-hot iron, but for the creeping poison of the soul—the loss of honor—there is no cure."

When the seamen came to get orders from their young captain, Saavedra observed with surprise the lad's clear knowledge of his own trade. Francis Drake's old master had seen King Henry's shipwrights discarding time-honored models to build for speed, speed and more speed. He had seen Fletcher of Rye, in 1539, prove to all the Channel that a ship could sail against the wind. All that he knew he had taught his young apprentice, and now the boy was free to use it for his own work—whatever that should be. Unlike the gilded and perfumed courtiers, these men of the sea showed little respect toward the tall ships of Spain. Saavedra, pleased that they spoke without reserve in his presence, watched the rugged straightforward faces, and wondered.



The time came when they took him and his stocky, silent old servant to board a Vizcayan boat. As they caught his last quick smile and farewell gesture Will Harvest heaved a rueful sigh. "I never thought to be sorrowful at parting with a Don," he said reflectively, "but I be."

Page 118

“God made men afore the Devil made Dons,” growled Tom Moone. “Yon’s a man.”

Drake had gone down the wharf with John Hawkins of Plymouth, a town that was warmly defiant of Spain’s armed monopoly of sea-trade. Privateers were dodging about the trade-routes where Spanish and Portuguese galleons, laden with ingots of gold and silver, dyewoods, pearls, spices, silks and priceless merchandise, moved as menacing sea-castles. Huger and huger galleasses were built, masted and timbered with mighty trunks from the virgin forests of the Old World, four and five feet thick. The military discipline of the Continent made a warship a floating barrack; the decks of a Spanish man-of-war were packed with drilled troops like marching engines of destruction, dealing leaden death from arquebus and musquetoun. The little ships of Cabot, Willoughby and William Hawkins had not exceeded fifty, sixty, at most a hundred tons; Philip’s leviathans outweighed them more than ten to one. What could England do against the landing of such an army? An English Admiral would be Jack the Giant-Killer with no magic at his command. Yet in the face of all this, under the very noses of the Spanish patrol, Protestant craftsmen were escaping from the Inquisition in the Netherlands to England, where Elizabeth had contrived to let it be known that they were quite welcome.

To a perfectly innocent and lawful coasting trade Drake and his crew now added this hazardous passenger service. They were braving imprisonment, torture and the stake, for in 1562 no less than twenty-six Englishmen were burned alive in Spain, and ten times as many lay in prison. Before Drake was twenty all Spanish ports were closed to English trade. He sold his ship and joined Hawkins in his more or less contraband trade with the West Indies.

With every year of adventure upon the high seas his hatred of the tyranny of Spain deepened and strengthened. Yet though Spanish ferocity might soak the world in blood, he would not have his men tainted with the evil inheritance of the idolaters. It came to be known that El Draque did not kill prisoners. His crews fought like demons, but they slew no unarmed man, they molested no woman or child. On these terms only would he accept allies. Tons of plunder he took, but never a helpless life. He landed the shivering crews of his prizes on some Spanish island or with a laugh returned to them their empty ships. “A dead man’s no mortal use to anybody,” he would say cheerily, and go on using his cock-boats to sink or capture galleys. At twenty-seven, beholding for the first time the shining Pacific, he vowed that with God’s help he would sail an English ship on that sea. Alone upon the platform built in a great tree with steps cut in its trunk, to which his negro allies the Maroons had guided him, he conceived the sublimely audacious plan which he was one day to unfold to Walsingham and the Queen.



Page 119

The air was thick with rumors of war with Spain when Drake arrived in London years later, in the company of a new friend, Thomas Doughty,—courtier, soldier, scholar, familiar with every shifting undercurrent of European court life. Never at a loss for a phrase, ready of wit and quick of understanding, Doughty could put into words what the frank-hearted young sea-captain had thought and felt and dreamed. Both knew the peace with Philip to be only deceptive. Walsingham and Leicester were for war; Burleigh for peace; between the two the subtle Queen played fast and loose with her powerful enemy.

Drake avowed to Doughty his belief that to strike effectively at the gigantic power of Spain, England must raid the colonies—not the West Indies alone, but the rich western provinces of Peru and Chili. No one had been south of Patagonia since its discovery, sixty years before. Geographers still held that beyond the Straits of Magellan a huge Antarctic continent existed. From that unknown region of darkness and tempest came the great heaving ground-swell, the tidal wave and the hurricane. Even Spanish pilots never used the perilous southern route. Treasure went overland across the Isthmus. Every year an elephantine treasure-ship sailed from Panama westward through the South Sea; and there was a rich trade between the American mines and the Orient and the Spanish peninsula, by way of the Cape of Good Hope. Doughty's imagination was fired by the gorgeous possibilities of the idea, and when he became the secretary of Christopher Hatton, the Queen's handsome Captain of the Guard, he laid the plan before him with all the eloquence of his persuasive tongue. Hatton finally obtained from Elizabeth a promise to contribute a thousand crowns to the cost of an expedition to penetrate the South Seas. This, however, was only on condition that the affair should be kept secret, above all from Burleigh, who was certain to use every effort to stop it. She had already, in a private audience with Drake, been informed of the main features and even the details of the scheme, and had assured him that when the time was ripe he should be chosen to avenge the long series of injuries which Philip had inflicted upon England's honor and her own.

When in mid-November, 1577, Drake ran out of Plymouth with his tiny fleet, he had with him all told one hundred and fifty seamen and fourteen boys, enlisted for a voyage to Alexandria, although it was pretty well known that this was a blind. His flagship, the *Pelican*, afterward re-christened the *Golden Hynde* for Hatton's coat-of-arms, was a hundred-ton ship carrying eighteen guns. The *Marygold*, a barque of thirty tons and fifteen guns, and the *Swan*, a provision ship of fifty tons, were commanded by two of the gentlemen volunteers, Mr. John Thomas and Mr. John Chester. Captain John Wynter commanded the *Elizabeth*, a new eighty-ton ship, and a fifteen-ton pinnace called the *Christopher* in honor of Hatton, was commanded by Tom Moore. Thomas Doughty was commander of the land-soldiers, and his brother John was enlisted among the gentlemen adventurers.



Page 120

All of Drake's experience and sagacity had gone to the fitting out of the ships. There were less than fifty men on board besides the regular crews, and among them were special artisans, two trained surveyors, skilled musicians furnished with excellent instruments, and the adventurous sons of some of the best families in England. As page the Admiral had his own nephew, Jack Drake. There were stores of wild-fire, chain-shot, arquebuses, pistols, bows, and other weapons. The Queen herself had sent packets of perfume breathing of rich gardens, and Drake's table furniture was of silver gilt, engraved with his arms; even some of the cooking utensils were of silver. Nothing was spared which became the dignity of England, her Admiral and her Queen. On calm nights the sea was alive with music. And on board the little flagship Doughty and Drake talked together as those do whose minds answer one another like voices in a roundelay.

Men who have time and again run their heads into the jaws of death are often inclined to fatalism. Drake had never expressed it in words, but he had a feeling that whatever he was meant to do, God would see that he did, so long as he gave himself wholly to the work. One evening when the Southern Cross was lifting above the darkling sea, and the violins were crooning something with a weird burden to it, Doughty mused aloud.

"T is the strangest thing in life, that whatever we are most averse to, that we are fated to do."

"Eh?" said Drake with a laugh, looking up from Eden's translation of Pigafetts. "Accordin' to that you can't even trust yourself. D'you look to see me set up an image to be worshiped?" Then he added in a lower tone, "That's foolish, Tom. God don't shape us to be puppets."

"That sounds like old Saavedra," was Doughty's idle comment. "He had great store of antiquated sentiments—like those in the chronicles of the paladins. I knew his nephew well—a witty fellow, but visionary. He laughed at the old cavalero, but he was fond of him, and our affections rule us and ruin us. A man should have no loves nor hates if he would get on at court."

Sheer surprise kept the other silent for the moment, and Doughty went on,—

"The old man had been in Mexico with Cortes, and might have risen to Adelantado in some South American province if he had not been too scrupulous to join Pizarro. He was in London, ten or fifteen years before I knew him, and I believe he was the destruction of a well-considered Spanish plot for the assassination of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth—the assassins nearly killed him. He was left for dead and was picked up by some sailors."

"He was in luck." Drake's eyes twinkled.



“They would have been luckier—if they had let the Spanish agents in London know they had him. He paid them well of course, but he gave them credit for the most exalted motives. All his geese were swans.”

“Maybe they acted out o’ pure decency,” Drake said dryly.



Page 121

“My Admiral, this is not Utopia.” Doughty stroked his beard with a light complacent hand. “Seriously, it is not a kindness to expect of men without traditions more than they are capable of doing. ‘E meglio cade dalle fenestre che del tetto.’” (It is better to fall from the window than from the roof.)

Drake was silent, fingering the slender Milanese poniard with the blade inlaid with gold and the great ruby in the top of the hilt, which lay on the table between them. The shipmaster came in just then with some question, and the conversation dropped.

[Illustration: “DRAKE WAS SILENT, FINGERING THE SLENDER MILANESE PONIARD.”—*Page 227*]

It was not often that Francis Drake attempted to analyze the character and behavior of those about him. Mostly he judged men by a shrewd instinct; but that night he lay long awake, watching the witch-lights upon the waves from the dancing lanterns. He was acute enough to see that Doughty had hit slyly at him over Saavedra’s shoulders. Doughty had not liked it that Moone should be raised to the rank of captain; he had already shown that he regarded himself as second only to Drake in command, and the champion of the gentlemen as distinct from the mariners. The second officer of every English ship was a practical shipmaster whose authority held in all matters concerning navigation. The soldiers and their officers were passengers. This was unavoidable in view of the new method of English sea-fighting, which depended quite as much on the skill of the seamen as on the armed and trained soldier. English gunners could give the foe a broadside and slip away before their huge adversary could turn. Drake now had two factions to deal with, and he bent his brows and set his jaw as he pondered the situation. If discord arose, the gentlemen would have to come to order. There was no room here for old ideas of caste. Any man too good to haul on a rope might go to—Spain.

Doughty had a way of taking it for granted that Drake and he, as gentlemen, shared thoughts and feelings not to be comprehended by common men. On land this had not seemed offensive, but on blue water, with the old sea-chanteys in his ears, in the intimate association of a long voyage, Drake found himself resenting it. What was there about the man that made his arguments so plausible when one heard them, so false when his engaging presence was withdrawn? And yet how devoted, how sympathetic, how witty and companionable he could be! Drake found himself excusing his friend as if he were a woman,—laughed, sighed, and went to sleep.

Presently he began to hear of John Doughty’s amusing himself by reading palms and playing on the superstitions of the sailors with strange prophecies, in which his brother sometimes joined. Drake summoned the two to a brief interview in which Thomas Doughty learned that his friend on land, frank, boyish and unassuming, was a different person from the Admiral of the Fleet. Yet as this impression faded, the brothers

perversely went on encouraging discord between the gentlemen adventurers and the sailors, and foretelling events with sinister aptness.



Page 122

It grew colder and colder. It should be summer,—but as they crept southward they encountered cold and wind beyond that of the North Sea in January. The nights grew long; the battering of the gales never ceased; the ships lost sight of one another. It was whispered that not only had the uncanny brothers foretold the evil weather, but Thomas Doughty had boasted of having brought it about. “We’ll ha’ no luck till we get rid of our prophet,” said blunt Tom Moone, “and the Lord don’t provide no whales for the likes o’ he.”

Drake warned his comrade with an ominous quiet. “Doughty,” he said, “if you value your neck you keep your reading and writing to what a common man can understand—you and your brother. A man can’t always prophesy for himself, let alone other folk.”

“You heard what he said,” commented Wynter grimly when the Admiral was in his cabin behind closed doors. “Better not raise the devil unless you know for sure what he’ll do. There’s been one gallows planted on this coast.”

“Sneck up!” laughed Doughty, “he would not dare hang a gentleman!” but he felt a creeping chill at the back of his neck.

On the desolate island where the stump of Magellan’s gallows stood black against a crimson dawn, they landed and the tragedy of estrangement and suspicion ended. Thomas Doughty was tried for mutiny and treason before a jury of his peers. Every man there held him a traitor, yet he was acquitted for lack of evidence. Thus encouraged, Doughty boldly declared that they should all smart for this when Burleigh heard of it. What he had done to hinder the voyage, he averred, was by Burleigh’s orders, for before they sailed he had gone to that wily statesman and told him the entire scheme.

In a flash of merciless revelation Drake saw the truth. He left Doughty to await the verdict, called the companies down to the shore, and there told them the story of the expedition from first to last, not overlooking the secret orders of the Queen.

“This man was my friend,” he said with a break in his voice such as they had not heard save at the suffering of a child. “I would not take his life,—but if he be worthy of death, I pray you hold up your hands.”

There was a breathless instant when none stirred; then every hand was raised.

On the next day but one they all sat down to a last feast on that bleak and lonely shore; the two comrades drank to each other for the last time, shared the sacrament, and embracing, said their farewells. Doughty proved that if he could not live a true man he could die like a gentleman; the headsman did his work, and Drake pronounced the solemn sentence, “Lo! this is the death of traitors!”



In that black hour the boyish laughter went forever from the eyes of the Admiral, and the careless mirth from his voice. When after a while young Jack Drake, unable to bear the silence that fell between them, began some phrase of blundering boyish affection, the sentence trailed off into a stammer.



Page 123

“He’s dead and at peace, Jack,” the master said, the words dropping wearily, like spent bullets. “He couldn’t help being as he was,—I reckon. If I’d known he was like that I could ha’ stopped him, but I never knew—till too late.”

Discord among the crews continued, until Drake, rousing from his fitful melancholy, called them all together on a Sunday, and mounted to the place of the chaplain.

“I am going to preach to-day,” he said shortly. Then he unfolded a paper and began to read it aloud.

“My masters, I am a very bad orator, for my bringing up hath not been in learning; but what I shall speak here let every man take good notice of and let him write it down. For I will speak nothing but what I will answer it in England, yea, and before Her Majesty.” He reminded them of the great adventure before them and went on.

“Now by the life of God this mutiny and dissension must cease. Here is such controversy between the gentlemen and the sailors that it doth make me mad to hear it. I must have the gentleman to haul with the mariner and the mariner with the gentleman. I would know him that would refuse to set his hand to a rope—but I know there is not any such here.

“Any who desire to go home may go in the *Marygold*, but let them take care that they do go home, for if I find them in my way I will sink them.”

Then beginning with Wynter he reduced every officer to the ranks forthwith, reprimanded known offenders, and wound up with this appeal:

“We have set by the ears three mighty sovereigns, and if this voyage have not success we shall be a scorning unto our enemies and a blot on our country forever. What triumph would it not be for Spain and Portugal! The like of this would never more be tried!” Then he gave every man his former rank and dismissed them. Moone, meeting Will Harvest that night by the light of a bonfire, was the only man who dared venture a comment. “We was spoilin’ for a lickin’,” he said, “and we got it. I do hope and trust we’ll keep out o’ mischief till Frankie gets us home to Plymouth, Hol’.” Will grinned back cheerfully, and there was a subdued laugh from the group about the fire. The fleet was itself again.

Adventure after adventure succeeded, wilder than minstrel ever sang. The *Marygold* went down with all hands; Wynter in the *Elizabeth*, believing the Admiral lost, turned homeward; the *Christopher* and the *Swan* had already been broken up. All alone the little *Golden Hynde*, blown southward, sailed around Cape Horn and proved the Antarctic continent a myth. Then Drake steered northward after more than two month’s tossing on the uncharted seas, to revictual his ship in Spanish ports, fill his hold with the rich cargoes of one prize ship after another, and capture at last the great annual

treasure-ship *Nuestra Senora de la Concepcion*, nicknamed the *Spitfire* because she was better armed than



Page 124

most of the ships plying on that coast. As they ballasted the *Golden Hynde* with silver from her huge hulk the jesting seamen dubbed her the *Spit-silver*. The little flagship was literally brimful of silver bars, ingots of gold, pieces of eight, and jewels whose value has never been accurately known. The Spanish Adelantados, accustomed to trust in their remoteness for defense, frantically looked for Drake everywhere except where he was. Warships hung about the Patagonian coast to catch him on his way home—surely he could not stay at sea forever!

But Drake had other plans. Navigators were still searching for the northern passage, the Straits of Anian, and he coasted northward until his men were half paralyzed with cold and the creeping chill of the fog. From the latitude of Vancouver he turned south again, and put into a natural harbor not far from the present San Francisco, which he named New Albion because of the white cliffs like the chalk downs of England. Here he landed and made camp to refit and repair his flagship. He had captured on one prize, two China pilots in whose possession were all the secret charts of the Pacific trade.

Indians ventured down from the mountains to the little fort and dockyard, wondering and admiring. Parson Fletcher presently came to the Admiral with the extraordinary news that they were worshipping the English as gods. Horror and laughter contended among the Puritans when they found themselves set up as idols of the heathen, and the chaplain endeavored by signs to teach the simple savages that the God whom all men should worship was invisible in the heavens.

“T only shows,” remarked Moone, with a nail in one corner of his mouth, after vehemently dissuading a persistent adorer, “that a man never knows what he’ll come to. Granny Toothacre used to say that if there’s a thing you fight against all your life it’ll come to you sooner or later.”

“So she did,” said Drake with a grim smile as he passed. “Takes a woman to tell a fortune, after all.”

“D’you ever hear what become of the old Don we picked up that time?” Moone asked in a lowered voice.

“Not since he sent Frankie the dagger with the gold work and the jewel. Why?”

“Cause the pilot o’ the *Spit-silver* he knowed un. He say the plague broke out in the Low Countries, and the old Don took and tended that Gallego servant o’ his and then he died—not o’ the pestilence—just wore out like. I reckon maybe he told Mus’ Drake. I didn’t.”



Silence fell. Then Will said thoughtfully, “He won’t be Mus’ Drake much longer—by rights—but you never know what a woman’ll do. She keep her presents and her favors for them that ha’n’t earned ’em—as a rule.”

Moone presently hummed half aloud,

“When I served my master I got my Sunday pudden,
When I served the Company I got my bread and cheese.
When I served the Queen I got hanged for a pirate,
All along o’sailin’ on the Carib Seas!”



Page 125

It was a reckless jest, for every one knew that if Elizabeth were dead or married to a Catholic or at peace with Spain when they saw England again, it was extremely likely that the gallows would be their reward. But here, at any rate, was one spot not yet haunted by the Spanish spectre.

The Indians, persuaded at last that the white chief was not a god, insisted on making him their King. They crowned him with a headdress of brilliant feathers, in all due ceremony, hung a chain of beads about his neck, and looked on with the utmost reverence while Drake fixed to a large upright post a tablet claiming the land for the Queen of England, and a silver sixpence with the portrait of Elizabeth and the Tudor rose. Securely hidden under the tablet in a hollow of the wood were memoranda concerning the direction in which, according to the Indians, gold was to be found in the streams,—plenty of gold. When she was ready to the last rope's end the little ship spread her wings and sailed straight across the Pacific, round the Cape of Good Hope, home to England.

Battered and scarred but still seaworthy the *Golden Hynde* crept into Plymouth Sound, where Drake heard that the plague was in the seaport. Using this for excuse not to land until he knew his footing, he anchored behind Saint Nicholas Island and sent letters to Court.

The sea-dogs who patrolled the Narrow Seas in Elizabeth's time understood her better than her courtiers did. To Drake she was still the keen-minded woman who, like the jeweled silent birds he had seen in tropical jungles, sat in her palace, with enemies all about her alert and observant, and ready to seize her if she came within their grasp. He knew her waywardness to be half assumed, since to let an enemy know what he can count on is fatal. He had not much doubt of her action, but he must wait for her to give him his cue.

Within a week came her answer. She demurely suggested that she should be pleased to see any curiosities which her good Captain had brought home. Drake went up to London, and with him a pack train laden with the cream of his spoil. The Spanish Ambassador Mendoza came with furious letters from Philip demanding the pirate's head. A Spanish force landed that very week in Ireland. Burleigh and the peace party were desperate. All that Mendoza could get out of Elizabeth was an order to Edmund Tremayne at Plymouth to register the cargo of the *Golden Hynde* and send it up to London that she might see how much the pirate had really taken. At the same time Drake himself went down with her private letter to Tremayne telling him to look another way while her captain got his share of the bullion. Meanwhile she suggested that Philip call his Spaniards out of Ireland. Philip snarled that they were private volunteers. Elizabeth replied, so was Drake. An inquiry was held, and not a single act of cruelty or destruction of property could be proved against any of Drake's crews. The men were richly rewarded by their Admiral; the *Golden Hynde* came up to Deptford; a list of the plunder was returned to Mendoza; and London waited, excited and curious.



Page 126

Out of this diplomatic tangle Elizabeth took her own way, as she usually did. On April 4, 1581, she suggested to Drake that she would be his guest at a banquet on board the little, worm-eaten ship. All the court was there, and a multitude of on-lookers besides, for those were the days when royalty sometimes dined in public. After the banquet, the like of which, as Mendoza wrote his master, had not been seen in England since the time of her father, Elizabeth requested Drake to hand her the sword she had given him before he left England. "The King of Spain demands the head of Captain Drake," she said with a little laugh, "and here am I to strike it off." As Drake knelt at her command she handed the sword to Marchaumont, the envoy of her French suitor, asking that since she was a woman and not trained to the use of weapons, he should give the accolade. This open defiance of Philip thus involved in her action the second Catholic power of Europe before all the world. Then, as Marchaumont gave the three strokes appointed the Queen spoke out clearly, while men thrilled with sudden presage of great days to come,—

"Rise up,—Sir Francis Drake!"

A WATCH-DOG OF ENGLAND

Where the Russian Bear stirs blindly in the leash of a mailed hand,
Bright in the frozen sunshine, the domes of Moscow stand,

Scarlet and blue and crimson, blazing across the snow
As they did in the Days of Terror, three hundred years ago.

Courtiers bending before him, envoys from near and far,
Sat in his Hall of Audience Ivan the Terrible Tsar,

(He of the knout and torture, poison and sword and flame)
Yet unafraid before him the English envoy came.

And he was Sir Jeremy Bowes, born of that golden time
When in the soil of Conquest blossomed the flower of Rhyme.

Dauntless he fronted the Presence,—and the courtiers whispered low,
"Doth Elizabeth send us madmen, to tempt the torture so?"

"Have you heard of that foolhardy Frenchman?" Ivan the Terrible said,—
"He came before me covered,—I nailed his hat to his head."

Then spoke Sir Jeremy Bowes, "I serve the Virgin Queen,—
Little is she accustomed to veil her face, I ween.



“She is Elizabeth Tudor, mighty to bless or to ban,
Nor doth her envoy give over at the bidding of any man!

“Call to your Cossacks and hangmen,—do with me what ye please,
But ye shall answer to England when the news flies over seas.”

Ivan smiled on the envoy,—the courtiers saw that smile,
Glancing one at the other, holding their breath the while.

Then spoke the terrible Ivan, “His Queen sits over sea,
Yet he hath bid me defiance,—would ye do as much for me?”

XVI



Page 127

LORDS OF ROANOKE

Primrose garlands in Coombe Wood shone with the pale gold of winter sunshine. Violets among dry leaves peered sedately at the pageant of spring. In the royal hunting forest of Richmond, venerable trees unfolded from their tiny buds canopies like the fairy pavilion of Paribanou.

Philip Armadas and Arthur Barlowe, coming up from Kingston, beheld all this April beauty with the wistful pleasure of those who bid farewell to a dearly beloved land. Within a fortnight Sir Walter Raleigh's two ships, which they commanded, would be out upon the gray Atlantic. The Queen would lie at Richmond this night, and the two young captains had been bidden to court that she might see what manner of men they were.[1]

Armadas, though born in Hull, was the son of a Huguenot refugee. Barlowe was English to the back-bone. Both knew more of the ways of ships than the ways of courts. Yet for all her magnificence and her tempers Elizabeth had a way with her in dealing with practical men. She welcomed merchants, builders, captains and soldiers as frankly as she did Italian scholars or French gallants. Her attention was as keen when she was framing a letter to the Grand Turk securing trade privileges to London or Bristol, as when she listened to the graceful flatteries of Spenser or Lyly. In this year 1584 she had granted a patent to Raleigh for further explorations of the lands north of Florida discovered half a century since by Sebastian Cabot. She heaped upon it rights and privileges which made Hatton and her other court gallants grind their teeth. Raleigh knew well that this was no time for him to be wandering about strange coasts. He was therefore fitting out an expedition to make a preliminary voyage and report to him what was found.

"T is like this," Armadas was saying with the buoyant confidence which endeared him alike to his patron and his comrade. "North you get the scurvy and south the fever, but midway is the climate for a new empire. There Englishmen may have timber for their shipyards, and pasture for their sheep and cattle, and meadows for their corn. There Flemings and Huguenots may live and work in peace. Our sons may be lords and princes of a new world, Arthur lad."

"Aye; but there's the Inquisition in the Indies to reckon with," answered Barlowe with his grim half-smile. "And if what we hear of the barbarians be true, the men who make the first plantation may be forced to plant and build with their left hand and keep their right for fighting."

"Oh, the barbarians,—" Armadas began, and paused, for the chatter of young voices broke forth in a copse.

"I tell thee salvages be hairy men with tails like monkeys. My uncle he has seen them on the Guinea coast."



“Dick, if thou keep not off my heels in the passamezzo—”

“Be not so choleral, Tom Poope, or the Master’ll give thee a tuning. Thou’rt not Lord of the Indies yet.”



Page 128

“Faith,” chuckled Barlowe, “here be some little eyasses practising a fantasy for the Queen’s pleasure. Hey, lads, what’s all the pother about?”[2]

The company emerged half-shamefacedly from the shrubbery, a group of youngsters between ten and fourteen, in fanciful costumes of silk and brocade, or mimic armor and puffed doublets. The central figure of the group was a handsome little lad in a sort of tunic of hairy undressed goatskin, a feather head-dress and gilded ornaments. His dark face had a sullen look, and he grasped his lance as if about to use it. Another urchin, whose great arched eyebrows, rolling eyes and impish mouth marked him as the clown of the company, made answer boldly,

“’T is Tom Poope, your lordships, who mislikes the dress he must wear, and says if we have but a king and queen of the monkeys to welcome the discoverers, the Queen will only laugh at us, and ’a will not stay to be laughed at. ’T is a masque of the ventures of Captain Cabot, look you, and Tom’s the King of the salvages and makes all the long speeches.”

“Upon my word, coz,” laughed Armadas, “I think we have stumbled upon a pretty conceit intended to do honor to our master. Methinks His Royal Highness here has the right on’t—the man who made that costume never saw true Indians.”

“Have you seen them, then, sir? Are you a voyager?” asked Tom Poope eagerly, his face brightening. “And will you look on and tell us if we do it right?”

Barlowe grinned good-humoredly, and Armadas waved a laughing assent. They seated themselves upon a grassy bank and the play began.

Before half a dozen speeches had been said it was quite clear that the dark-eyed child who played the Indian King was the heart and fire of the piece. They were all clever children and well trained, but he alone lived his part. His small figure moved with a grace and dignity that even his grotesque apparel could not spoil. The costumer had evidently built his design for the costume of an Indian chief upon legends of wild men drawn from the history of Hanno and his gorillas, adding whatever absurdities he had gathered from sailors of the Gold Coast and the Caribbean Sea. Armadas, who had made a voyage to Newfoundland and seen the stately figure of a sachem outlined against a sunset sky, thought that the boy’s instinct was truer than the costumer’s tradition.

“Let me arrange thy habit, lad,” he said when the first scene ended and the clown began his dance. With a few deft touches, ripping down one side of the tunic and wreathing a girdle of ivy and bracken, he changed the whole outline of the figure. With the hairy tunic draped as a cloak, and the ungainly plumed head-dress arranged as a warrior’s crest, the character which had been almost ridiculous became heroic, as the author of

the masque evidently had intended. The little King's beautiful voice changed like the singing of a Cremona violin as he spoke his lines to the white stranger:



Page 129

“To this our wild domain we welcome thee
In honorable hospitality.
If Thou dost come as the great Lord of Life,
The Lord of bear and wolf, and stag and fox,
Leopard and ape, and rabbits of the rocks,
We are thy children, as our brothers are,—
The furry folk of forest fastnesses,
The bright-winged birds that wanton with the breeze,
The seal that sport amid the sapphire seas.
We worship gods of lightning and of thunder,
Of winds and hissing waves, the rainbow’s wonder,
The fruits and grains, borne by the kindly earth,
And all the mysteries of death and birth.
Say who you are, and from what realm you hail,
White spirits that in winged peraguas sail?
If ye be angels, tell us of your heaven.
If ye be men, tell us who is your King.”

It was not a long play, and had been written by a court poet especially for the children, of whose acting the Queen was fond. There were dances and songs—a sailor’s contra-dance to the music of a horn pipe, a stately passamezzo by the Indian court, a madrigal and an ode in compliment to the Queen.[3] Finally the leader of the white men planted the banner of England on the little knoll, and in the name of his sovereign received the homage of the Indians. The last notes of the final chorus had just died away when trumpets called from the Thames, and the scene melted into chaos. Off ran the players, cramming costumes and properties into their wallets as they went, to see the Queen land at the water-gate. Amadas and Barlowe took the same direction less hurriedly.

“I wonder now,” said Armadas thoughtfully, “how much of prophecy there may have been in that mascarado? Do you know, old lad, we may be taken for gods ourselves in two months’ time? God grant they think us not devils before we are done!”

“We need have no fear if no Spaniards have landed on that coast before us,” said Barlowe stolidly. “If they have—no poetical speeches will help our cause.”

The Queen’s great gilded barge with its crimson hangings came sweeping up the river just as they joined the company drawn up to receive her. The tall graceful figure of Raleigh was nearest her, and when she set her small neat foot upon the stone step it was his hand which she accepted to steady her in landing. She was a sovereign every inch even in her traveling cloak, but when dinner was over, and she took her seat in the throne-room, she dazzled the eye with the splendor of gold and pearl network over brilliant velvets, the glitter of diamonds among the frost-work of Flanders lace. Elizabeth knew how to stage the great Court drama as well as any Master of the Revels.



Page 130

Moreover, what the Queen did, set the fashion for all the courtiers, to the profit and prosperity of merchants and craftsmen. Earls might secretly writhe at the prospect of entertaining their sovereign with suitable magnificence, but the tradesmen and purveyors rubbed their hands. When a company of Flemings was employed for four years on the carving of the beams and panels of the Middle Temple Hall, or noblemen to be in the fashion built new banquet-rooms in the Italian style, with long windows and galleries, English, Flemish and Huguenot builders flocked to the kingdom. If she took with one hand she gave with the other, and it was not without reason that the common folk of England long after she was dead called their daughters after “good Queen Bess.”

To Armadas and Barlowe it was a novel and splendid pageant. After they were presented to the Queen, and expressed their modest thanks for the honor of being sent upon her service, they withdrew to a window-recess to watch the company. The gentlemen pensioners in gold-embroidered suits and lace-edged ruffs, the dignified councilors in richer if darker robes, the maids of honor, bright as damask roses moving in the wind, all circled around one pale woman with keen gray-blue eyes that never betrayed her. A little apart, speaking now and then to some courtier or councilor, stood the Spanish Ambassador in somber black and gold, like a watchful spider in a garden of rich flowers. Raleigh, careless and debonair, gave him a frank salutation as he came to speak to his captains.

“You may repent of the venture and wish to stay at Court,” he said smiling. “The Queen thinks well of ye.”

“Not I,” growled Barlowe, and Armadas laughed, “My Lord, do you think so ill of us as to deem us weathercocks in the wind?”

“You must take care to avoid the clutches of the Inquisition,” Raleigh added, not lowering his voice noticeably, yet not speaking loud enough to be heard by others. “I have hastened the fitting out of the ships and delayed your coming to Court lest Philip’s ferrets be set on you. The life of Kings and Queens is like to a game of chess.”

“Of primero rather, it seems to me,” said Armadas, “or the game the Spanish call ombre. Chess is brain against brain, fair play. In the other one may win the game by the fall of the cards—or by cheaterly.”[4]

“A good simile, Philip,” said Raleigh, with shining eyes. “’T is all very well to say, as some do, that if old King Harry were alive he’d have our Englishmen out of Spanish prisons. But in his day Spain had hardly begun her conquests over seas, and the Inquisition had not tasted English blood. It was Philip that taught our men primero—and the best player is he who can bluff, so playing his hand that his enemy guesses not the truth. And the stake in this game is—Empire.”



Page 131

Raleigh's head lifted as if he saw visions. In silence the three joined the company now assembling to see the masque of the children. Bravely it went, nimbly the dancers footed it, sweetly rang the choruses, and well did the little chief and captain play their parts. At the end the Queen, saying in merry courtesy that she could do no less for him who had found her a kingdom and him who freely gave it, presented a ring set with a carnelian heart to Hal Kempe who played Cabot, but about the neck of Tom Poope she hung a golden chain, for if he had to wear her fetters, she said, they should at least be golden. And so the play came to an end, and work began.

[Illustration: "IF HE HAD TO WEAR HER FETTERS, THEY SHOULD AT LEAST BE GOLDEN."—Page 245]

On April 27, with a fair wind, the two ships of Raleigh's venture went down to the Channel and out upon the western ocean. They had good fortune, for not a Spaniard crossed their course. Nine weeks later they sighted the coast which the French had once called Carolina. Before they were near enough to see it well they caught the scent of a wilderness of flowering vines and trees blown seaward, and as they neared the shore they saw tall cedars and goodly cypresses, pines and oaks and many other trees, some of them quite unknown to English soil. It is written in Armadas's journal that the wild grapes were so abundant near the sea that sometimes the waves washed over them; and the sands were yellow as gold. The first time that an arquebus was fired, great flocks of birds rose from the trees, screaming all together like the shouting of an army, but there seemed to be no fierce beasts nor indeed any large animals.

"With kine, sheep, cattle, and poultry, and such herbs and grain as can be brought from England," said Armadas, "this land would sure be a paradise on earth."

"You forget the serpent," returned Barlowe, who had been reared by a Puritan grandfather and knew his Bible.

"I am not likely to forget our great enemy while the name of Ribault or Coligny remains unforgotten," said the other. "All the more reason why this land should be kept for the Religion."

Indeed when they landed they found little in the country or the people to recall Adam's doom. They set up their English standard upon an island and took possession of the domain in the name of Elizabeth of England. This island the Indians called Wocoken, and the inlet where the ships lay, Ocracoke. They went inland as the guests of the native chiefs, and on the island of Roanoke they were entertained by the people of Wingina the king, most kindly and hospitably. The sea remained smooth and pleasant and the air neither very hot nor very cold, but sweet and wholesome. Manteo and Wanchese, two of the Indian warriors, chose to sail away with the white men, and in good time the ships returning reached Plymouth harbor, early in September of that year. Manteo was made Lord of Roanoke, the first and the last of the American Indians

to bear an English title to his wild estate. The new province was named Virginia, with the play upon words favored in that day, for it was a virgin country, and its sovereign was the Virgin Queen.



Page 132

When the two captains came again to London they found the air full of the intrigings of Spain. In that year Santa Cruz had organized a plot against the Queen's life, discovered almost by chance; in that year it became clear that Philip's long chafing against the growing sea-power of England and his hatred of such rangers as Drake and Hawkins must sooner or later blaze up in war. And by chance also Armadas learned how narrow had been their own escape from a Spanish prison.

He had been the guest of a friend at the acting of Master Lyly's new masque by the Children of the Chapel at Gray's Inn. Little Tom Poope sang Apelles's song and ruffled it afterward among the ladies of the court, as lightly as Essex himself. Armadas came out into the dank Thames air humming over the dainty verses,—

“At last he staked her all his arrows.
His mother's doves, and team of sparrows—”

A small hand slid into his own and pulled him toward a byway.

“Why, how is it with thee, Master Poope? Didst play thy part bravely, lad.”

“Come,” said the boy in a low breathless voice. “I have somewhat to tell thee. In here,” and he drew Armadas toward a doorway. “T is my mother's lodging—there is nothing to fear.”

A woman let them in as if she had been watching for them, opened the door into a small plainly furnished private room and vanished.

“Art not going on any more voyages to the Virginias?” asked the boy, his eager eyes on the Captain's face.

“Not for the present, my boy. Why? Wouldst like to sail with us, and learn more of the ways of Indian Princes?”

“Nay, I have no time for fooling—they'll miss me,” said the youngster impatiently. “The Spanish Ambassador has his spies upon thee, and thou must leave a false scent for them to smell out. He sent his report on thee, eight months ago.”

“Before we sailed to Roanoke?” queried Armadas with lifted brows.

“Before thou went to Richmond that day. His Excellency quizzed me after the masque and asked me did I know when the ships sailed and whither they were bound, believing me to be cozened by his gold. I told him they were for Florida to find the fountain of youth for the Queen, and would sail on May-day!”

A grin of pure delight widened the boy's face, and he wriggled in gleeful remembrance where he perched, on a tall oaken chair. “Oh, they will swallow any bait, those



gudgeons, and some day their folly will be the end of them. I would not have them catch thee if they could be fooled, and well did I fool them, I tell thee!”

“For—heaven’s—sake!” stammered Armadas in amazement. “Little friend,” he added gently, “it seems to me that we owe thee life and honor. But why didst do it?”

“Why?” The boy’s fine dark brows bent in a quick frown. “What a pox right had they to be tempting me to be false to the salt that I and they had eaten? I hate all Spaniards. I’d ha’ done it any way,” he added shyly, “for to win our game, but I did it for love o’ thee because thou took my part about the mascarado.”



Page 133

"I think," said Armadas as he took from his wallet a bracelet of Indian shell-work hung with baroque pearls, "that all our fine plans would ha' come to naught but for thy wise head, young 'un. These be pearls from the Virginias, and if you find 'em scorched, that's only because the heathen know no other way of opening the oyster-shell but by fire. The beads are such as they use for money and call roanoke. The gold of the Spanish mines can buy men maybe, but it does not buy such loyalty as thine, that's sure. I have no gold to give, lad,—but wear this for a love-token. And I think that could the truth be known, the Queen herself would freely name thee Lord of Roanoke."

NOTES

[1] The name is variously spelled Armadas, Amidas and Amadas. The form here used is that of the earliest records. The same is true of the spelling "Raleigh."

[2] Companies of children under various names were often employed in the acting of plays in the time of Elizabeth. These are the "troops of children, little eyasses" alluded to by Shakespeare in "Hamlet." They sometimes acted in plays written for them by Lyly and others, and sometimes in the popular dramas of the day. Ben Jonson wrote a charming epitaph on Salathiel Pavy, one of these little actors, who died at thirteen.

[3] The passamezzo, passy-measure or half-measure was a popular Elizabethan dance, like the coranto and lavolta.

[4] Primero, or ombre, is said to be the ancestor of our modern game of poker. An interesting account of its origin and variations will be found in Mrs. Schuyler Van Rensselaer's "Prophetical, Educational and Playing Cards."

THE CHANGELINGS

Out on the road to Fairyland where the dreaming children go,
There's a little inn at the Sign of the Rose, that all the fairies
know,
For Titania lodged in that tavern once, and betwixt the night and
the day
The children that crowded about her there, she stole their hearts away!

Peaseblossom, Moth and Mustardseed, Agate and Airymouse too,
Once were children that laughed and played as children always do,
But when Titania kissed their lips, and crowned them with daffodil gold
They never forgot what she whispered them, they never knew how to grow
old!



Mothers that wonder why little lads forget their homely ways,
And little maids put their dolls aside and take to acting plays,
Ah, let them be kings and queens awhile, for there's nothing sad or
mean
In their innocent thought, and their crowns were wrought by the touch
o' the Fairy Queen!

Close to the heart o' the world they come, the children who know the
way
To the little low gateway under the rose, where 't is neither night
nor day.
They see what others can never guess, they hear what we cannot hear,
And the loathly dragons that waste our life they never learn to fear.



Page 134

The little inn at the Sign of the Rose,—ah, who can forget the place
Where Titania danced with the children small and lent them her elfin
grace?
And wherever they go and whatever they do in the years that turn them
gray
They never forget the charm she said when she stole their hearts away!

XVII

THE GARDENS OF HELENE

“Is there not any saint of the kitchen, at all?” asked the serious-eyed little demoiselle sorting herbs under the pear-tree. Old Jacqueline, gathering the tiny fagots into her capacious apron, chuckled wisely.

“There should be, if there isn’t. Perhaps the good God thinks that the men will take care that there are kitchens, without His help.” She hobbled briskly into the house. Helene sat for a few minutes with hands folded, her small nose alert as a rabbit’s to the marvelous blend of odors in the hot sunshiny air.

It was a very agreeable place, that old French garden. There had been a kitchen-garden on that very spot for more than five hundred years; at least, so said Monsieur Lescarbot the lawyer, and he knew all about the history of the world. A part of the old wall had been there in the days of the First Crusade, and the rest looked as if it had. When Henry of Navarre dined at the Guildhall, before Ivry, they had come to Jacqueline for poultry and seasoning. She could show you exactly where she gathered the parsley, the thyme, the marjoram, the carrots and the onion for the stuffing, and from which tree the selected chestnuts came. A white hen proudly promenading the yard at this moment was the direct descendant of the fowl chosen for the King’s favorite dish of *poulet en casserole*.

But the common herbs were far from being all that this garden held. Besides the dozen or more herbs and as many vegetables which all cooks used, there were artichokes, cucumbers, peppers of several kinds, marigolds, rhubarb, and even two plants of that curious Peruvian vegetable with the golden-centered creamy white flowers, called *po-te-to*. Jacqueline’s husband, who had been a sea-captain, had brought those roots from Brazil, and she,—Helene,—who was very little then, had disgraced herself by gathering the flowers for a nosegay. It was after that that Jacqueline had begun to teach her what each plant was good for, and how it must be fed and tended. Helene had grown to feel that every plant, shrub or seedling was alive and had thoughts. In the delightful fairy tales that Monsieur Marc Lescarbot told her they were alive, and talked of her when they left their places at night and held moonlight dances.



Lescarbot's thin keen face with the bald forehead and humorous eyes appeared now at the grille in the green door. He swept off his beret and made a deep bow. "Mademoiselle la bien-aimee de la bonne Sainte Marthe," he said gravely, "may I come in?"



Page 135

He had a new name for her every time he came, usually a long one. “But why Sainte Marthe?” she asked, running to let him in.

“She is the patron saint of cooks and housewives, petite. A good cook can do anything. Sainte Marthe entertained the blessed Lord in her own home, and was the first nun of the sisterhood she founded. Moreover when she was preaching at Aix a fearful dragon by the name of Tarasque inhabited the river Rhone, and came out each night to devastate the country until Sainte Marthe was the means of his—conversion.”

“Oh, go on!” cried Helene, and Lescarbot sat down on the old bench under the pear-tree and began to help with the herbs.

“Sainte Marthe was an excellent cook, and the first thing she did when she founded her convent was to plant a kitchen-garden. On Saint John’s Eve she went into the garden and watered each plant with holy water, blessing it in the use of God. People came from miles around to get roots and seeds from the garden and to ask for Sainte Marthe’s recipes for broths and cordials for the sick. Often they brought roots of such plants as rhubarb and—er—marigold, which had been imported from heathen countries, to be blessed and made wholesome.” Lescarbot’s eye rested on the potato plant, which he distrusted.

“Well. The dragon prowled around and around the convent walls, but of course he could not come in. At last he pretended to be sick and sent for Sainte Marthe to come and cure him. As soon as she set eyes on him she knew what a wicked lie he had told, and resolved to punish him for his impudence. Of course all he wanted of her was to get her recipes for sauces and stews so that he might cook and eat his victims without having indigestion—which is what a good sauce is for. Sainte Marthe promised to make him some broth if he would do no harm while she was gone, and just to make sure he kept his promise she made him hold out his fore-paws and tied them hard and fast with her girdle, while he sat with his fore-legs around his—er—knees, and her broomstick thrust crosswise between. Then she got out her largest kettle and made a good savory broth of all the herbs in her garden—there were three hundred and sixty-five kinds. She knew that if he drank it all, the blessed herbs would work such a change in his inside that he would be like a lamb forever after.

“But one thing neither she nor Tarasque had thought of, and that was, that the broth was hot. Of course he always took his food and drink very cold. When he smelled its delicious fragrance he opened his mouth wide, and she poured it hissing hot down his throat, and it melted him into a famous bubbling spring. People go there to be cured of colic.”

Helene drew a long breath. She did not believe that Lescarbot had found that story in any book of legends of the saints, but she liked it none the worse for that.

“I wonder if Sainte Marthe blessed this garden?” she said.



Page 136

“I have no doubt she did, and that is why it flourishes from Easter to Michaelmas. But I came to-day for a potato. Sieur de Monts desires to see one and to understand the method of its cultivation.”

“Oh, I know that,” cried Helene, eagerly, and she took one of the queer brown roots from the willow basket by the wall. “See, these are its eyes, one, two, three—seven eyes in this one. You must cut it in pieces, as many pieces as it has eyes, and plant each piece separately; and from each eye springs a plant.”

“Ah!” said Lescarbot gravely, and he put the potato in his wallet.

For two years Pierre du Guast, Sieur de Monts, and the valiant gentlemen Samuel de Champlain, Bienville de Poutrincourt, and others of his company, had been striving to maintain a settlement in the grant of La Cadie or L'Acadie, between the fortieth and forty-sixth degrees of north latitude in the New World, of which the King had made De Monts Lieutenant-General. De Monts engaged Champlain, who had already explored those coasts, as chief geographer, and the merchant Pontgrave was in charge of a store-ship laden with supplies. Fearing the severe winter of the St. Lawrence, the party steered south along the coast and anchored in a tranquil and beautiful harbor surrounded with forest, green lowlands, and hills laced with waterfalls. In his delight with the place Poutrincourt declared that he would ask nothing better than to make it his home; and he received a grant of the harbor, which he named Port Royal. The expedition finally came to rest on an island in a river flowing into Passamaquoddy Bay, where they began their settlement. Their wooden buildings—a house for their viceroy, one for Champlain and other gentlemen, barracks, lodgings, workshops and storehouses,—surrounded a square in the middle of which one fine cedar was left standing, while a belt of them remained to hedge the island from the north winds. The work done, Poutrincourt set sail for France, leaving seventy-nine men to spend the winter at Ile Sainte-Croix. Scurvy broke out, and before spring almost half the company were in their graves. Spring came, but no help from France. It was June 16 before Poutrincourt returned with forty men, and two days later Champlain set sail in a fifteen-ton barque with De Monts and several others, to explore the coast and discover if possible a better place for the colony. They went as far south as Nauset Harbor, and Champlain made charts and kept a journal quaintly illustrated with figures drawn and painted; but De Monts found no place that suited him. Then he bethought himself of the deep sheltered harbor of Port Royal, and they removed everything to that new site, on the north side of the basin below the mouth of a little river which they called the Equille. Even parts of the buildings were taken across the Bay of Fundy. But a ship from France brought news to De Monts that enemies at court were working against his Company, and leaving Pontgrave in command he and Poutrincourt



Page 137

returned home, to see what they could do to further the interests of the colony in Paris. Among other things Champlain, who had tried without success to make a garden in the sandy soil of the island, begged them to provide the settlers with seeds, roots, cuttings and implements by which they might raise grain and vegetables and other provisions for themselves. This would improve the health and also reduce the expenses of the colony, and the land about the new site was well adapted for cultivation.

Poutrincourt, foregathering with his friend Lescarbot soon after the lawyer had lost nearly all he possessed in a suit, recounted to him the woes of the colony, and found with pleasure that in spite of the doleful history of the last two years Lescarbot was eager to seek a new career in New France.

Helene came running in one morning in the early spring of 1606, to find old Jacqueline on the steps of the root-cellar with a heap of sprouting potatoes beside her. Lescarbot was packing away in a panier such as she gave him, while under the whitening pear-tree a donkey stood, sleepily shaking his ears as he waited for orders.

“Oh, what are you doing, Uncle Marc?” she cried.

“Making ready to go to the land beyond the sunset, Mademoiselle la Princesse du Jardin de Paradis,” he said smiling. “Sit down while the good mother gets the packets of seeds she promised me, and I will tell you a story.”

All curiosity and wonder, the little maid settled herself on the ancient worm-eaten bench, and Lescarbot began.

“It happened one day that men came and told the King that a great realm lay beyond the seas, where only wild men and animals lived, and that this realm was all his. Now the wild men were not good for anything, for they had never been taught anything, but since the winters in that country were very cold the animals wore fur coats. The King called to him a Chief Huntsman and told him that he might go and collect tribute from the fur coats of the animals, and that after he had given the King his share, the fur coats of all the animals belonged to him.”

“Did the animals know it?”

“I think they did, for they were accustomed to having men try to take away their fur coats. All the other hunters were very angry when they found that the King had given this order, but the Chief Huntsman told them that they might have a share in the hunting, only they must ask his permission and pay tribute to the King; and that satisfied them for a while.



“The Chief Huntsman sailed to the far country and built a castle for himself and his men, and when winter came they found that it was indeed very cold—so cold that the wine and the cider froze and had to be given out by the pound instead of the pint. But that was not the worst of it. There was a dragon.”

Helene’s blue eyes grew round with interest.



Page 138

“A dragon whose poisonous breath tainted the food and caused a terrible plague. They prayed to Saint Luke the Physician for help, and he appeared to them in a vision and said, ‘I cannot do anything for you so long as you eat not good food. God made man to live in a garden, not to fill himself with salt fish and salt meat and dry bread.’ But they could not plant a garden in the middle of winter, and they had to wait. When the ship went back to France a gallant captain—named Samuel de Champlain—sent a letter to a friend of his in France, praying him to send a gardener with seeds, roots and cuttings that there might be good broths and tisanes and sauces to work magic against the dragon that he slay no more of their folk. And, little Helene, I am filling a pair of paniers with those roots and those seeds, and I am going to be a gardener beyond the sunset.”

Helene looked grave. To find her friend and playfellow suddenly dropped away from her into the middle of a fairy-tale was rather terrifying, but it was also thrilling. She slipped down from the bench.

“You shall have cuttings from my very own rose-bushes,” said she; and at her direction Lescarbot took up very carefully small rose-shoots that had rooted themselves around the great bushes,—bushes that bore roses white with a faint flush, white with a golden-creamy heart, pure snow-white, sunrise pink and deep glowing crimson with a purple shade.

If Lescarbot had been a superstitious man, he might have been inclined to gloom during his first sea-voyage, for the ship in which he and Poutrincourt set sail from Rochelle on the thirteenth of May, 1606, was called the *Jonas*. But instead he joined in all the diversions possible in their two months’ voyage—harpooning porpoises, fishing for cod off the Banks, or dancing on the deck in calm weather,—and in his leisure kept a lively and entertaining journal of the adventure. They ran into dense fog in which they could see nothing; they saw, when the mist cleared, a green and lovely shore, but before it fierce and dangerous rocks on which the breakers pounded. Then a storm broke, with rolling thunder like a salute of cannon. At last on July 27 they sailed into the narrow channel at the entrance of the harbor of Port Royal.

The flag of France, with its golden lilies on a white ground, gleamed in the noon sunlight as they came up the bay toward the little group of wooden buildings in the edge of the forest. Not a man was to be seen on the silent shore; a birch canoe, with one old Indian in it, hovered near the landing. A great fear gripped the hearts of Bienville de Poutrincourt and Marc Lescarbot. Were Pontgrave and Champlain all dead with their people? Had help come too late?

Then from the bastion of the rude fortifications a cannon barked salute, and a Frenchman with a gun in his hand came running down to the beach. The ship’s guns returned the salute, and the trumpets sang loud greeting to whoever might be there to hear.



Page 139

When they had landed they learned what had happened. There were only two Frenchmen in the fort; Pontgrave and the others, fearing that the supply ship would never arrive, had gone twelve days before in two small ships of their own building to look for some of the French fishing fleet who might have provisions. The two who remained had volunteered to stay and guard the buildings and stores. There was a village of friendly Indians near by, and the chief, Membertou, who was more than a hundred years old, had seen the distant sail of the *Jonas* and come to warn the white men, who were at dinner. Not knowing whether the strange ship came in peace or war, one of the comrades had gone to the platform on which the cannon were mounted, and stood ready to do what he could in defense, while the other ran down to the shore. When they saw the French flag at the mast-head the cannon spoke joyfully in salute.

All was now eager life and activity. Poutrincourt sent out a boat to explore the coast, which met the two little ships of Pontgrave and Champlain and told the great news. Lescarbot, exploring the meadows under the guidance of some of Membertou's people, saw moose with their young feeding peacefully upon the lush grass, and beavers building their curious habitations in a swamp. Pontgrave took his departure for France in the *Jonas*, and Champlain and Poutrincourt began making plans.

The winter in Port Royal had been less severe than the terrible first winter of the settlement, on the St. Croix, but the two leaders decided to take one of the ramshackle little ships and make another exploring voyage along the coast, to see whether some more comfortable site for the colony could not be found. There was plenty of leeway to the southward, for De Monts was supposed to control everything as far south as the present site of Philadelphia; but the coast had never been accurately charted by the French further south than Cape Cod.

Lescarbot, who was to command at Port Royal in their absence, had already laid out his kitchen-garden and set about spading and planting it. The kitchen, the smithy and the bakery were on the south side of the quadrangle around which the wooden buildings stood; east of them was the arched gateway, protected by a sort of bastion of log-work, from which a path led to the water a few paces away; and west of them another bastion matched it, mounting the four cannon. The storehouses for ammunition and provisions were on the eastern side; on the west were the men's quarters, and on the north, a dining-hall and lodgings for the chief men of the company, who now numbered fifteen. Lescarbot set some of the men to burning over the meadows that they might sow wheat and barley; others broke up new soil for the herbs, roots and cuttings he had brought, and he himself, hoe in hand, was busiest of all.

"Do not overtask yourself," warned Poutrincourt, pausing beside the thin, pale-faced man who knelt in the long shadows of the rainy dawn among his neatly-arranged plots. "If you are too zealous you may never see France again." Lescarbot laughed and dug a little grave in his plantation. "What in heaven's name are those?"



Page 140

“Potatoes,” answered the lawyer-gardener. “The Peruvian root they are planting in Ireland.”

“But you do not expect to get a crop this year—and in this climate?”

“I don’t expect anything at all. I am making the experiment. If they come up, good; if they do not, I have seed enough for next year.”

The potatoes came up. It was an unusually hot summer, and the situation was favorable. If Lescarbot had known the habits of the vegetable he might not have thought of putting them into the ground on the last day of July, but they grew and flourished, and their odd ivory-and-gold blossoms were charming. Lescarbot worked all day in the bracing sunlit air, and now and then he hoed and transplanted by moonlight. In the evening he read, wrote, or planned out the next day’s program.

September came, with cool bright days and a hint of frost at night; the lawyer marshalled his forces and harvested the crops. The storehouses, already stocked with Pontgrave’s abundant provision, were filled to overflowing, and they had to dig a makeshift cellar or root-pit under a rough shelter for the last of their produce. The potatoes were carefully bestowed in huge hampers provided by Membertou’s people, who were greatly interested in all that the white men did. Old Jacqueline had said that they needed “room to breathe,” and Lescarbot was taking no chances on this unknown American product.

October came; the Indians showed the white men how to grind corn, and the carpenters planned a water-mill to be constructed in the spring, to take the place of the tedious hand-mill worked by two men. Wild geese flew overhead, recalling to the Frenchmen the legends of Saint Gabriel’s hounds. The forests robed themselves in hues like those of a priceless Kashmir shawl, and the squirrels, martens, beavers, otters, weasels, which the hunters brought in were in their winter coats. But the exploring party had not returned. Lescarbot, who had occupied spare moments in preparing a surprise for them when they did return, and carefully drilled the men in their parts, began to be secretly anxious. But on the morning of November 14, old Membertou, who had appointed himself an informal sentinel to patrol the waters near the fort, appeared with the news that the chiefs were coming back.

All was excitement in a moment, although Lescarbot privately had to admit that he could not even see a sail, to say nothing of recognizing the boat or its occupants. But the long-sighted old sagamore was right. The party of adventurers, their craft considerably the worse for the journey, steering with a pair of oars in place of a rudder, reached the landing-place and battered, weary and dilapidated, came up to the fort. They were surprised and disappointed to see no one about except a few curious Indians peeping from the woods.



Page 141

As they neared the wooden gateway it was suddenly flung open, and out marched a procession of masquers, headed by Neptune in full costume of shell-fringed robe, diadem, trident, and garlands of kelp and sea-moss, attended by tritons grotesquely attired, and fauns, reinforced by a growing audience of Indians, squaws and papooses. This merry company greeted the wanderers with music, song and some excellent French verse written by Lescarbot for the occasion. Refreshed with laughter and the relief of finding all so well conducted, Champlain, Poutrincourt and their men went in to have something to eat and drink. Then they spent the rest of the day hearing and telling the story of the last three months.

It is written down, adorned with drawings, in the journals of Champlain, and it was all told over as the men sat around their blazing fires and talked, all together, while a light November snow flurried in the air outside.

“So you see we lost our rudder in a storm off Mount Desert—” “And the autumn gales drove us back before we had fairly passed Port Fortune—” “It came near being Port Malheur for us, and it was for Pierre and Jacques le Malouin, poor fellows. They and three others stayed ashore for the night and hundreds of Indians attacked them,—oh, but hundreds. Well, we heard the uproar—naturally it waked us in a hurry—and up we jumped and snatched any weapon that was handy, and piled into the boat in our shirts. Two of the shore party were killed and we saw the other three running for their boat for dear life, all stuck over with arrows like hedgehogs, my faith! So then we landed and charged the Indians, who must have thought we were ghosts, for they left off whooping and ran for the woods. Our provisions were so far spent that we thought it best to return after that, and in any case—it would be as bad, would it not, to die of Indians as to die of scurvy?”

“But tell me, my dear fellow,” said Champlain when the happy hubbub had a little subsided, “how have your gardens prospered? Truly I need not ask, in view of the abundance of the dinner you gave us.”

Lescarbot smiled. “I think that the saints must have whispered to the little plants,” he said whimsically, “or else they knew that they must grow their best for the honor of France. But perhaps it is not strange. I had the seeds and roots from the garden of Helene.”

“And who is Helene?” asked Champlain with interest. Lescarbot explained.

“It was really wonderful,” he said in conclusion, “to see how careful she was to remember every herb and plant which might be useful, and to ask Jacqueline for some especial recipes for cordials and tisanes for the sick. And by the way, Jacqueline told me that the sea-captains regard potatoes as especially good to prevent or cure scurvy.”



In any case the potato was popular among the exiled Frenchmen. They ate it boiled, they ate it parboiled, sliced and fried in deep kettles of fat, they ate it in stews, and they ate it—and liked it best of all—roasted in the ashes. Jacqueline had said that the water in which the root was boiled must always be thrown away, which showed that there was something uncanny about it, but whether it was due to the potatoes or the general variety of the bill of fare, there was not a case of scurvy in the camp all winter.



Page 142

Soon after his return Champlain broached a plan which he had been perfecting during the voyage. The fifteen men of rank formed a society, to be called "L'Ordre de Bon-Temps." Each man became Grand-Master in turn, for a single day. On that day he was responsible for the dinner,—the cooking, catering, buying and serving. When not in office he usually spent some days in hunting, fishing and trading with the Indians for supplies. He had full authority over the kitchen during his reign, and it was a point of honor with each Grand Master to surpass, if possible, the abundance, variety and gastronomic excellence of the meals of the day before. There was no market to draw upon, but the caterer could have steaks and roasts and pies of moose, bear, venison and caribou; beavers, otters, hares, trapped for their fur, also helped to feed the hunters. Ducks, geese, grouse and plover were to be had for the shooting. Sturgeon, trout and other fish might be caught in the bay, or speared through the ice of the river. The supplies brought from France, with the addition of all this wilderness fare, held out well, and Lescarbot expressed the opinion, with which nobody disagreed, that no epicure in Paris could dine better in the Rue de l'Ours than the pioneers of Port Royal dined that winter.

Ceremony was not neglected, either. At the dinner hour, twelve o'clock, the Grand Master of the day entered the dining-hall, a napkin on his shoulder, his staff of office in his hand, and the collar of the Order, worth about four crowns, about his neck. After him came the Brotherhood in procession, each carrying a dish. Indian chiefs were often guests at the board; old Membertou was always made welcome. Biscuit, bread and many other kinds of food served there were new and alluring luxuries to the Indians, and warriors, squaws and children who had not seats at table squatted on the floor gravely awaiting their portions.

[Illustration: "THE GRAND MASTER OF THE DAY ENTERED THE DINING HALL."—*Page 266*]

The evening meal was less formal. When all were gathered about the fire, the Grand Master presented the collar and staff of office to his successor, and drank his health in a cup of wine.

The winter was unusually mild; until January they needed nothing warmer than their doublets. On the fourteenth, a Sunday, they went boating on the river, and came home singing the gay songs of France. A little later they went to visit the wheat fields two leagues from the fort, and dined merrily out of doors. When the snow melted they saw the little bright blades of the autumn sowing already coming up from the rich black soil. Winter was over, and work began in good heart. Poutrincourt was not above gathering turpentine from the pines and making tar, after a process invented by himself. Then late in spring a ship came into harbor with news which ended everything. The fur-traders of Normandy, Brittany and the Vizcayan ports had succeeded in having



Page 143

the privilege of De Monts withdrawn. Hardly more than a year after his arrival Lescarbot left his beloved gardens, and in October all the colonists were once more in France. Membertou and his Indians bewailed their departure, and held them in long remembrance. Wilderness houses soon go back to their beginnings, and it was not long before all that was left of the brave and gay French colony was a little clearing where the herb of immortality, the tansy of Saint Athanase, lifted its golden buttons and thick dark green foliage above the remnant of the garden of Helene.

Yet the experience of that year was not lost. It was the first instance of a company of settlers in that northern climate passing the winter without illness, discord or trouble with the Indians. Later, in the little new settlements of Quebec and Montreal, some of the colonists met again under the wise and kindly rule of Champlain. Little Helene lived to bring her own roses to a garden in New France, and teach Indian girls the secrets which old Jacqueline taught her. And it is recorded in the history of the voyageurs, priests and adventurers of France in the New World that wherever they went they were apt to take with them seeds and plants of wholesome garden produce, which they planted along their route in the hope that they might thus be of service to those who came after them.

THE WOODEN SHOE

Amsterdam's the cradle where the race was rocked—
All the ships of all the world to her harbor flocked.
Rosy with the sea-wind, solid, stubborn, sweet,
Played the children by canals, up and down the street.
Neltje, Piet and Hendrik, Dirck and Myntje too,—
Little Nick of Leyden sailed his wooden shoe.

"Quarter-deck and cabin—rig her fore-and-aft,"—
Thus he murmured wisely as he launched his craft.
"Cutlass, pike and musquetoun, howitzer and shot—
But our knives and mirrors and beads are worth the lot."
Room enough for cargo to last a year or two,
In the round amidships of a wooden shoe!

Bobbing on the waters of the Nieuwe Vlei
See the bantam galleot, short and broad and high.
Laden for the Indies, trading all the way,
Frank and shrewd and cautious, fiery in a fray,—
Sagamore and mandarin are all the same to you,
Little Nick of Leyden with your wooden shoe!



XVIII

THE FIRES THAT TALKED

All along the coast of Britain, from John o' Groat's to Beachey Head, from Saint Michael's Mount to Cape Wrath, twinkled the bonfires on the headlands. Henry Hudson, returning from a voyage among icebergs, guessed at once what this chain of lights meant. The son of Mary Queen of Scots had been crowned in London.[1]

Hudson's keen eyes were unusually grave and thoughtful as the *Muscovy Duck* sailed up to London Pool on the incoming tide. The sailors looked even more sober, for most of them were English Protestants, with a few Flemings, and John Williams the pilot was an Anabaptist. It was he who asked the question of which all were thinking.



Page 144

“Master Hudson, d’ye think the new King will light them other fires—the ones at Smithfield?”

Hudson shook his head. “That’s a thing no man can say for certain, John. But there’s the Low Countries and the Americas to run to. ’T is not as it was in Queen Mary’s day.”

“Aye, but Spain has got all of America, pretty near, and the French are nabbing the rest,” said the pilot doubtfully.

“Nay, that’s a bigger place than you guess, over yonder. Ever see the map that Doctor Dee made for Queen Bess near thirty years ago? I remember him showing it to my grandsire with the ink scarce dry on it. The country Raleigh’s people saw has got room for the whole of France and England, and plenty timber and corn-land. Sir Walter he knew that.”

There was plague in London when they landed, and all sought their families in fear and trembling, not knowing what might have come and gone in their absence. Hudson’s house was at Mortlake on the Thames above London, and there he was rejoiced to find all well. Young John Hudson was brimful of Mr. Brereton’s new *Relacion of the Voyage of Captain Bartholomew Gosnold and Captain Bartholomew Gilbert to the North part of Virginia by permission of the honorable Knight Sir Walter Raleigh*. Strawberries bigger than those of England, and cherries in clusters like grapes, blackbirds with carnation-colored wings, Indians who painted their eyebrows white and made faces over mustard, were mixed higgledy-piggledy in his bubbling talk. Hudson, turning the pages of the new book, saw at once that on this voyage around Cape Cod the little ship *Concord* had sailed seas unknown to him.

“Why won’t the Company send you to the Americas, Dad?” the boy asked eagerly. “When will I be old enough to go to sea?”

“Wait till ye’re fourteen at least, Jack,” his father answered. “There’s much to learn before ye’re a master mariner.”

In the next few years things were not so well with English mariners as they had been. Cecil and Howard, picking a quarrel with Raleigh, had him shut up in the Tower. The Dutch were trading everywhere, seizing the chances King James missed. But Hudson was in the employ of the Muscovy Company like his father and grandfather, and the Russian fur trade was making that Company rich.

Captain John Smith, a shrewd-faced soldier with merry eyes, appeared at the house one day and told entertaining stories of his campaigns under Prince Sigismund of Bohemia. He and the boy John drove the neighbors nearly distracted with curiosity, one winter evening, signalling with torches from the house to the river.[2] To anxious souls who surmised a new Guy Fawkes conspiracy Captain Smith showed how he had once

conveyed a message to the garrison of a beleaguered city in this way. Here was the code. The first half of the alphabet was represented by single lights, the second half by pairs. To secure attention three torches were shown at equal distances from one another, until a



Page 145

single light flashed in response to show that the signal was understood. For any letter from A to L a single light was shown and hidden one or more times according to the number of the letter from the beginning; thus, three flashes meant C; four meant D, and so on. For a letter between M and Z the same plan was followed using two torches. The end of a word was signified by three lights. In this way Smith had spelled out the message, "On Thursday night I will charge on the east; at the alarm, sally you." He had, however, translated it into Latin, to make it short.

John Hudson found new interest in Latin.

When Captain Smith began to talk of joining a new colony to go to Virginia the boy begged hard to be allowed to go. But just at this time the Muscovy Company was sending Henry Hudson to look for a way round through northern seas to the Spice Islands. The Dutch were already trading in the Portuguese Indies. If England could reach them by a shorter route, it would be a very pleasant discovery for the Muscovy Company.

Even in 1607 geographers believed in an open polar sea north of Asia. Hudson tried the Greenland route. Sailing east of Greenland he found himself between that country and the islands named "Nieuwland" by William Barents the Dutch navigator in 1596. Their pointed icy mountains seemed to push up through the sea. Icebergs crowded the waters like miniature peaks of a submerged range. Hudson returned to report to the company "no open sea."

In 1608 he was again sent out on the same errand. This time he steered further east, between those islands and another group named by Barents Nova Zembla. He sailed nearer to the pole than any man had been before him, and found whales bigger, finer and more numerous than anywhere else. Rounding the North Cape on his way home he made the first recorded observation of a sun-spot. In August, when he returned and made his report, there was a sensation in the seafaring world.

The Dutch promptly sent whaling ships into the arctic seas, and suggested, through Van Meteren the Dutch consul in London, a friend of Hudson, that the English navigator should come to Amsterdam and talk of entering their service. While there, he received an offer from the French Ambassador, suggesting that his services would be welcome to a proposed French East India Company. Hearing this, the Dutch hastened to secure him, and on April 4, 1609, he sailed from Amsterdam in a yacht of eighty tons called the *Half Moon* and shaped rather like one, manned by a crew of twenty, half English and half Netherlanders, and John as cabin-boy.

John was in such a state of bliss as a boy can know when sailing on the venture of his dreams. His father had told him in confidence that as his sailing orders were almost the

same as the year before, he did not expect to find the northern route to India in that direction. Failing this the *Half Moon* would look for it in the western seas. Of this plan he had said nothing in Holland.



Page 146

He found, as he had expected, that the arctic waters were choked with ice, and turning southward he headed for the Faroe Isles. While in Holland he had had a letter from Captain John Smith, who had explored the regions about Chesapeake Bay. No straits leading to the western ocean had been discovered there, and no Sea of Verrazzano. Captain Smith's opinion was that if such a passage existed it would be somewhere about the fortieth parallel. Explorations had already been made farther north. Davis Strait had been discovered some years before by John Davis, now dead. Martin Frobisher had found another strait leading northwest. Both of these were so far north that they were likely to be ice-bound by the time the little *Half Moon* could reach them. Hudson meant to look along the coast further south, and see what could be found there.

The *Half Moon* took in water at the Faroes and anchored some seven weeks later, on July 18, in Penobscot Bay. Her foremast was gone and her sails ripped and rent by the gales of the North Atlantic, and the carpenter with a selected crew rowed ashore and chose a pine tree for a new mast. While this was a-making and the sails were patched up, the crew not otherwise engaged went fishing.

"I say," presently observed John Hudson, who knew Brereton's *Relacion* by heart, "this must ha' been the place where they caught so many fish that they were 'pestered with Cod' and threw numbers of 'em overboard. This makes twenty-seven, Dad, so far."

During that week they caught fifty cod, a hundred lobsters and a halibut which John declared to be half as big as the ship. Two French boats appeared, full of Indians ready to trade beaver skins for red cloth. The strawberry season was past, but John found wild cherries, small, deep red, in heavy bunches. When he tried to eat them, however, they were so sour that he nearly choked. Cautiously he tasted the big blue whortleberries that grew on high bushes; near water, and found them delicious. He had been eating them by the handful for some time when he became aware that there was a feaster on the other side of the thicket. Receiving no reply to his challenge he went to investigate and saw a brown bear standing on his hind legs and raking the berries off the twigs with both forepaws, into his mouth. At sight of John he dropped on all fours and cantered off.

Leaving the bay they cruised along the coast past Cape Cod, and then steered southwest for the fortieth parallel. Wind and rain came on in the middle of August, and they were blown toward an inlet which Hudson decided to be the James. Not knowing how the English governor of Jamestown might regard an intrusion by a Dutch ship, he turned north again, and on the twenty-eighth of August entered a large bay and took soundings. More than once the *Half Moon*, light as she rode, grounded on sand-banks, and Hudson shook his head in rueful doubt.

"D' you think the straits are here, Dad?" asked John when he had a chance to speak with his father alone.



Page 147

“Hardly. This is fresh water. It’s the mouth of a river.”[3]

“Yes, but might there be an isthmus—or the like?”

“A big river with as strong a current as this would not rise on a narrow, level strip of land, son. It’s bringing down tons of sand to make these banks we run into. There’s a great wide country inland there.”

The chanteys of the sailors were heard at daybreak in the lonely sea, as the *Half Moon* went on her way northward. On September 3 the little ship edged into another and bigger bay to the north. Whether it was a bay or a lake Hudson was at first rather doubtful. The shores were inhabited, for little plumes of smoke arose everywhere, and soon from all sides log canoes came paddling toward the ship. These Indians were evidently not unused to trading, for they brought green tobacco, hemp, corn and furs to sell, and some of them knew a few words of French. By this, and by signs, they gave Hudson to understand that three rivers, or inlets, came into this island-encircled sea, the largest being toward the north. Hudson determined to follow this north river and see where it led.

As he sailed cautiously into the channel, taking soundings and observing the shores, he was puzzled. The tide rose and fell as if this were an inlet of the sea, and it was far deeper than an ordinary river. In fact it was more like a Norwegian fiord.[4] It might possibly lead to a lake, and this lake might have an outlet to the western ocean. That it was a strait he did not believe. Even in the English Channel the meeting tides of the North Sea and the Atlantic made rough water, and the *Half Moon* was drifting as easily as if she were slipping down stream. In any event, nothing else had been found, either north or south of this point, which could possibly be a strait, and Hudson meant to discover exactly what this was before he set sail for Amsterdam.

They passed an Indian village in the woods to the right, and according to the Indians who had come on board the place was called Sapokanican,[5] and was famous for the making of wampum or shell beads. A brook of clear sweet water flowed close by. Presently Hudson anchored and sent five men ashore in a boat to explore the right-hand bank of the channel. Night came on, and it began to rain, but the boat had not returned. Hudson slept but little. In the morning the missing men appeared with a tale of disaster. After about two leagues’ travel they had come to a bay full of islands. Here they had been attacked by two canoes carrying twenty-six Indians, and their arrows had killed John Colman and wounded two other men. It grew so dark when the rain began that they dared not seek the ship, and the current was so strong that their grapnel would not hold, so that they had had to row all night.

Sailing only in the day time and anchoring at night the little Dutch ship went on to the north, looking between the steep rocky banks like a boat carved out of a walnut-shell, in the wooden jaws of a nutcracker. After dark, fires twinkled upon the heights, and the



lapping waters about the quiet keel were all shining with broken stars. The flame appeared and vanished like a signal, and John Hudson wondered if the Indians knew John Smith's trick of sending a message as far as a beacon light could be seen.



Page 148

One night he climbed up on the poop with the ship's great lantern and tried the flashing signals he remembered. Before many minutes two of the wild men had drawn near to watch, and although John could not make out the meaning of the light that came and went upon the cliffs, it was quite clear that they could. One of them waved his mantle in front of the lantern, and turning to the boy nodded and grinned good-naturedly. The signal fires must have talked to some purpose, for the next day a delegation paddled out from the shore to invite the great captain, his son and his chief officers to a feast.

When the party arrived at the house of the chief, which was a round building, or pavilion, of saplings sheathed with oak bark, mats were spread for them to sit upon, and food was served in polished red wooden bowls. Two hunters were sent out to bring in game, and returned almost at once with pigeons which were immediately dressed and cooked by the women. One of the hunters gave John one of the arrowheads used for shooting small birds; it was no bigger than his least fingernail and made of a red stone like jasper. A fat dog had also been killed, skinned and dressed with shell knives, and served as the dish of honor. Hudson hastily explained in English to his companions that whether they relished dog or not, it would never do to refuse it, as this was a special dish for great occasions.

"Dad," said John that night, "do you think any ship with white men ever came up here before?"

"No," said Hudson.

"I hope they'll call this the Hudson."

The water was now hardly more than seven feet deep, and the tide rose only a few inches. Hudson came reluctantly to the conclusion that there was no proceeding further in a ship. He sent a boatload of men several leagues up-stream, but they came back with the report that the river was much the same so far as they had gone.

During the voyage they had often seen parties of the savages, usually friendly but sometimes hostile. Flights of arrows occasionally were aimed at the *Half Moon*, and the crew replied with musket-shots which sometimes but not always hit the mark. The painted warriors had a way of disappearing into the woods like elves. Once, in spite of all endeavors to shake him off, a solitary Indian in a small canoe followed along under the stern till he saw the chance of climbing up the rudder to the cabin window. He stole the pillow off the commander's bed, two shirts, and two bandoliers (ammunition-belts), the tinkle of which betrayed him. The mate saw him making off with his plunder and shot him, whereupon the other Indians paddled off at top speed, some even leaping from their canoes to swim ashore. A boat put out and recovered the stolen property, and when a swimming Indian caught the side of it to overturn it the cook valiantly beat him off with a sword. These with many other adventures were duly written down by Robert Juet the mate.



Page 149

To John Hudson the voyage was a journey of enchantment. Nothing he had ever seen was in the least like the glory of the autumn forests, mantling the mountains in scarlet, gold, malachite, russet, orange and purple. He had been in the gardens at Lambeth where Tradescant the famous gardener ruled, but there was more color in a single vivid maple standing blood-red in a bit of lowland than in all his Lancaster roses. And the great river had its flowers as well. A tall plant like an elfin elm covered with thick-set tiny blossoms yellow as broom, grew wild over the pastures, and interspersed with this fairy forest were thickets of deep lavender daisies with golden centers. In lowland glades were tall spikes of cardinal blossoms, and clusters of deep blue flowers like buds that never opened. Vines loaded with bunches of scarlet and orange berries like waxwork, and others bearing fluffy bunches of silky gray down curly as an old man's beard, climbed the trees that overhung the stream. The mountains in the upper river came right down to the water like the glacis of a giant fort, and fitful winds pounced upon the *Half Moon* and rocked her like a cradle. Once there was a late thunder-shower, and the noise of the thunder among the humped ranges was for all the world like balls rolling in a great game of bowls played by goblins of the mountains.

On the fourth of October, the *Half Moon* left the island which the Indians called Manahatta, passed through the Narrows and sailed for Europe. Looking back at those green shores with their bronze feather-crowned people watching to see the flight of their strange guest, John Hudson felt that when he was a man, he would like nothing better than to have an estate on the shores of the noble river, which no white boy had ever before set eyes on. Where a great terrace rose, some fifty miles above Manahatta, walled around by mountains and almost two hundred feet above the river, there should be a fort, of which Captain John Smith should be the commander; and in the broadening of the river below to form an inland sea, his father's squadron should ride, while the Indians of all the upper reaches of the river should come to pay tribute and bring wampum, furs and tobacco in exchange for trinkets. And on the island at the mouth of the river there would be a great city, greater than Antwerp, to which all the ships of the world should come as they came now to Antwerp and to London. So dreaming, John Hudson saw the shores of this new world vanish in the blue line, where earth and sky are one.

NOTES

[1] The kindling of bonfires and beacon lights on the accession of a sovereign or any other occasion of national rejoicing is a very old custom in Britain and is still kept up. At the time of Queen Victoria's jubilee trees were planted closely to form a great V on the side of the Downs, and when the fires were lighted on Ditchling Beacon and other heights the letter stood out black against the close turf of the hillside.



Page 150

[2] The account of Smith's campaigns and signalling code is given in his autobiography.

[3] The Delaware.

[4] Some authorities consider the Hudson River to be actually a fiord or fjord and not a true river.

[5] Greenwich Village.

IMPERIALISM

The Tailor sat with his goose on the table—
(Table of Laws it was, he said)
Fashioning uniforms dyed in sable,
Picked out with gold and sanguine red.

"This," he said as he snipped and drafted,
"Sublimely foreshadowing cosmic Fate
With world-dominion august, resplendent,
Will wear, as nothing can wear but Hate!

"Chimerical dreams of souls romantic
Are out of date as an old wife's rune.
Britain is doomed as Plato's Republic—"
When in at the door came a lilting tune!

*"Here to-day and gone to-morrow—
All in the luck of the road!
Didn't come to stay forever,
But we'll take our share of the load!"*

Highlanders, Irish, Danes, Egyptians,
Norman or Slav the dialects ran;
Something more than a board-school shaped them—
Drill and discipline never made man!

Once they knew Crecy, Hastings, Drogheda,
Moscow, Assaye, Khartoum or Glencoe,—
Now the old hatreds are tinder for campfires.
England has only her world to show!

They are not dreamers, these men of the Empire,
Guarding their land in the old-time way,



And this is the style that prevails in the Legions,—
“The foe of the past is a friend to-day.”

*“It’s a long, long road to the Empire
(From Beersheba even to Dan)
And the time is rather late for a chronic Hymn of Hate,—
And we know the tailor doesn’t make the man!”*

XIX

ADMIRAL OF NEW ENGLAND

Barefoot and touzle-headed, in the coarse russet and blue homespun of an apprentice, a small boy sidled through the wood. Like a hunted hedgehog, he was ready to run or fight. Where a bright brook slid into the meadows, he stopped, and looked through new leaves at the infinite blue of the sky. Words his grandfather used to read to him came back to his mind.

“Let the inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountain.”

The Bible which old Joseph Bradford had left to his grandson had been taken away, but no one could take away the memory of it. If he had dared, Will would have shouted aloud then and there. For all his hunger and weariness and dread of the future the strength of the land entered into his young soul. He drank of the clear brook, and let it wash away the soil of his pilgrimage. Then he curled himself in a hollow full of dry leaves, and went to sleep.



Page 151

When he woke, it was in the edge of the evening. Long shadows pointed like lances among the trees. A horse was cropping the grass in a clearing, and some one beyond the thicket was reading aloud. For an instant he thought himself dreaming of the old cottage at Austerfield—but the voice was young and lightsome.

“Where a man can live at all, there can he live nobly.”

The reader stopped and laughed out. A lively snarling came from a burrow not far away, where two badgers were quarrelling conscientiously.

“Just like folks ye be, a-hectorin’ and a-fussin’. What’s the great question to settle now—predestination or infant baptism?—Why, where under the canopy did you come from, you pint o’ cider?”

“I be a-travelin’,” Will said stoutly.

“Runaway ’prentice, I should guess. I was one myself at fifteen.”

“I’m ’leven, goin’ on twelve,” said the boy, standing as straight as he could.

“Any folks?”

“I lived with granddad until he died, four year back.”

“And so you’re wayfarin’, be you? What can you do to get your bread?”

The urchin dug a bare toe into the sod. “I can work,” he said half-defiantly. “Granddad always said I should be put to school some day, but my uncle won’t have that. I can read.”

“Latin?”

“No—English. Granddad weren’t college-bred.”

“Nor I—they gave me more lickings than Latin at the grammar school down to Alvord, ’cause I would go bird’s-nesting and fishing sooner than study my *hic, haec, hoc*. And now I’ve built me a booth like a wild man o’ Virginia and come out here to get my Latin that I should ha’ mastered at thirteen. All the travel-books are in Latin, and you have to know it to get on in foreign parts.”

“Have you been in foreign parts?”

“Four year—France and Scotland and the Low Countries. But I got enough o’ seeing Christians kill one another, and says I to myself, John Smith, you go see what they’re



about at home. And here I found our fen-sludgers all by the ears over Bishops and Papists and Brownists and such like. In Holland they let a man read's Bible in peace."

"Is that the Bible you got there?"

"Nay—Marcus Aurelius Antoninus—a mighty wise old chap, if he was an Emperor. And I've got Niccolo Macchiavelli's seven books o' the Art o' War. When I'm weary of one I take to t' other, and between times I ride a tilt." He waved his hand toward a ring fastened on a tree, and a lance and horse-furniture leaning against the trunk.

"Our folks be Separatists," the boy said.

"Well, and what of it?" laughed the young man. "As I was a-reading here—a man is what his thoughts make him. Be he Catholic or Church Protestant or Baptist, he's what he's o' mind to be, good or bad. Other folk's say-so don't stop him—no more than them badgers' worryin' dams the brook."

This was a new idea to Will. His hunger for books was so keen that it had seemed to him that without them, he would be stupid as the swine. John Smith seemed to understand it, for he added,



Page 152

“You bide here with me awhile, lad. Maybe there’s a way for you to get learning, yet.”

Will shared the leafy booth and simple fare of his new friend for a fortnight, doing errands, rubbing down the black horse, Tamlane, and at odd times learning his conjugations. When John Smith left his hermitage and went to fight against the Turks in Transylvania, he placed a little sum of money with a Puritan scholar at Scrooby to pay for the boy’s schooling for a year or two. The yeoman uncle had a family of his own to provide for, and was glad to have Will off his hands.

Transylvania in 1600 was on the very frontier of Christendom. John Smith needed all the philosophy he had learned from his favorite author when, after many adventures, he was taken prisoner and sent to the slave-market of Axopolis to be sold. Bogal, a Turkish pacha, bought the young Englishman to send as a gift to his future wife, Charatza Tragabigzanda, in Constantinople.

Chained by the neck in gangs of twenties the slaves entered the great Moslem city. John Smith was left at the gate of a house exactly like all the others in the narrow noisy street. The beauty of an Oriental palace is inside the walls. Within the blank outer wall of stone and mud-brick, arched roofs, painted and gilded within, were upheld by slender round pillars of fine stone—marble, jasper, porphyry, onyx, red syenite, highly polished and sometimes brought from old palaces and temples in other lands. Intricate carving in marble or in fine hard wood adorned the doorways and lattices, and the balconies with their high lattice-work railings where the women could see into a room below without being seen. In the courtyards fountains plashed in marble basins, and from hidden gardens came the breath of innumerable roses. On floors of fine mosaic were silken many-hued rugs, brought in caravans from Bagdad, Moussoul or Ispahan, and the soft patter of bare feet, morocco shoes and light sandals came from the endless vistas of open arches. A silken rustling and once a gurgle of soft laughter might have told the Englishman that he was watched, but he knew no more what it meant than he understood the Arabic mottoes, interwoven with the decoration of the blue-and-gold walls.

Charatza’s curiosity was aroused at the sight of a slave so tall, ruddy and handsome. She sent for him to come into an inner room where she and her ladies sat, closely veiled, upon a cushioned divan. Bogal’s letter said that the slave was a rich Bohemian nobleman whom he had captured in battle, and whose ransom would buy Charatza splendid jewels. But when spoken to in Bohemian the captive looked perfectly blank. He did not seem to understand one word.

Arabic and Turkish were no more successful. At last the young princess asked a question in Italian and found herself understood. It did not take long for her to find out that the story her lover had written had not a word of truth in it. She was as indignant as a spirited girl would naturally be.



Page 153

In one way and another she made opportunities to talk with the Englishman and to inquire of others about his career. She presently discovered that he was the champion who had beheaded three Turkish warriors, one after another, before the walls of the besieged city Regall. She made up her mind that when she was old enough to control her own fortune, which would be in the not very distant future, she would set him free and marry him. Such things had been done in Constantinople, and doubtless could be done again.

But meantime Charatza's mother, learning that her daughter had been talking to a slave, was not at all pleased and threatened, since he was no nobleman and would not be ransomed, to sell him in the market. Charatza was used to having her way sooner or later, and managed to have him sent instead to her brother, a pacha or provincial governor in Tartary. She sent also a letter asking the pacha to be kind to the young English slave and give him a chance of learning Turkish and the principles of the Koran.

This was far from agreeable to a brother who had already heard of his sister's liking for the penniless stranger,—especially as he found that the Englishman had no intention of turning Moslem. The slave-master was told to treat him with the utmost severity, which meant that his life was made almost unbearable. A ring of iron, with a curved iron handle, was locked around his neck, his only garment was a tunic of hair-cloth belted with undressed hide, he was herded with other Christian slaves and a hundred or more Turks and Moors who were condemned criminals, and, as the last comer, had to take the kicks and cuffs of all the others. The food was coarse and unclean, and only extreme hunger made it possible to eat it.

John Smith was not the man to sit down hopelessly under misfortune, and he talked with the other Christians whenever chance offered, about possible plans of escape. None of them saw any hope of getting away, even by joining their efforts. It may be that some of this talk was overheard; at any rate Smith was sent after a while to thresh wheat by himself in a barn two or three miles from the stone castle where the governor lived. The pacha rode up while he was at work and began to abuse him, taunting him with being a Christian outcast who had tried to set himself above his betters by winning the favor of a Turkish lady. The Englishman flew at him like a wildcat, dragged him off his horse and broke his skull with the club which was used instead of a flail for threshing. Then he dressed himself in the Turk's garments, hid the body under a heap of grain, filled a bag with wheat for all his provision, mounted the horse of his late master, and rode away northward. He knew that Muscovy was in this general direction, and coming to a road marked by a cross, rode that way for sixteen days, hiding whenever he heard any sound of travelers for fear the iron slave-ring should betray him. At last he came to a Russian garrison on the River



Page 154

Don, where he found good friends. In 1604, after some other adventures, he came again to England. All London was talking of the doings of King James, who in one short year had managed to dissatisfy both Catholics and Protestants. Since the voyages of Gosnold, Pring and Weymouth there was much interest in Virginia. Raleigh was a prisoner in the Tower. There was talk of a trading association to be called the London Company, and it was said that this company planned a new plantation somewhere north of Roanoke. Smith could see the great future which might await an English settlement in that rich land. He decided to join the adventurers going out in the fleet of Captain Christopher Newport. Before sailing, he went to Lincolnshire to bid farewell to his own people, and in the shadow of the Tower of Saint Botolph's he espied a tall lad whose look recalled something.

"Why," he cried with a hearty clasp of the hand. "'t is thyself grown a man, Will! And how goes the Latin?"

"I love it well," the youth answered shyly. "Master Brewster hath also instructed me in the Greek. If—if I had known where to send it I would have repaid the money you was so kind as to spare."

"Nay, think no more o't—or rather, hand it on to some other young book-worm," laughed the bearded and bronzed captain. "And how be all your folk?"

The lad's eyes rested wistfully upon the quaint old seaport streets. "The Bishop rails upon our congregation," he said. "Holland is better than a prison, and we shall go there soon."

Smith's practical mind saw the uselessness of trying to get any Non-Conformist taken on by a royal colony in Virginia just then. "'Tis a hard case," he said sympathetically, "but we may meet again some day. There's room enough in the Americas, the Lord knows, for all the honest men England can spare."

Thus they parted, and on April 26, 1607, the Virginia voyagers saw land at the mouth of the Chesapeake.

The company was rather top-heavy. Out of the hundred who were enrolled, fifty-two were gentlemen adventurers, each of whom thought himself as good as the rest and even a little better. No sooner had the ship dropped anchor than thirty of them went ashore to roam the forest, laughing and shouting as if they had the country to themselves. The appearance of five Indians sent them scurrying back to the ship with two of their number wounded, for they had no weapons with them. That night the sealed orders of the London Company were opened, and it was found that the directors had appointed a council of seven to govern the colony and choose a president for a

year. The colonists were charged to search for gold and pearls and for a passage to the East Indies. Nothing more original in the way of a colonial enterprise had occurred to the directors. Success in these undertakings meant immediate profits with which the new Company could compete with Bristol, Antwerp, and the Muscovy Company's rich fur trade.



Page 155

In the list of names for the council appeared that of Captain John Smith, which was somewhat embarrassing, since a scandalous tale had been set going during the voyage, that he intended to lead a mutiny and make himself governor of the colony. This was so far believed that he was kept a prisoner through the last part of the voyage. The other councilors, Newport, Gosnold, Wingfield, Ratcliffe, Martin and Kendall, held their election without him and chose Wingfield president.

Next day the carpenters began work on the shallop, which had been shipped in sections, and Wingfield ordered Smith inland with a party of armed men, to explore. They saw no Indians, but found a fire where oysters were still roasting, and made a good meal off them, though some of the luscious shellfish were so large that they had to be cut in pieces before they were eaten. Coasting along the bay they discovered a river, which was explored when the shallop was launched. Upon this river they saw an Indian canoe forty feet long, made of the trunk of a tree hollowed out, Indian fashion, with hot stones and shell gouges. They found also oysters in abundance and in some of them fresh-water pearls. After spending seventeen days in examining the country, they chose for their settlement a peninsula on the north side of the river called the Powhatans by the Indians, from the tribe living on its banks. This site was about forty miles from the sea, and here, on May 13, they moored their ships to trees in six fathom of water and named the place Jamestown, and the river the King's River.

Thus far the Indians had been friendly, and Wingfield would not have any fortifications built, or any military drill, for fear of arousing their anger. Captain Kendall, despite orders, constructed a crescent-shaped line of fence of untrimmed boughs, but most of the weapons remained in packing-cases on board ship. Wingfield, who regarded Smith as a rather dangerously outspoken man to have about just then, sent him with Newport and twenty others, to explore the river to its head. On the sixth day they passed the chief town of the Powhatans. On May 24 they reached the head of the river, set up a cross, and proclaimed in the wilderness the sovereignty of King James Stuart.

The thrifty eye of the Lincolnshire yeoman observed many things with satisfaction during this march. There might not be any gold mines, but there was unlimited timber, and the meadows would make as good pasture for cattle as any in England. In the forests were red deer and fallow deer, bears, otters, beavers, and foxes, besides animals unknown in Europe. One moonlight night, while examining deer tracks near a little stream, Smith saw humped on a fallen log above it a furry beast about the size of a badger, with black face and paws like a bear, and a bushy tail with crosswise rings of brown and black. This queer animal was eating something, and dipping the food into the water before each mouthful.

Page 156

When Smith described it to the Indians he could make nothing of the name they gave it, but wrote it down as best he could—Araughcoune. Another new kind of creature was of the size of a rabbit, grayish white, with black ears and a tail like a rat. It would hang by its tail from a tree, until knocked off with a stick, and then curl up with shut eyes and pretend to be dead. It was excellent eating when roasted with wild yams,—rather like a very small suckling pig, the colonists later discovered. For the most part, however, Smith was inclined to think they would have to depend upon their provisions and the corn they could buy from the Indians.

On returning to Jamestown they found that the Indians had been raiding the settlement, the colonists at the time being all at work and taken completely by surprise. Seventeen men had been wounded, and a boy killed. After this, the men were drilled each day, the guns were unpacked and a palisade was begun.

Newport was in a hurry to return to England, and Wingfield now suggested that Smith, who was still supposed to be under arrest, should go with him and save any further trouble. This did not suit Smith at all. He demanded an open trial, got it, and was triumphantly cleared of all charges.

Of the privation, dissensions and sickness which followed Newport's departure, the bad water, rotten food, constant trouble with savages, and the unreasonable demands of the directors of the London Company, all historians have told. One story, which Smith was wont to tell with keen relish, deals with the instructions of the Company that the Indian chief, "King Powhatan," should be crowned with all due ceremony, just at a time of year when every hand in the colony was needed for attending to the crops. Smith and Newport had just come to a reasonable understanding with that astute savage, by which he treated them with real respect; and the attention paid him by his "brother James," as he proceeded to call the King of England, rather turned his head. He liked the red cloak sent him, but had no idea what a crown meant. The raccoon skin mantle which he removed when robed in the royal crimson was sent to England and is now in a museum at Oxford.

After some years of strenuous toil and adventure John Smith went back to London. An explosion of powder, whether accidental or intentional was never known, wounded him seriously just before he left Jamestown, and he did not recover from it for some time.

"And what is in your mind to do next, Captain?" asked Master William Simons the geographer when they had finished, between them, the new map of Virginia. Smith's eyes twinkled as he snapped the cover on his inkhorn.

"Why, 't is hard for an old rover like me to lie abed when there's man's work to be done. You know, the London Company holds only the southern division of the King's Patent for

Virginia; the north's given to Bristol, Exeter and Plymouth. And that's never been settled yet."



Page 157

“There was a colony of Captain George Popham and Raleigh Gilbert went out, five year ago,” said Simons doubtfully. “They said they could not endure the bitter climate.”

“Sho,” said Smith impatiently, one stubbed forefinger on the map, “’t is in almost the same latitude as France. Maybe they chose the wrong place for their plantation. Why, the French trade furs with the savages, all up and down the Saint Laurence, and mind the cold no more than nothing at all. The first thing we know, the Dutch will be out here finding a road to the Indies.”

Both men laughed. They had lost faith in that road to fortune.

“Anyhow Hudson didn’t find it when they sent him to look for it the year afore he died,” said Simons, “or they’d be into it now. But what are you scheming?”

“First make a voyage of exploration,” said Smith. “I ha’ talked with one and another that told me they taken a draught of the coast, and I ha’ six or seven of the plots they drew, so different from one another and out of proportion they do me as much good as so much waste paper—though they cost me more,” added the veteran grimly. “With a true map o’ the coast, we’d know whereabouts we were.”

“No gold nor silver, I hear.”

“Maybe not. But what commodity in England decays faster than wood? And where will you find better forest than along that shore? Build shipyards there, and our English folk would make a living off’n that and the fisheries. I know how ’t was in Boston—the Flemings would salt their fish down right aboard the ships when the fleets came in. But men for work like this must be men—not tyrants, nor slaves.”

John Smith’s eyes flashed, and his lips closed so tightly that his thick mustaches and beard stuck straight out like a lion’s. He had seen a plenty of both slavery and tyranny in his life.

In fact there was a neck-and-neck race between the Plymouth Company and the Dutch West India Company, for the control of the northern province. Dutch fur traders were already on Manhattan Island living in makeshift wooden huts, and Adrian Block was exploring Long Island Sound, when John Smith went out to map the coast north of Cape Cod for Sir Ferdinando Gorges of the Plymouth Company in 1614. The two little English ships reached the part of the coast called by the Indians Monhegan in April of that year. They had general instructions to meet the cost of the expedition, if possible, by whaling, fishing and fur-trading. No true whales were found, however, and by the time the ships reached the fishing grounds the cod season was nearly past. Mullet and sturgeon were plentiful in summer, and while the sailors fished, Smith took a few men in a small boat and ranged the coast, trading for furs. Within a distance of fifty or sixty

miles they got in exchange for such trifles as were prized by the Indians, more than a thousand beaver skins, a hundred or more martens and as many otter-pelts.



Page 158

On a rocky island four leagues from shore, in latitude 43 $\frac{1}{2}$, he made a garden in May which gave them all salad vegetables through June and July. Not a man of the twenty-five was ill even for a day. Cod, they learned, were abundant from March to the middle of June, and again from September to November, for cor-fish—salt fish or Poor John. The Indians said that the herring were more than the hairs of the head. Sturgeon, mullet, salmon, halibut and other fish were plentiful. Smith had a vision of comfortable independent mariners settled on farms all along the coast, sending their fish to market the year round, and sleeping every night at home. It seemed to him that here, in a hardy thrifty province which gold-seekers and gentlemen adventurers might scorn, he could contentedly end his days.

There was a pleasant inlet on the coast of a bold headland, north of Cape Cod, which he thought would be his choice for his plantation. This headland he had named Cape Tragabigzanda. There were three small round islands to be seen far to seaward, which he called the Three Turks' Heads. One Sunday, "a faire sunshining day," he climbed a green height above Anusquam, and sitting on a huge boulder surveyed the bright and peaceful landscape and chose the site for his house. Good stone there would be in abundance, and mighty timbers that had been growing for him since the days of Noah. In this Province of New England a strong and fearless race would found new towns with the old names—Boston, Plymouth, Ipswich, Sandwich, Gloucester. So he dreamed until the sun went down under a canopy of crimson and gold, while the boat rocked in the little bay where he would have his wharf.

In 1619, when English Puritans began preparations for the founding of a new colony, he offered his services, but the older men would have none of him. He was a "Church of England Protestant" and one of the unregenerate with whom they had no fellowship. They took his map as a guide, and settled, not on Cape Tragabigzanda, which Prince Charles had re-named Cape Anne, but in the bay which he had called Plymouth. He spent some years in London writing an account of his adventures, and died in 1631 at the age of fifty-two—Captain John Smith, Admiral of New England.

NOTE

The account of Captain John Smith's adventures among the Turks was at one time considered apocryphal, but good authorities now see no reason to regard his narrative of his own career as in any way inaccurate. The perils and strange chances which an adventurous man encountered in such times often seem almost incredible in a more peaceful age, but there is really no more reason to doubt them than to discredit authentic accounts of men like Daniel Boone, Francis Drake, or other men of similar disposition.



THE DISCOVERIES

Through tangled mysteries of old romance
Knights, Latin, Celt or Saxon, pass a-dream,
Seeking the minarets of magic towers
Through the witched woods that gleam.



Page 159

Stately in trappings thick with gold and gems,
Stern-browed and stubborn-eyed, they wandered forth,
As children credulous, as strong men brave,
To South, and West, and North.

Our venturous pilots map the windy skies;
To serve our pleasure, huger galleons wait.
Aflame with more than magic lights, our walls
Guard the Manhattan Gate!

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THE END

[Transcriber's Notes:

Page Problem Change/Comment

8 "Helene" "Helene" to match rest of text 26 same awe some awe 55 Inserted a comma after 'jeweled

trappings'.

85 superfluous comma in "Catherine,
became" removed

85 valuable valuable 90 good cheap and wholesome. As in image 108 comrad
comrade 133 'And the White Gods come' Line indented to match other stanzas. 150
squadron squadron 162 religion religion 178 excitement excitement 194 slaves slavers
194 Cabeca 'Cabece' as elsewhere 230 'like spent bullets' 'like spent bullets.' 232 two
month's As in image 239 exploratioins explorations 247 Amadas Armadas 300 Inserted
'(' before 'Edited by Justin
Winsor)'



Page 160

The following variant spellings in the text have been left unmodified:

“Bacalao” and “Baccalao”

“Mappe-Mondo” and “Mappe-Monde”

“T is” and “Tis”

The following variant hyphenations in the text have been left unmodified:

“arrow-heads” and “arrowheads” “birch-bark” and “birchbark” “cross-bow” and “crossbow-bolts” “court-yards” and “courtyards” “deer-skin” and “deerskin” “frost-work” and “frostwork” “Grand-Master” and “Grand Master” “ink-horn” and “inkhorn” “kin-folk” and “kinfolk” “sea-weed” and “seaweed” “shell-fish” and “shellfish” “ship-worm” and “shipworms”]