

Marx Hardy Machiavelli Joyce Austen
Defoe Abbot Melville Montaigne Cooper Emerson Hugo
Stoker Wilde Christie Maupassant Haggard Chesterton Molière Eliot Grimm
Garnett Engels Schiller Byron Molière
Goethe Hawthorne Smith Kafka
Cotton Dostoyevsky Kipling Doyle
Baum Henry Flaubert Nietzsche Willis
Leslie Dumas Stockton Vatsyayana Crane
Burroughs Verne
Curtis Tocqueville Gogol Busch
Homer Tolstoy Whitman Twain
Darwin Zola Lawrence Dickens Plato
Potter Freud Jowett Stevenson Andersen Harte
Kant London Descartes Cervantes Burton Hesse
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Hale James Hastings Shakespeare Irving
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History of the United Netherlands, 1588d

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CHAPTER XIX. Part 2.

And in Calais roads the great fleet—sailing slowly all next day in company with the English, without a shot being fired on either side—at last dropped anchor on Saturday afternoon, August 6th.

Here then the Invincible Armada had arrived at its appointed resting-place. Here the great junction—of Medina Sidonia with the Duke of Parma was to be effected; and now at last the curtain was to rise upon the last act of the great drama so slowly and elaborately prepared.

That Saturday afternoon, Lord Henry Seymour and his squadron of sixteen lay between Dungeness and Folkestone; waiting the approach of the two fleets. He spoke several-coasting vessels coming from the west; but they could give him no information—strange to say—either of the Spaniards or, of his own countrymen,—Seymour; having hardly three days' provision in his fleet, thought that there might be time to take in supplies; and so bore into the Downs. Hardly had he been there half an hour; when a pinnace arrived from the Lord-Admiral; with orders for Lord Henry's squadron to hold itself in readiness. There was no longer time for victualling, and very soon afterwards the order was given to make sail and bear for the French coast. The wind was however so light; that the whole day was spent before Seymour with his ships could cross the channel. At last, towards seven in the evening; he saw the great Spanish Armada, drawn up in a half-moon, and riding at anchor—the ships very near each other—a little to the eastward of Calais, and very near the shore. The English, under Howard Drake, Frobisher, and Hawkins, were slowly following, and—so soon as Lord Henry, arriving from the opposite shore; had made his junction with them—the whole combined fleet dropped anchor likewise very near Calais, and within one mile and a half of the Spaniards. That invincible force had at last almost reached its destination. It was now to receive the cooperation of the great Farnese, at the head of an army

of veterans, disciplined on a hundred battle-fields, confident from countless victories, and arrayed, as they had been with ostentatious splendour, to follow the most brilliant general in Christendom on his triumphal march into the capital of England. The long-threatened invasion was no longer an idle figment of politicians, maliciously spread abroad to poison men's minds as to the intentions of a long-enduring but magnanimous, and on the whole friendly sovereign. The mask had been at last thrown down, and the mild accents of Philip's diplomatists and their English dupes, interchanging protocols so decorously month after month on the sands of Bourbourg, had been drowned by the peremptory voice of English and Spanish artillery, suddenly breaking in upon their placid conferences. It had now become supererogatory to ask for Alexander's word of honour whether he had, ever heard of Cardinal Allan's pamphlet, or whether his master contemplated hostilities against Queen Elizabeth.

Never, since England was England, had such a sight been seen as now revealed itself in those narrow straits between Dover and Calais. Along that long, low, sandy shore, and quite within the range of the Calais fortifications, one hundred and thirty Spanish ships—the greater number of them the largest and most heavily armed in the world lay face to face, and scarcely out of cannon-shot, with one hundred and fifty English sloops and frigates, the strongest and swiftest that the island could furnish, and commanded by men whose exploits had rung through the world.

Farther along the coast, invisible, but known to be performing a post perilous and vital service, was a squadron of Dutch vessels of all sizes, lining both the inner and outer edges of the sandbanks off the Flemish coasts, and swarming in all the estuaries and inlets of that intricate and dangerous cruising-ground between Dunkerk and Walcheren. Those fleets of Holland and Zeeland, numbering some one hundred and fifty galleons, sloops, and fly-boats, under Warmond, Nassau, Van der Does, de Moor, and Rosendael, lay patiently blockading every possible egress from Newport, or Gravelines; or Sluys, or Flushing, or Dunkerk, and longing to grapple with the Duke of Parma, so soon as his fleet of gunboats and hoys, packed with his Spanish and Italian veterans, should venture to set forth upon the sea for their long-prepared exploit.

It was a pompous spectacle, that midsummer night, upon those narrow seas. The moon, which was at the full, was rising calmly upon a scene of anxious expectation. Would she not be looking, by the morrow's night, upon a subjugated England, a re-enslaved Holland—upon the downfall of civil and religious liberty? Those ships of Spain, which lay there with their banners waving in the moonlight, discharging salvoes of anticipated triumph and filling the air with strains of insolent music; would they not, by daybreak, be moving straight to their purpose, bearing the conquerors of the world to the scene of their cherished hopes?

That English fleet, too, which rode there at anchor, so anxiously on the watch—would that swarm of, nimble, lightly-handled, but slender vessels,—which had held their own hitherto in hurried and desultory skirmishes—be able to cope with their great antagonist now that the moment had arrived for the death grapple? Would not Howard, Drake, Frobisher, Seymour, Winter, and Hawkins, be swept out of the straits at last, yielding an open passage to Medina, Oquendo, Recalde, and Farnese? Would those Hollanders and Zee-landers, cruising so vigilantly among their treacherous shallows, dare to maintain their post, now that the terrible 'Holofernese,' with his invincible legions, was resolved to come forth?

So soon as he had cast anchor, Howard despatched a pinnace to the Vanguard, with a message to Winter to come on board the flagship. When Sir William reached the Ark, it was already nine in the evening. He was anxiously consulted by the Lord-Admiral as to the course now to be taken. Hitherto the English had been teasing and perplexing an enemy, on the retreat, as it were, by the nature of his instructions. Although anxious to give battle, the Spaniard was forbidden to descend upon the coast until after his junction with Parma. So the English had played a comparatively easy game, hanging upon their enemy's skirts, maltreating him as they doubled about him, cannonading him from a distance, and slipping out of his reach at their pleasure. But he was now to be met face to face, and the fate of the two free commonwealths of the world was upon the issue of the struggle, which could no longer be deferred.

Winter, standing side by aide with the Lord-Admiral on the deck of the little Ark-Royal, gazed for the first time on those enormous

galleons and galleys with which his companion, was already sufficiently familiar.

"Considering their hugeness," said he, "twill not be possible to remove them but by a device."

Then remembering, in a lucky moment, something that he had heard four years before of the fire ships sent by the Antwerpens against Parma's bridge—the inventor of which, the Italian Gianibelli, was at that very moment constructing fortifications on the Thames to assist the English against his old enemy Farnese—Winter suggested that some stratagem of the same kind should be attempted against the Invincible Armada. There was no time nor opportunity to prepare such submarine volcanoes as had been employed on that memorable occasion; but burning ships at least might be sent among the fleet. Some damage would doubtless be thus inflicted by the fire, and perhaps a panic, suggested by the memories of Antwerp and by the knowledge that the famous Mantuan wizard was then a resident of England, would be still more effective. In Winter's opinion, the Armada might at least be compelled to slip its cables, and be thrown into some confusion if the project were fairly carried out.

Howard approved of the device, and determined to hold, next morning, a council of war for arranging the details of its execution.

While the two sat in the cabin, conversing thus earnestly, there had well nigh been a serious misfortune. The ship, *White Bear*, of 1000 tons burthen, and three others of the English fleet, all tangled together, came drifting with the tide against the *Ark*. There were many yards carried away; much tackle spoiled, and for a time there was great danger; in the opinion of Winter, that some of the very best ships in the fleet would be crippled and quite destroyed on the eve of a general engagement. By alacrity and good handling, however, the ships were separated, and the ill-consequences of an accident—such as had already proved fatal to several Spanish vessels—were fortunately averted.

Next day, Sunday, 7th August, the two great fleets were still lying but a mile and a half apart, calmly gazing at each other, and rising and falling at their anchors as idly as if some vast summer regatta were the only purpose of that great assemblage of shipping. Noth-

ing as yet was heard of Farnese. Thus far, at least, the Hollanders had held him at bay, and there was still breathing-time before the catastrophe. So Howard hung out his signal for council early in the morning, and very soon after Drake and Hawkins, Seymour, Winter, and the rest, were gravely consulting in his cabin.

It was decided that Winter's suggestion should be acted upon, and Sir Henry Palmer was immediately despatched in a pinnace to Dover, to bring off a number of old vessels fit to be fired, together with a supply of light wood, tar, rosin, sulphur, and other combustibles, most adapted to the purpose.' But as time wore away, it became obviously impossible for Palmer to return that night, and it was determined to make the most of what could be collected in the fleet itself. Otherwise it was to be feared that the opportunity might be for ever lost. Parma, crushing all opposition, might suddenly appear at any moment upon the channel; and the whole Spanish Armada, placing itself between him and his enemies, would engage the English and Dutch fleets, and cover his passage to Dover. It would then be too late to think of the burning ships.

On the other hand, upon the decks of the Armada, there was an impatience that night which increased every hour. The governor of Calais; M. de Gourdon, had sent his nephew on board the flag-ship of Medina Sidonia, with courteous salutations, professions of friendship, and bountiful refreshments. There was no fear—now that Mucio was for the time in the ascendancy—that the schemes of Philip would be interfered with by France. The governor, had, however, sent serious warning of—the dangerous position in which the Armada had placed itself. He was quite right. Calais roads were no safe anchorage for huge vessels like those of Spain and Portugal; for the tides and cross-currents to which they were exposed were most treacherous. It was calm enough at the moment, but a westerly gale might, in a few hours, drive the whole fleet hopelessly among the sand-banks of the dangerous Flemish coast. Moreover, the Duke, although tolerably well furnished with charts and pilots for the English coast, was comparatively unprovided against the dangers which might beset him off Dunkerk, Newport, and Flushing. He had sent messengers, day after day, to Farnese, begging for assistance of various kinds, but, above all, imploring his instant presence on the field of action. It was the time and, place for Alexander to

assume the chief command. The Armada was ready to make front against the English fleet on the left, while on the right, the Duke, thus protected, might proceed across the channel and take possession of England.

And the impatience of the soldiers and sailors on board the fleet was equal to that of their commanders. There was London almost before their eyes—a huge mass of treasure, richer and more accessible than those mines beyond the Atlantic which had so often rewarded Spanish chivalry with fabulous wealth. And there were men in those galleons who remembered the sack of Antwerp, eleven years before—men who could tell, from personal experience, how helpless was a great commercial city, when once in the clutch of disciplined brigands—men who, in that dread 'fury of Antwerp,' had enriched themselves in an hour with the accumulations of a merchant's life-time, and who had slain fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, brides and bridegrooms, before each others' eyes, until the number of inhabitants butchered in the blazing streets rose to many thousands; and the plunder from palaces and warehouses was counted by millions; before the sun had set on the 'great fury.' Those Spaniards, and Italians, and Walloons, were now thirsting for more gold, for more blood; and as the capital of England was even more wealthy and far more defenceless than the commercial metropolis of the Netherlands had been, so it was resolved that the London 'fury' should be more thorough and more productive than the 'fury' of Antwerp, at the memory—of which the world still shuddered. And these professional soldiers had been taught to consider the English as a pacific, delicate, effeminate race, dependent on good living, without experience of war, quickly fatigued and discouraged, and even more easily to be plundered and butchered than were the excellent burghers of Antwerp.

And so these southern conquerors looked down from their great galleons and galeasses upon the English vessels. More than three quarters of them were merchantmen. There was no comparison whatever between the relative strength of the fleets. In number they were about equal being each from one hundred and thirty to one hundred and fifty strong—but the Spaniards had twice the tonnage of the English, four times the artillery, and nearly three times the number of men.

Where was Farnese? Most impatiently the Golden Duke paced the deck of the Saint Martin. Most eagerly were thousands of eyes strained towards the eastern horizon to catch the first glimpse of Parma's flotilla. But the day wore on to its close, and still the same inexplicable and mysterious silence prevailed. There was utter solitude on the waters in the direction of Gravelines and Dunkerque – not a sail upon the sea in the quarter where bustle and activity had been most expected. The mystery was profound, for it had never entered the head of any man in the Armada that Alexander could not come out when he chose.

And now to impatience succeeded suspicion and indignation; and there were curses upon sluggishness and upon treachery. For in the horrible atmosphere of duplicity, in which all Spaniards and Italians of that epoch lived, every man suspected his brother, and already Medina Sidonia suspected Farnese of playing him false. There were whispers of collusion between the Duke and the English commissioners at Bourbourg. There were hints that Alexander was playing his own game, that he meant to divide the sovereignty of the Netherlands with the heretic Elizabeth, to desert his great trust, and to effect, if possible, the destruction of his master's Armada, and the downfall of his master's sovereignty in the north. Men told each other, too, of a vague rumour, concerning which Alexander might have received information, and in which many believed, that Medina Sidonia was the bearer of secret orders to throw Farnese into bondage, so soon as he should appear, to send him a disgraced captive back to Spain for punishment, and to place the baton of command in the hand of the Duke of Pastrana, Philip's bastard by the Eboli. Thus, in the absence of Alexander, all was suspense and suspicion. It seemed possible that disaster instead of triumph was in store for them through the treachery of the commander-in-chief. Four and twenty hours and more, they had been lying in that dangerous roadstead, and although the weather had been calm and the sea tranquil, there seemed something brooding in the atmosphere.

As the twilight deepened, the moon became totally obscured, dark cloud-masses spread over the heavens, the sea grew black, distant thunder rolled, and the sob of an approaching tempest became distinctly audible. Such indications of a westerly gale, were

not encouraging to those cumbrous vessels, with the treacherous quicksands of Flanders under their lee.

At an hour past midnight, it was so dark that it was difficult for the most practiced eye to pierce far into the gloom. But a faint drip of oars now struck the ears of the Spaniards as they watched from the decks. A few moments afterwards the sea became, suddenly luminous, and six flaming vessels appeared at a slight distance, bearing steadily down upon them before the wind and tide.

There were men in the Armada who had been at the siege of Antwerp only three years before. They remembered with horror the devil-ships of Gianibelli, those floating volcanoes, which had seemed to rend earth and ocean, whose explosion had laid so many thousands of soldiers dead at a blow, and which had shattered the bridge and floating forts of Farnese, as though they had been toys of glass. They knew, too, that the famous engineer was at that moment in England.

In a moment one of those horrible panics, which spread with such contagious rapidity among large bodies of men, seized upon the Spaniards. There was a yell throughout the fleet—"the fire-ships of Antwerp, the fire-ships of Antwerp!" and in an instant every cable was cut, and frantic attempts were made by each galleon and galleasse to escape what seemed imminent destruction. The confusion was beyond description. Four or five of the largest ships became entangled with each other. Two others were set on fire by the flaming—vessels, and were consumed. Medina Sidonia, who had been warned, even, before his departure from Spain, that some such artifice would probably be attempted, and who had even, early that morning, sent out a party of sailors in a pinnace to search for indications of the scheme, was not surprised or dismayed. He gave orders—as well as might be that every ship, after the danger should be passed, was to return to its post, and, await his further orders. But it was useless, in that moment of unreasonable panic to issue commands. The despised Mantuan, who had met with so many rebuffs at Philip's court, and who—owing to official incredulity had been but partially successful in his magnificent enterprise at Antwerp, had now; by the mere terror of his name, inflicted more dam-

age on Philip's Armada than had hitherto been accomplished by Howard and Drake, Hawkins and Frobisher, combined.

So long as night and darkness lasted, the confusion and uproar continued. When the Monday morning dawned, several of the Spanish vessels lay disabled, while the rest of the fleet was seen at a distance of two leagues from Calais, driving towards the Flemish coast. The threatened gale had not yet begun to blow, but there were fresh squalls from the W.S.W., which, to such awkward sailers as the Spanish vessels; were difficult to contend with. On the other hand, the English fleet were all astir; and ready to pursue the Spaniards, now rapidly drifting into the North Sea. In the immediate neighbourhood of Calais, the flagship of the squadron of galleasses, commanded by Don Hugo de Moncada, was discovered using her foresail and oars, and endeavouring to enter the harbour. She had been damaged by collision with the St. John of Sicily and other ships, during the night's panic, and had her rudder quite torn away. She was the largest and most splendid vessel in the Armada—the show-ship of the fleet,—“the very glory and stay of the Spanish navy,” and during the previous two days she had been visited and admired by great numbers of Frenchmen from the shore.

Lord Admiral Howard bore down upon her at once, but as she was already in shallow water, and was rowing steadily towards the town, he saw that the Ark could not follow with safety. So he sent his long-boat to cut her out, manned with fifty or sixty volunteers, most of them “as valiant in courage as gentle in birth”—as a partaker in the adventure declared. The Margaret and Joan of London, also following in pursuit, ran herself aground, but the master despatched his pinnace with a body of musketeers, to aid in the capture of the galleasse.

That huge vessel failed to enter the harbour, and stuck fast upon the bar. There was much dismay on board, but Don Hugo prepared resolutely to defend himself. The quays of Calais and the line of the French shore were lined with thousands of eager spectators, as the two boats-rowing steadily toward a galleasse, which carried forty brass pieces of artillery, and was manned with three hundred soldiers and four hundred and fifty slaves—seemed rushing upon their own destruction. Of these daring Englishmen, patricians and

plebeians together, in two open pinnaces, there were not more than one hundred in number, all told. They soon laid themselves close to the Capitana, far below her lofty sides, and called on Don Hugo to surrender. The answer was, a smile of derision from the haughty Spaniard, as he looked down upon them from what seemed an inaccessible height. Then one Wilton, coxswain of the Delight; of Winter's squadron, clambered up to the enemy's deck and fell dead the same instant. Then the English volunteers opened a volley upon the Spaniards; "They seemed safely ensconced in their ships," said bold Dick Tomson, of the Margaret and Joan, "while we in our open pinnaces, and far under them, had nothing to shroud and cover us." Moreover the numbers were, seven hundred and fifty to one hundred. But, the Spaniards, still quite disconcerted by the events of the preceding night, seemed under a spell. Otherwise it would have been an easy matter for the great galeasse to annihilate such puny antagonists in a very short space of time.

The English pelted the Spaniards quite cheerfully, however, with arquebus shot, whenever they showed themselves above the bulwarks, picked off a considerable number, and sustained a rather severe loss themselves, Lieutenant Preston of the Ark-Royal, among others, being dangerously wounded. "We had a pretty skirmish for half-an-hour," said Tomson. At last Don Hugo de Moncada, furious at the inefficiency of his men, and leading them forward in person, fell back on his deck with a bullet through both eyes. The panic was instantaneous, for, meantime, several other English boats—some with eight, ten; or twelve men on board—were seen pulling—towards the galeasse; while the dismayed soldiers at once leaped overboard on the land side, and attempted to escape by swimming and wading to the shore. Some of them succeeded, but the greater number were drowned. The few who remained—not more, than twenty in all—hoisted two handkerchiefs upon two rapiers as a signal of truce. The English, accepting it as a signal of defeat; scrambled with great difficulty up the lofty sides of the Capitana, and, for an hour and a half, occupied themselves most agreeably in plundering the ship and in liberating the slaves.

It was their intention, with the flood-tide, to get the vessel off, as she was but slightly damaged, and of very great value. But a serious obstacle arose to this arrangement. For presently a boat came along-

side, with young M. de Gourdon and another French captain, and hailed the galeasse. There was nobody on board who could speak French but Richard Tomson. So Richard returned the hail, and asked their business. They said they came from the governor.

"And what is the—governor's pleasure?" asked Tomson, when they had come up the side.

"The governor has stood and beheld your fight, and rejoiced in your victory," was the reply; "and he says that for your prowess and manhood you well deserve the pillage of the galeasse. He requires and commands you, however, not to attempt carrying off either the ship or its ordnance; for she lies a-ground under the battery of his castle, and within his jurisdiction, and does of right appertain to him."

This seemed hard upon the hundred volunteers, who, in their two open boats, had so manfully carried a ship of 1200 tons, 40 guns, and 750 men; but Richard answered diplomatically.

"We thank M. de Gourdon," said he, "for granting the pillage to mariners and soldiers who had fought for it, and we acknowledge that without his good-will we cannot carry away anything we have got, for the ship lies on ground directly under his batteries and bulwarks. Concerning the ship and ordnance, we pray that he would send a pinnace to my Lord Admiral Howard, who is here in person hard by, from whom he will have an honourable and friendly answer, which we shall all-obey."

With this—the French officers, being apparently content, were about to depart, and it is not impossible that the soft answer might have obtained the galeasse and the ordnance, notwithstanding the arrangement which Philip II. had made with his excellent friend Henry III. for aid and comfort to Spanish vessels in French ports. Unluckily, however, the inclination for plunder being rife that morning, some of the Englishmen hustled their French visitors, plundered them of their rings and jewels, as if they had been enemies, and then permitted them to depart. They rowed off to the shore, vowing vengeance, and within a few minutes after their return the battery of the fort was opened upon the English, and they were compelled to make their escape as they could with the plunder

already secured, leaving the galeasse in the possession of M. de Gourdon.

This adventure being terminated, and the pinnaces having returned to the fleet, the Lord-Admiral, who had been lying off and on, now bore away with all his force in pursuit of the Spaniards. The Invincible Armada, already sorely crippled, was standing N.N.E. directly before a fresh topsail-breeze from the S.S.W. The English came up with them soon after nine o'clock A.M. off Grave-lines, and found them sailing in a half-moon, the admiral and vice-admiral in the centre, and the flanks protected by the three remaining galeasses and by the great galleons of Portugal.

Seeing the enemy approaching, Medina Sidonia ordered his whole fleet to luff to the wind, and prepare for action. The wind shifting a few points, was now at W.N.W., so that the English had both the weather-gage and the tide in their favour. A general combat began at about ten, and it was soon obvious to the Spaniards that their adversaries were intending warm work. Sir Francis Drake in the *Revenge*, followed by, Frobisher in the *Triumph*, Hawkins in the *Victory*, and some smaller vessels, made the first attack upon the Spanish flagships. Lord Henry in the *Rainbow*, Sir Henry Palmer in the *Antelope*, and others, engaged with three of the largest galleons of the Armada, while Sir William Winter in the *Vanguard*, supported by most of his squadron, charged the starboard wing.

The portion of the fleet thus assaulted fell back into the main body. Four of the ships ran foul of each other, and Winter, driving into their centre, found himself within musket-shot of many of their most formidable' ships.

"I tell you, on the credit of a poor gentleman," he said, "that there were five hundred discharges of demi-cannon, culverin, and demi-culverin, from the *Vanguard*; and when I was farthest off in firing my pieces, I was not out of shot of their harquebus, and most time within speech, one of another."

The battle lasted six hours long, hot and furious; for now there was no excuse for retreat on the part of the Spaniards, but, on the contrary, it was the intention of the Captain-General to return to his station off Calais, if it were within his power. Nevertheless the English still partially maintained the tactics which had proved so suc-

cessful, and resolutely refused the fierce attempts of the Spaniards to lay themselves along-side. Keeping within musket-range, the well-disciplined English mariners poured broadside after broadside against the towering ships of the Armada, which afforded so easy a mark; while the Spaniards, on their part, found it impossible, while wasting incredible quantities of powder and shot, to inflict any severe damage on their enemies. Throughout the action, not an English ship was destroyed, and not a hundred men were killed. On the other hand, all the best ships of the Spaniards were riddled through and through, and with masts and yards shattered, sails and rigging torn to shreds, and a north-went wind still drifting them towards the fatal sand-batiks of Holland, they, laboured heavily in a chopping sea, firing wildly, and receiving tremendous punishment at the hands of Howard Drake, Seymour, Winter, and their followers. Not even master-gunner Thomas could complain that day of "blind exercise" on the part of the English, with "little harm done" to the enemy. There was scarcely a ship in the Armada that did not suffer severely; for nearly all were engaged in that memorable action off the sands of Gravelines. The Captain-General himself, Admiral Recalde, Alonzo de Leyva, Oquendo, Diego Flores de Valdez, Bertendona, Don Francisco de Toledo, Don Diego de Pimentel, Telles Enriquez, Alonzo de Luzon, Garibay, with most of the great galleons and galleasses, were in the thickest of the fight, and one after the other each of those huge ships was disabled. Three sank before the fight was over, many others were soon drifting helpless wrecks towards a hostile shore, and, before five o'clock, in the afternoon, at least sixteen of their best ships had been sacrificed, and from four to five thousand soldiers killed.

["God hath mightily preserved her Majesty's forces with the least losses that ever hath been heard of, being within the compass of so great volleys of shot, both small and great. I verily believe there is not threescore men lost of her Majesty's forces." Captain J. Fenner to Walsingham, 4/14 Aug. 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)]

Nearly all the largest vessels of the Armada, therefore, having, been disabled or damaged – according to a Spanish eye-witness – and all their small shot exhausted, Medina Sidonia reluctantly gave

orders to retreat. The Captain-General was a bad sailor; but he was, a chivalrous Spaniard of ancient Gothic blood, and he felt deep mortification at the plight of his invincible fleet, together with undisguised: resentment against Alexander Farnese, through whose treachery and incapacity, he considered. the great Catholic cause to have been, so foully sacrificed. Crippled, maltreated, and diminished in number, as were his ships; he would have still faced, the enemy, but the winds and currents were fast driving him on, a lee-shore, and the pilots, one and all, assured him that it would be inevitable destruction to remain. After a slight and very ineffectual attempt to rescue Don Diego de Pimentel in the St. Matthew—who refused to leave his disabled ship—and Don Francisco de Toledo; whose great galleon, the St. Philip, was fast driving, a helpless wreck, towards Zeeland, the Armada bore away N.N.E. into the open sea, leaving those, who could not follow, to their fate.

The St. Matthew, in a sinking condition, hailed a Dutch fisherman, who was offered a gold chain to pilot her into Newport. But the fisherman, being a patriot; steered her close to the Holland fleet, where she was immediately assaulted by Admiral Van der Does, to whom, after a two hours' bloody fight, she struck her flag. Don Diego, marshal of the camp to the famous legion of Sicily, brother, of the Marquis of Tavera, nephew of the Viceroy of Sicily, uncle to the Viceroy of Naples, and numbering as many titles, dignities; and high affinities as could be expected of a grandee of the first class, was taken, with his officers, to the Hague. "I was the means," said Captain Borlase, "that the best sort were saved, and the rest were cast overboard and slain at our entry. He, fought with us two hours; and hurt divers of our men, but at, last yielded."

John Van der Does, his captor; presented the banner; of the Saint Matthew to the great church of Leyden, where—such was its prodigious length—it hung; from floor to ceiling without being entirely unrolled; and there hung, from generation to generation; a worthy companion to the Spanish flags which had been left behind when Valdez abandoned the siege of that heroic city fifteen years before.

The galleon St. Philip, one of the four largest ships in the Armada, dismasted and foundering; drifted towards Newport, where camp-marshal Don Francisco de Toledo hoped in, vain for succour. La

Motte made a feeble attempt at rescue, but some vessels from the Holland fleet, being much more active, seized the unfortunate galleon, and carried her into Flushing. The captors found forty-eight brass cannon and other things of value on board, but there were some casks of Ribadavia wine which was more fatal to her enemies than those pieces of artillery had proved. For while the rebels were refreshing themselves, after the fatigues of the capture, with large draughts of that famous vintage, the *St. Philip*, which had been bored through and through with English shot, and had been rapidly filling with water, gave a sudden lurch, and went down in a moment, carrying with her to the bottom three hundred of those convivial Hollanders.

A large Biscay galleon, too, of Recalde's squadron, much disabled in action, and now, like many others, unable to follow the Armada, was summoned by Captain Cross of the *Hope*, 48 guns, to surrender. Although foundering, she resisted, and refused to strike her flag. One of her officers attempted to haul down her colours, and was run through the body by the captain, who, in his turn, was struck dead by a brother of the officer thus slain. In the midst of this quarrel the ship went down with all her crew.

Six hours and more, from ten till nearly five, the fight had lasted— a most cruel battle, as the Spaniard declared. There were men in the Armada who had served in the action of Lepanto, and who declared that famous encounter to have been far surpassed in severity and spirit by this fight off Gravelines. "Surely every man in our fleet did well," said Winter, "and the slaughter the enemy received was great." Nor would the Spaniards have escaped even worse punishment, had not, most unfortunately, the penurious policy of the Queen's government rendered her ships useless at last, even in this supreme moment. They never ceased cannonading the discomfited enemy until the ammunition was exhausted. "When the cartridges were all spent," said Winter, "and the munitions in some vessels gone altogether, we ceased fighting, but followed the enemy, who still kept away." And the enemy— although still numerous, and seeming strong enough, if properly handled, to destroy the whole English fleet— fled before them. There remained more than fifty Spanish vessels, above six hundred tons in size, besides sixty hulks and other vessels of less account; while in the whole English

navy were but thirteen ships of or above that burthen. "Their force is wonderful great and strong," said Howard, "but we pluck their feathers by little and little."

For Medina Sidonia had now satisfied himself that he should never succeed in boarding those hard-fighting and swift-sailing craft, while, meantime, the horrible panic of Sunday night and the succession of fights throughout the following day, had completely disorganized his followers. Crippled, riddled, shorn, but still numerous, and by no means entirely vanquished, the Armada was flying with a gentle breeze before an enemy who, to save his existence; could not have fired a broadside.

"Though our powder and shot was well nigh spent," said the Lord-Admiral, "we put on a brag countenance and gave them chase, as though we had wanted nothing." And the brag countenance was successful, for that "one day's service had much appalled the enemy" as Drake observed; and still the Spaniards fled with a freshening gale all through the Monday night. "A thing greatly to be regarded," said Fenner, of the Nonpariel, "is that that the Almighty had stricken them with a wonderful fear. I have hardly, seen any of their companies succoured of the extremities which befell them after their fights, but they have been left, at utter ruin, while they bear as much sail as ever they possibly can."

On Tuesday morning, 9th August, the English ships were off the isle of Walcheren, at a safe distance from the shore. "The wind is hanging westerly," said Richard Tomson, of the Margaret and Joan, "and we drive our enemies apace, much marvelling in what port they will direct themselves. Those that are left alive are so weak and heartless that they could be well content to lose all charges and to be at home, both rich and poor."

"In my, conscience," said Sir William Winter, "I think the Duke would give his dukedom to be in Spain again."

The English ships, one-hundred and four in number, being that morning half-a-league to windward, the Duke gave orders for the whole Armada to lay to and, await their approach. But the English had no disposition to engage, for at, that moment the instantaneous destruction of their enemies seemed inevitable. Ill-managed, panic-struck, staggering before their foes, the Spanish fleet was now close