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RALEIGH

Edmund Gosse

Raleigh

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Edmund Gosse

Raleigh

PREFACE

The existing Lives of Raleigh are very numerous. To this day the most interesting of these, as a literary production, is that published in 1736 by William Oldys, afterwards Norroy King at Arms. This book was a marvel of research, as well as of biographical skill, at the time of its appearance, but can no longer compete with later lives as an authority. By a curious chance, two writers who were each ignorant of the other simultaneously collected information regarding Raleigh, and produced two laborious and copious Lives of him, at the same moment, in 1868. Each of these collections, respectively by Mr. Edward Edwards, whose death is announced as these words are leaving the printers, and by the late Mr. James Augustus St. John, added very largely to our knowledge of Raleigh; but, of course, each of these writers was precluded from using the discoveries of the other. The present Life is the first in which the fresh matter brought forward by Mr. Edwards and by Mr. St. John has been collated; Mr. Edwards, moreover, deserved well of all Raleigh students by editing for the first time, in 1868, the correspondence of Raleigh. I hope that I do not seem to disparage Mr. Edwards's book when I say that in his arrangement and conjectural dating of undated documents I am very frequently in disaccord with him. The present Life contains various small data which are now for the first time published, and more than one fact of considerable importance which I owe to the courtesy of Mr. John Cordy Jeaffreson. I have, moreover, taken advantage up to date of the *Reports* of the Historical MSS. Commission, and of the two volumes of *Lismore Papers* this year published. In his prospectus to the latter Dr. Grosart promises us still more about Raleigh in later issues. My dates are new style.

The present sketch of Raleigh's life is the first attempt which has been made to portray his personal career disengaged from the general history of his time. To keep so full a life within bounds it has been necessary to pass rapidly over events of signal importance in which he took but a secondary part. I may point as an example to the defeat of the Spanish Armada, a chapter in English history which has usually occupied a large space in the chronicle of Raleigh and his times. Mrs. Creighton's excellent little volume on the latter and wider theme may be recommended to those who wish to see Raleigh painted not in a full-length portrait, but in an historical composition of the reigns of Elizabeth and James I. I have to thank Dr. Brushfield for the use of his valuable Raleigh bibliography, now in the press, and for other kind help.

CHAPTER I. YOUTH

Walter Raleigh was born, so Camden and an anonymous astrologer combine to assure us, in 1552. The place was Hayes Barton, a farmstead in the parish of East Budleigh, in Devonshire, then belonging to his father; it passed out of the family, and in 1584 Sir Walter attempted to buy it back. 'For the natural disposition I have to the place, being born in that house, I had rather seat myself there than anywhere else,' he wrote to a Mr. Richard Duke, the then possessor, who refused to sell it. Genealogists, from himself downwards, have found a rich treasure in Raleigh's family tree, which winds its branches into those of some of the best Devonshire houses, the Gilberts, the Carews, the Champernownes. His father, the elder Walter Raleigh, in his third marriage became the second husband of Katherine Gilbert, daughter of Sir Philip Champernoun of Modbury. By Otto Gilbert, her first husband, she had been the mother of two boys destined to be bold navigators and colonists, Humphrey and Adrian Gilbert. It, is certainly the influence of his half-brother Sir Humphrey Gilbert, of Compton, which is most strongly marked upon the character of young Raleigh; while Adrian was one of his own earliest converts to Virginian enterprise.

The earliest notice of Sir Walter Raleigh known to exist was found and communicated to the *Transactions of the Devonshire Association* by Dr. Brushfield in 1883. It is in a deed preserved in Sidmouth Church, by which tithes of fish are leased by the manor of Sidmouth to 'Walter Rawlegh the elder, Carow Raleigh, and Walter Raleigh the younger,' on September 10, 1560. In 1578 the same persons passed over their interest in the fish-tithes in another deed, which contains their signatures. It is amusing to find that the family had not decided how to spell its name. The father writes 'Ralegh,' his elder son Carew writes 'Caro Rawlyh,' while the subject of this memoir, in this his earliest known signature, calls himself 'Rauleygh.'

His father was a Protestant when young Walter was born, but his mother seems to have remained a Catholic. In the persecution under Mary, she, as we learn from Foxe, went into Exeter to visit the heretics in gaol, and in particular to see Agnes Prest before her burning. Mrs. Raleigh began to exhort her to repentance, but the martyr turned the tables on her visitor, and urged the gentlewoman to seek the blessed body of Christ in heaven, not on earth, and this with so much sweet persuasiveness that when Mrs. Raleigh 'came home to her husband she declared to him that in her life she never heard any woman, of such simplicity to see to, talk so godly and so earnestly; insomuch, that if God were not with her she could not speak such things – "I was not able to answer her, I, who can read, and she cannot.'" It is easy to perceive that this anecdote would not have been preserved if the incident had not heralded the final secession of Raleigh's parents from the creed of Philip II., and thus Agnes Prest was not without her share in forging Raleigh's hatred of bigotry and of the Spaniard. Very little else is known about Walter and Katherine Raleigh. They lived at their manorial farm of Hayes Barton, and they were buried side by side, as their son tells us, 'in Exeter church.'

The university career of Raleigh is vague to us in the highest degree. The only certain fact is that he left Oxford in 1569. Anthony à Wood says that he was three years there, and that he entered Oriel College as a commoner in or about the year 1568. Fuller speaks of him as resident at Christ Church also. Perhaps he went to Christ Church first as a boy of fourteen, in 1566, and removed to Oriel at sixteen. Sir Philip Sidney, Hakluyt, and Camden were all of them at Oxford during those years, and we may conjecture that Raleigh's acquaintance with them began there. Wood tells us that Raleigh, being 'strongly advanced by academical learning at Oxford, under the care of an excellent tutor, became the ornament of the juniors, and a proficient in oratory and philosophy.' Bacon and Aubrey preserved each an anecdote of Raleigh's university career, neither of them worth repeating here.

The exact date at which he left Oxford is uncertain. Camden, who was Raleigh's age, and at the university at the same time, says authoritatively in his *Annales*, that he was one of a hundred gentlemen volunteers taken to the help of the Protestant princes by Henry Champernowne, who was Raleigh's first-cousin, the son of his mother's elder brother. We learn from De Thou that Champernowne's contingent arrived at the Huguenot camp on October 5, 1569. This seems circumstantial enough, but there exist statements of Raleigh's own which tend to show that, if he was one of his cousin's volunteers, he yet preceded him into France. In the *History of the World* he speaks of personally remembering the conduct of the Protestants, immediately after the death of Condé, at the battle of Jarnac (March 13, 1569). Still more positively Raleigh says, 'myself was an eye-witness' of the retreat at Moncontour, on October 3, two days before the arrival of Champernowne. A provoking obscurity conceals Walter Raleigh from us for the next six or seven years. When Hakluyt printed his *Voyages* in 1589 he mentioned that he himself was five years in France. In a previous dedication he had reminded Raleigh that the latter had made a longer stay in that country than himself. Raleigh has therefore been conjectured to have fought in France for six years, that is to say, until 1575.

During this long and important period we are almost without a glimpse of him, nor is it anything but fancy which has depicted him as shut up by Walsingham at the English embassy in Paris on the fatal evening of St. Bartholomew's. Another cousin of his, Gawen Champernowne, became the son-in-law and follower of the Huguenot chief, Montgomery, whose murder on June 26, 1574, may very possibly have put a term to Raleigh's adventures as a Protestant soldier in France. The allusions to his early experiences are rare and slight in the *History of the World*, but one curious passage has often been quoted. In illustration of the way in which Alexander the Great harassed Bessus, Raleigh mentions that, 'in the third civil war of France,' he saw certain Catholics, who had retired to mountain-caves in Languedoc, smoked out of their retreat by the burning of bundles of straw at the cave's mouth. There has lately been shown to be no probability in the conjecture, made by several of his biographers, that he was one of the English volunteers in the Low Countries who fought in their shirts and drawers at the battle of Rimenant in August 1578.

On April 15, 1576, the poet Gascoigne, who was a *protégé*, of Raleigh's half-brother, issued his satire in blank verse, entitled *The Steel Glass*, a little volume which holds an important place in the development of our poetical literature. To this satire a copy of eighteen congratulatory verses was prefixed by 'Walter Rawley of the middle Temple.' These lines are perfunctory and are noticeable only for their heading 'of the middle Temple.' Raleigh positively tells us that he never studied law until he found himself a prisoner in the Tower, and he was probably only a passing lodger in some portion of the Middle Temple in 1576. On October 7, 1577, Gascoigne died prematurely and deprived us of a picturesque pen which might have gossiped of Raleigh's early career.

I am happy, through the courtesy of Mr. J. Cordy Jeaffreson, in being able for the first time to prove that Walter Raleigh was admitted to the Court as early as 1577. So much has been suspected, from his language to Leicester in a later letter from Ireland, but there has hitherto been no evidence of the fact. In examining the Middlesex records, Mr. Jeaffreson has discovered that on the night of December 16, 1577, a party of merry roisterers broke the peace at Hornsey. Their ringleaders were a certain Richard Paunsford and his brother, who are described in the recognisances taken next day before the magistrate Jasper Fisher as the servants of 'Walter Rawley, of Islington, Esq.,' and two days later as yeoman in the service of Walter Rawley, Esq., 'of the Court (*de curia*).'

It is very important to find him thus early officially described as of the Court. As Raleigh afterwards said, the education of his youth was a training in the arts of a gentleman and a soldier. But it extended further than this – it embraced an extraordinary knowledge of the sea, and in particular of naval warfare. It is tantalising that we have but the slenderest evidence of the mode in which this particular schooling was obtained. The western ocean was, all through the youth of Raleigh, the most fascinating and mysterious of the new fields which were being thrown open to English enterprise. He was a babe when Tonson came back with the first wonderful legend of the hidden treasure-house of

the Spaniard in the West Indies. He was at Oxford when England thrilled with the news of Hawkins' tragical third voyage. He came back from France just in time to share the general satisfaction at Drake's revenge for San Juan de Ulloa. All through his early days the splendour and perilous romance of the Spanish Indies hung before him, inflaming his fancy, rousing his ambition. In his own family, Sir Humphrey Gilbert represented a milder and more generous class of adventurers than Drake and Hawkins, a race more set on discovery and colonisation than on mere brutal rapine, the race of which Raleigh was ultimately to become the most illustrious example. If we possessed minute accounts of the various expeditions in which Gilbert took part, we should probably find that his young half-brother was often his companion. As early as 1584 Barlow addresses Raleigh as one personally conversant with the islands of the Gulf of Mexico, and there was a volume, never printed and now lost, written about the same time, entitled *Sir Walter Raleigh's Voyage to the West Indies*. This expedition, no other allusion to which has survived, must have taken place before he went to Ireland in 1580, and may be conjecturally dated 1577.

The incidents of the next two years may be rapidly noted; they are all of them involved in obscurity. It is known that Raleigh crossed the Atlantic for a second time on board one of the ships of Gilbert's ill-starred expedition to the St. Lawrence in the winter of 1578. In February of the next year¹ he was again in London, and was committed to the Fleet Prison for a 'fray' with another courtier. In September 1579, he was involved in Sir Philip Sidney's tennis-court quarrel with Lord Oxford. In May of this same year he was stopped at Plymouth when in the act of starting on a piratical expedition against Spanish America. He had work to do in opposing Spain nearer home, and he first comes clearly before us in connection with the Catholic invasion of Ireland in the close of 1579. It was on July 17, 1579, that the Catholic expedition from Ferrol landed at Dingle. Fearing to stay there, it passed four miles westward to Smerwick Bay, and there built a fortress called Fort del Ore, on a sandy isthmus, thinking in case of need easily to slip away to the ocean. The murder of an English officer, who was stabbed in his bed while the guest of the brother of the Earl of Desmond, was recommended by Sandars the legate as a sweet sacrifice in the sight of God, and ruthlessly committed. The result was what Sandars had foreseen; the Geraldines, hopelessly compromised, threw up the fiction of loyalty to Elizabeth. Sir Nicholas Malby defeated the rebels in the Limerick woods in September, but in return the Geraldines burned Youghal and drove the Deputy within the walls of Cork, where he died of chagrin. The temporary command fell on an old friend of Raleigh's, Sir Warham Sentleger, who wrote in December 1579 a letter of earnest appeal which broke up the apathy of the English Government. Among other steps hurriedly taken to uphold the Queen's power in Ireland, young Walter Raleigh was sent where his half-brother, Humphrey Gilbert, had so much distinguished himself ten years before.

The biographer breathes more freely when he holds at last the earliest letter which remains in the handwriting of his hero. All else may be erroneous or conjectural, but here at least, for a moment, he presses his fingers upon the very pulse of the machine. On February 22, 1580, Raleigh wrote from Cork to Burghley, giving him an account of his voyage. It appears that he wrote on the day of his arrival, and if that be the case, he left London, and passed down the Thames, in command of a troop of one hundred foot soldiers, on January 15, 1580. By the same computation, they reached the Isle of Wight on the 21st, and stayed there to be transferred into ships of Her Majesty's fleet, not starting again until February 5. On his reaching Cork, Raleigh found that his men and he were only to be paid from the day of their arrival in Ireland, and he wrote off at once to Burghley to secure, if possible, the arrears. His arrival was a welcome reinforcement to Sentleger, who was holding Cork in the greatest peril, with only forty Englishmen. It must be recollected that this force under Raleigh was but a fragment of what English squadrons were busily bringing through this month of January into every port of Ireland. Elizabeth had, at last, awakened in earnest to her danger.

¹ Mr. Edwards corrects the date to 1580 n. s., but this is manifestly wrong; on the 7th of February 1580 n. s. Raleigh was on the Atlantic making for Cork Harbour.

Raleigh, in all probability, took no part in the marchings and skirmishings of the English armies until the summer. His 'reckoning,' or duty-pay, as a captain in the field, begins on July 13, 1580, and perhaps, until that date, his services consisted in defending Cork under Sentleger. In August he was joined with the latter, who was now Provost-marshal of Munster, in a commission to try Sir James, the younger brother of the Earl of Desmond, who had been captured by the Sheriff of Cork. No mercy could be expected by so prominent a Geraldine; he was hanged, drawn and quartered, and the fragments of his body were hung in chains over the gates of Cork. Meanwhile, on August 12, Lord Grey de Wilton arrived in Dublin to relieve Pelham of sovereign command in Ireland. Grey, though he learned to dislike Raleigh, was probably more cognisant of his powers than Pelham, who may never have heard of him. Grey had been the patron of the poet Gascoigne, and one of the most prominent men in the group with whom we have already seen that Raleigh was identified in his early youth.

From the moment of Grey's arrival in Ireland, the name of Raleigh ceased to be obscure. Sir William Pelham retired on September 7, and Lord Grey, who had brought the newly famous poet, Edmund Spenser, with him as his secretary, marched into Munster. With his exploits we have nothing to do, save to notice that it must have been in the camp at Rakele, if not on the battlefield of Glenmalure, that Raleigh began his momentous friendship with Spenser, whose *Shepherd's Calender* had inaugurated a new epoch in English poetry just a month before Raleigh's departure for Ireland. It is scarcely too fanciful to believe that this tiny anonymous volume of delicious song may have lightened the weariness of that winter voyage of 1580, which was to prove so momentous in the career of 'the Shepherd of the Ocean.' Lodovick Bryskett, Fulke Greville, Barnabee Googe, and Geoffrey Fenton were minor songsters of the copious Elizabethan age who were now in Munster as agents or soldiers, and we may suppose that the tedious guerilla warfare, in the woods had its hours of literary recreation for Raleigh.

The fortress on the peninsula of Dingle was now occupied by a fresh body of Catholic invaders, mainly Italians, and Smerwick Bay again attracted general interest. Grey, as Deputy, and Ormond, as governor of Munster, united their forces and marched towards this extremity of Kerry; Raleigh, with his infantry, joined them at Rakele; and we may take September 30, 1580, which is the date when his first 'reckoning' closes, as that on which he took some fresh kind of service under Lord Grey. Hooker, who was an eye-witness, supplies us with some very interesting glimpses of Raleigh in his *Supply of the Irish Chronicles*, a supplement to Holinshed. We learn from him that when Lord Grey broke into the camp at Rakele, Raleigh stayed behind, having observed that the kerns had the habit of swooping down upon any deserted encampment to rob and murder the camp followers. This expectation was fulfilled; the hungry Irish poured into Rakele as soon as the Deputy's back was turned. Raleigh had the satisfaction of capturing a large body of these poor creatures. One of them carried a great bundle of withies, and Raleigh asked him what they were for. 'To have hung up the English churls with,' was the bold reply. 'Well,' said Raleigh, 'but now they shall serve for an Irish kern,' and commanded him 'to be immediately tucked up in one of his own neck-bands.' The rest were served in a similar way, and then the young Englishman rode on after the army.

Towards the end of October they came in sight of Smerwick Bay, and of the fort on the sandy isthmus in which the Italians and Spaniards were lying in the hope of slipping back to Spain. The Legate had no sanguine aspirations left; every roof that could harbour the Geraldines had been destroyed in the English forays; Desmond was hiding, like a wild beast, in the Wood. By all the principles of modern warfare, the time had come for mercy and conciliation, and one man in Ireland, Ormond, thought as much. But Lord Grey was a soldier of the old disposition, an implacable enemy to Popery, what we now call a 'Puritan' of the most fierce and frigid type. There is no evidence to show that the gentle Englishmen who accompanied him, some of the best and loveliest spirits of the age, shrank from sharing his fanaticism. There was massacre to be gone through, but neither Edmund Spenser, nor Fulke Greville, nor Walter Raleigh dreamed of withdrawing his sanction. The story has been told and retold. For simple horror it is surpassed, in the Irish history of the time, only

by the earlier exploit which depopulated the island of Rathlin. In the perfectly legitimate opening of the siege of Fort del Ore, Raleigh held a very prominent commission, and we see that his talents were rapidly being recognised, from the fact that for the first three days he was entrusted with the principal command. It would appear that on the fourth day, when the Italians waved their white flag and screamed 'Misericordia! misericordia!' it was not Raleigh, but Zouch, who was commanding in the trenches. The parley the Catholics demanded was refused, and they were told they need not hope for mercy. Next day, which was November 9, 1580, the fort yielded helplessly. Raleigh and Mackworth received Grey's orders to enter and 'fall straight to execution.'

It was thought proper to give Catholic Europe a warning not to meddle with Catholic Ireland. In the words of the official report immediately sent home to Walsingham, as soon as the fort was yielded, 'all the Irish men and women were hanged, and 600 and upwards of Italians, Spaniards, Biscayans and others put to the sword. The Colonel, Captain, Secretary, Campmaster, and others of the best sort, saved to the number of 20 persons.' Of these last, two had their arms and legs broken before being hanged on a gallows on the wall of the fort. The bodies of the six hundred were stripped and laid out on the sands – 'as gallant goodly personages,' Lord Grey reported, 'as ever were beheld.' The Deputy took all the responsibility and expected no blame; he received none. In reply to his report, Elizabeth assured him a month later that 'this late enterprise had been performed by him greatly to her liking.' It is useless to expatiate on a code of morals that seems to us positively Japanese. To Lord Grey and the rest the rebellious kerns and their Southern allies were enemies of God and the Queen, beyond the scope of mercy in this world or the next, and no more to be spared or paltered with than malignant vermin. In his inexperience, Raleigh, to be soon ripened by knowledge of life and man, agreed with this view, but, happily for Ireland and England too, there were others who declined to sink, as Mr. Froude says, 'to the level of the Catholic continental tyrannies.' At Ormond's instigation the Queen sent over in April 1581 a general pardon.

Severe as Lord Grey was, he seemed too lenient to Raleigh. In January 1581, the young captain left Cork and made the perilous journey to Dublin to expostulate with the Deputy, and to urge him to treat with greater stringency various Munster chieftains who were blowing the embers of the rebellion into fresh flame. Among these malcontents the worst was a certain David Barry, son of Lord Barry, himself a prisoner in Dublin Castle. David Barry had placed the family stronghold, Barry Court, at the disposal of the Geraldines. Raleigh obtained permission to seize and hold this property, and returned from Dublin to carry out his duty. On his way back, as he was approaching Barry's country, with his men straggling behind him, the Seneschal of Imokelly, the strongest and craftiest of the remaining Geraldines, laid an ambush to seize him at the ford of Corabby. Raleigh not only escaped himself, but returned in the face of a force which was to his as twenty to one, in order to rescue a comrade whose horse had thrown him in the river. With a quarter-staff in one hand and a pistol in the other, he held the Seneschal and his kerns at bay, and brought his little body of troops through the ambush without the loss of one man. In the dreary monotony of the war, this brilliant act of courage, of which Raleigh himself in a letter gives a very modest account, touched the popular heart, and did as much as anything to make him famous.

The existing documents which illustrate Raleigh's life in Ireland during 1581, and they are somewhat numerous, give the student a much higher notion of his brilliant aptitude for business and of his active courage than of his amiability. His vivacity and ingenuity were sources of irritation to him, as the vigour of an active man may vex him in wading across loose sands. There was no stability and apparently no hope or aim in the policy of the English leaders, and Raleigh showed no mock-modesty in his criticism of that policy. Ormond had been on friendly terms with him, but as early as February 25 a quarrel was ready to break out. Ormond wished to hold Barry Court, which was the key to the important road between Cork and Youghal, as his own; while Raleigh was no less clamorous in claiming it. In the summer, not satisfied with complaining of Ormond to Grey, he denounced Grey to Leicester. In the meantime he had succeeded in ousting Ormond, who was recalled to England,

and in getting himself made, if not nominally, practically Governor of Munster. He proceeded to Lismore, then the English capital of the province, and made that town the centre of those incessant sallies and forays which Hooker describes. One of these skirmishes, closing in the defeat of Lord Barry at Cleve, showed consummate military ability, and deserves almost to rank as a battle.

In August, Raleigh's temporary governorship of Munster ended. He was too young and too little known a man permanently to hold such a post. Zouch took his place at Lismore, and Raleigh, returning to Cork, was made Governor of that city. It was at this time, or possibly a little earlier in the year, that Raleigh made his romantic attack upon Castle Bally-in-Harsh, the seat of Lord Roche. On the very same evening that Raleigh received a hint from head-quarters that the capture of this strongly fortified place was desirable, he set out with ninety men on the adventure. His troop arrived at Harsh very early in the morning, but not so early but that the townspeople, to the number of five hundred, had collected to oppose his little force. He soon put them to flight, and then, by a nimble trick, contrived to enter the castle itself, to seize Lord and Lady Roche at their breakfast-table, to slip out with them and through the town unmolested, and to regain Cork next day with the loss of only a single man. The whole affair was a piece of military sleight of hand, brilliantly designed, incomparably well carried out. The summer and autumn were passed in scouring the woods and ravines of Munster from Tipperary to Kilkenny. Miserable work he found it, and glad he must have been when a summons from London put an end to his military service in Ireland. In two years he had won a great reputation. Elizabeth, it may well be, desired to see him, and talk with him on what he called 'the business of this lost land.' In December 1581 he returned to England.

One point more may be mentioned. In a letter dated May 1, 1581, Raleigh offers to rebuild the ruined fortress of Barry Court at his own expense. This shows that he must by this time have come into a certain amount of property, for his Irish pay as a captain was, he says, so poor that but for honour he 'would disdain it as much as to keep sheep.' This fact disposes of the notion that Raleigh arrived at the Court of Elizabeth in the guise of a handsome penniless adventurer. Perhaps he had by this time inherited his share of the paternal estates.²

² Dr. Brushfield has found no mention of the elder Walter Raleigh later than April 11, 1578. As he was born in 1497, he must then have been over eighty years of age.

CHAPTER II. AT COURT

Raleigh had not completed his thirtieth year when he became a recognised courtier. We have seen that he had passed, four years before, within the precincts of the Court, but we do not know whether the Queen had noticed him or not. In the summer of 1581 he had written thus to Leicester from Lismore: —

I may not forget continually to put your Honour in mind of my affection unto your Lordship, having to the world both professed and protested the same. Your Honour, having no use of such poor followers, hath utterly forgotten me. Notwithstanding, if your Lordship shall please to think me yours, as I am, I will be found as ready, and dare do as much in your service, as any man you may command; and do neither so much despair of myself but that I may be some way able to perform so much.

To Leicester, then, we may be sure, he went, — to find him, and the whole Court with him, in the throes of the Queen's latest and final matrimonial embroilment. Raleigh had a few weeks in which to admire the empty and hideous suitor whom France had sent over to claim Elizabeth's hand, and during this critical time it is possible that he enjoyed his personal introduction to the Queen. Walter Raleigh in the prime of his strength and beauty formed a curious contrast to poor Alençon, and the difference was one which Elizabeth would not fail to recognise. On February 1, 1582, he was paid the sum of 200*l.* for his Irish services, and a week later he set out under Leicester, in company with Sir Philip Sidney, among the throng that conducted the French prince to the Netherlands.

When Elizabeth's 'poor frog,' as she called Alençon, had been duly led through the gorgeous pageant prepared in his honour at Antwerp, on February 17, the English lords and their train, glad to be free of their burden, passed to Flushing, and hastened home with as little ceremony as might be. Raleigh alone remained behind, to carry some special message of compliment from the Queen to the Prince of Orange. It is Raleigh himself, in his *Invention of Shipping*, who gives us this interesting information, and he goes on to say that when the Prince of Orange 'delivered me his letters to her Majesty, he prayed me to say to the Queen from him, *Sub umbra alarum tuarum protegimur*: for certainly, said he, they had withered in the bud, and sunk in the beginning of their navigation, had not her Majesty assisted them.' It would have been natural to entrust to Leicester such confidential utterances as these were a reply to. But Elizabeth was passing through a paroxysm of rage with Leicester at the moment. She ventured to call him 'traitor' and to accuse him of conspiring with the Prince of Orange. Notwithstanding this, his influence was still paramount with her, and it was characteristic of her shrewd petulance to confide in Leicester's *protégé*, although not in Leicester himself. Towards the end of March, Raleigh settled at the English Court.

On April 1, 1582, Elizabeth issued from Greenwich a strange and self-contradictory warrant with regard to service in Ireland, and the band of infantry hitherto commanded in that country by a certain Captain Annesley, now deceased. The words must be quoted verbatim: —

For that our pleasure is to have our servant Walter Rawley [this was the way in which the name was pronounced during Raleigh's lifetime] trained some time longer in that our realm [Ireland] for his better experience in martial affairs, and for the especial care which We have to do him good, in respect of his kindred that have served Us, some of them (as you know) near about Our person [probably Mrs. Catherine Ashley, who was Raleigh's aunt]; these are to require you that the leading of the said band may be committed to the said Rawley; and for that he is, for some

considerations, by Us excused to stay here. Our pleasure is that the said band be, in the meantime, till he repair into that Our realm, delivered to some such as he shall depute to be his lieutenant there.

He is to be captain in Ireland, but not just yet, not till a too tender Queen can spare him. We find that he was paid his 'reckoning' for six months after the issue of this warrant, but there is no evidence that he was spared at any time during 1582 to relieve his Irish deputy. He was now, in fact, installed as first favourite in the still susceptible heart of the Virgin Star of the North.

This, then, is a favourable opportunity for pausing to consider what manner of man it was who had so suddenly passed into the intimate favour of the Queen. Naunton has described Raleigh with the precision of one who is superior to the weakness of depreciating the exterior qualities of his enemy: 'having a good presence, in a handsome and well-compacted person; a strong natural wit, and a better judgment; with a bold and plausible tongue, whereby he could set out his parts to the best advantage.' His face had neither the ethereal beauty of Sidney's nor the intellectual delicacy of Spenser's; it was cast in a rougher mould than theirs. The forehead, it is acknowledged, was too high for the proportion of the features, and for this reason, perhaps, is usually hidden in the portraits by a hat. We must think of Raleigh at this time as a tall, somewhat bony man, about six feet high, with dark hair and a high colour, a facial expression of great brightness and alertness, personable from the virile force of his figure, and illustrating these attractions by a splendid taste in dress. His clothes were at all times noticeably gorgeous; and to the end of his life he was commonly bedizened with precious stones to his very shoes. When he was arrested in 1603 he was carrying 4,000*l.* in jewels on his bosom, and when he was finally captured on August 10, 1618, his pockets were found full of the diamonds and jacinths which he had hastily removed from various parts of his person. His letters display his solicitous love of jewels, velvets, and embroidered damasks. Mr. Jeaffreson has lately found among the Middlesex MSS. that as early as April 26, 1584, a gentleman named Hugh Pew stole at Westminster and carried off Walter Raleigh's pearl hat-band and another jewelled article of attire, valued together in money of that time at 113*l.* The owner, with characteristic promptitude, shut the thief up in Newgate, and made him disgorge. To complete our picture of the vigorous and brilliant soldier-poet, we must add that he spoke to the end of his life with that strong Devonshire accent which was never displeasing to the ears of Elizabeth.

The Muse of History is surely now-a-days too disdainful of all information that does not reach her signed and countersigned. In biography, at least, it must be a mistake to accept none but documentary evidence, since tradition, if it does not give us truth of fact, gives us what is often at least as valuable, truth of impression. The later biographers of Raleigh have scorned even to repeat those anecdotes that are the best known to the public of all which cluster around his personality. It is true that they rest on no earlier testimony than that of Fuller, who, writing in the lifetime of men who knew Raleigh, gives the following account of his introduction to Elizabeth: 'Her Majesty, meeting with a plashy place, made some scruple to go on; when Raleigh (dressed in the gay and genteel habit of those times) presently cast off and spread his new plush cloak on the ground, whereon the queen trod gently over, rewarding him afterwards with many suits for his so free and seasonable tender of so fair a footcloth.' The only point about this story which is incredible is that this act was Raleigh's introduction to the Queen. Regarded as a fantastic incident of their later attachment, the anecdote is in the highest degree characteristic of the readiness of the one and the romantic sentiment of the other.

Not less entertaining is Fuller's other story, that at the full tide of Raleigh's fortunes with the Queen, he wrote on a pane of glass with his diamond ring: —

Fain would I climb, but that I fear to fall,

whereupon Elizabeth replied,

If thy heart fail thee, then climb not at all.

Of these tales we can only assert that they reflect the popular and doubtless faithful impression of Raleigh's mother-wit and audacious alacrity.

If he did not go back to fight in Ireland, his experience of Irish affairs was made use of by the Government. He showed a considerable pliancy in giving his counsel. In May 1581 he had denounced Ormond and even Grey for not being severe enough, but in June 1582 he had veered round to Burghley's opinion that it was time to moderate English tyranny in Ireland. A paper written partly by Burghley and partly by Raleigh, but entitled *The Opinion of Mr. Rawley*, still exists among the Irish Correspondence, and is dated October 25, 1582. This document is in the highest degree conciliatory towards the Irish chieftains, whom it recommends the Queen to win over peacefully to her side, this policy 'offering a very plausible show of thrift and commodity.' It is interesting to find Raleigh so supple, and so familiar already with the Queen's foibles. It was probably earlier in the year, and about this same Irish business, that Raleigh spoke to Elizabeth, on the occasion which Naunton describes. 'Raleigh,' he says, 'had gotten the Queen's ear at a trice; and she began to be taken with his elocution, and loved to hear his reasons to her demands; and the truth is, she took him for a kind of *oracle*, which nettled them all.' Lord Grey, who was no diplomatist, had the want of caution to show that he was annoyed at advice being asked from a young man who was so lately his inferior. In answer to a special recommendation of Raleigh from the Queen, Lord Grey ventured to reply: 'For my own part I must be plain – I neither like his carriage nor his company, and therefore other than by direction and commandment, and what his right requires, he is not to expect from my hands.' Lord Grey did not understand the man he was dealing with. The result was that in August 1582 he was abruptly deposed from his dignity as Lord Deputy in Ireland. But we see that Raleigh could be exceedingly antipathetic to any man who crossed his path. That it was wilful arrogance, and not inability to please, is proved by the fact that he seems to have contrived to reconcile not Leicester only but even Hatton, Elizabeth's dear 'Pecora Campi,' to his intrusion at Court.

As far as we can perceive, Raleigh's success as a courtier was unclouded from 1582 to 1586, and these years are the most peaceful and uneventful in the record of his career. He took a confidential place by the Queen's side, but so unobtrusively that in these earliest years, at least, his presence leaves no perceptible mark on the political history of the country. Great in so many fields, eminent as a soldier, as a navigator, as a poet, as a courtier, there was a limit even to Raleigh's versatility, and he was not a statesman. It was political ambition which was the vulnerable spot in this Achilles, and until he meddled with statecraft, his position was practically unassailed. It must not be overlooked, in this connection, that in spite of Raleigh's influence with the Queen, he never was admitted as a Privy Councillor, his advice being asked in private, by Elizabeth or by her ministers, and not across the table, where his arrogant manner might have introduced discussions fruitless to the State. In 1598, when he was at the zenith of his power, he actually succeeded, as we shall see, in being proposed for Privy Council, but the Queen did not permit him to be sworn. Nothing would be more remarkable than Elizabeth's infatuation for her favourites, if we were not still more surprised at her skill in gauging their capacities, and her firmness in defining their ambitions.

Already, in 1583, Walter Raleigh began to be the recipient of the Queen's gifts. On April 10 of that year he came into possession of two estates, Stolney and Newland, which had passed to the Queen from All Souls College, Oxford. A few days later, May 4, he became enriched by obtaining letters patent for the 'Farm of Wines,' thenceforward to be one of the main sources of his wealth. According to this grant, which extended to all places within the kingdom, each vintner was obliged to pay twenty shillings a year to Raleigh as a license duty on the sale of wines. This was, in fact, a great relief to the wine trade, for until this time the mayors of corporations had levied this duty at their own judgment, and some of them had made a licensing charge not less than six times as heavy as the new duty. The grant, moreover, gave Raleigh a part of all fines accruing to the Crown under

the provisions of the wines statute of Edward VI. From his 'Farm of Wines' Raleigh seems at one time to have obtained something like 2,000*l.* a year. The emoluments dwindled at last, just before Raleigh was forced to resign his patent to James I., to 1,000*l.* a year; but even this was an income equivalent to 6,000*l.* of our money. The grant was to expire in 1619, and would therefore, if he had died a natural death, have outlived Raleigh himself. We must not forget that the cost of collecting moneys, and the salaries to deputy licensers, consumed a large part of these receipts.

While Raleigh was shaking down a fortune from the green ivy-bushes that hung at the vintners' doors, the western continent, at which he had already cast wistful glances, remained the treasure-house of Spain. His unfortunate but indomitable half-brother, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, recalled it to his memory. The name of Gilbert deserves to be better remembered than it is; and America, at least, will one day be constrained to honour the memory of the man who was the first to dream of colonising her shores. Until his time, the ambition of Englishmen in the west had been confined to an angry claim to contest the wealth and beauty of the New World with the Spaniard. The fabulous mines of Cusco, the plate-ships of Lima and Guayaquil, the pearl-fisheries of Panama, these had been hitherto the loadstar of English enterprise. The hope was that such feats as those of Drake would bring about a time when, as George Wither put it,

the spacious West,
Being still more with English blood possessed,
The proud Iberians shall not rule those seas,
To check our ships from sailing where they please.

Even Frobisher had not entertained the notion of leaving Spain alone, and of planting in the northern hemisphere colonies of English race. It was Sir Humphrey Gilbert who first thought of a settlement in North America, and the honour of priority is due to him, although he failed.

His royal charter was dated June 1578, and covered a space of six years with its privilege. We have already seen that various enterprises undertaken by Gilbert in consequence of it had failed in one way or another. After the disaster of 1579 he desisted, and lent three of his remaining vessels to the Government, to serve on the coast of Ireland. As late as July 1582 the rent due to him on these vessels was unpaid, and he wrote a dignified appeal to Walsingham for the money in arrears. He was only forty-three, but his troubles had made an old man of him, and he pleads his white hairs, blanched in long service of her Majesty, as a reason why the means of continuing to serve her should not be withheld from him. Raleigh had warmly recommended his brother before he was himself in power, and he now used all his influence in his favour. It is plain that Gilbert's application was promptly attended to, for we find him presently in a position to pursue the colonising enterprises which lay so near to his heart. The Queen, however, could not be induced to encourage him; she shrewdly remarked that Gilbert 'had no good luck at sea,' which was pathetically true. However, Gilbert's six years' charter was about to expire, and his hopes were all bound up in making one more effort. He pleaded, and Raleigh supported him, until Elizabeth finally gave way, merely refusing to allow Raleigh himself to take part in any such 'dangerous sea-fights' as the crossing of the Atlantic might entail.

On June 11, 1583, Sir Humphrey Gilbert sailed from Plymouth with a little fleet of five vessels, bound for North America. According to all authorities, Raleigh had expended a considerable sum in the outfit; according to one writer, Hayes (in Hakluyt), he was owner of the entire expedition. He spent, we know, 2,000*l.* in building and fitting out one vessel, which he named after himself, the 'Ark Raleigh.'

Sir Humphrey Gilbert was not born under a fortunate star. Two days after starting, a contagious fever broke out on board the 'Ark Raleigh,' and in a tumult of panic, without explaining her desertion to the admiral, she hastened back in great distress to Plymouth. The rest of the fleet crossed the Atlantic successfully, and Newfoundland was taken in the Queen's name. One ship out of the

remaining four had meanwhile been sent back to England with a sick crew. Late in September 1583 a second sailed into Plymouth with the news that the other two had sunk in an Atlantic storm on the 8th or 9th of that month. The last thing known of the gallant admiral before his ship went down was that 'sitting abaft with a book in his hand,' he had called out 'Be of good heart, my friends! We are as near to heaven by sea as by land.'

At the death of Gilbert, his schemes as a colonising navigator passed, as by inheritance, to Raleigh. That he had no intention of letting them drop is shown by the fact that he was careful not to allow Gilbert's original charter to expire. In June 1584 other hands might have seized his brother's relinquished enterprise, and therefore it was, on March 25, that Raleigh moved the Queen to renew the charter in his own name. In company with a younger half-brother, Adrian Gilbert, and with the experienced though unlucky navigator John Davis as a third partner, Raleigh was now incorporated as representing 'The College of the Fellowship for the Discovery of the North West Passage.' In this he was following the precedent of Gilbert, who had made use of the Queen's favourite dream of a northern route to China to cover his less attractive schemes of colonisation. Raleigh, however, took care to secure himself a charter which gave him the fullest possible power to 'inhabit or retain, build or fortify, at the discretion of the said W. Raleigh,' in any remote lands that he might find hitherto unoccupied by any Christian power. Armed with this extensive grant, Raleigh began to make his preparations.

It is needful here to pass rapidly over the chronicle of the expeditions to America, since they form no part of the personal history of Raleigh. On April 27 he sent out his first fleet under Amidas and Barlow. They sailed blindly for the western continent, but were guided at last by 'a delicate sweet smell' far out in ocean to the coast of Florida. They then sailed north, and finally landed on the islands of Wokoken and Roanoke, which, with the adjoining mainland, they annexed in the name of her Majesty. In September this first expedition returned, bringing Raleigh, as a token of the wealth of the new lands, 'a string of pearls as large as great peas.' In honour of 'the eternal Maiden Queen,' the new country received the name of Virginia, and Raleigh ordered his own arms to be cut anew, with this legend, *Propria insignia Walteri Raleigh, militis, Domini et Gubernatoris Virginiae*. No attempt had been made on this occasion to colonise. It was early in the following year that Raleigh sent out his second Virginian expedition, under the brave Sir Richard Grenville, to settle in the country. The experiment was not completely successful at first, but from August 17, 1585, which is the birthday of the American people, to June 18, 1586, one hundred and eight persons under the command of Ralph Lane, and in the service of Raleigh, made Roanoke their habitation. It is true that the colonists lost courage and abandoned Virginia at the latter date, but an essay at least had been made to justify the sanguine hopes of Raleigh.

These expeditions to North America were very costly, and by their very nature unremunerative for the present. Raleigh, however, was by this time quite wealthy enough to support the expense, and on the second occasion accident befriended him. Sir Richard Grenville, in the 'Tiger,' fell in with a Spanish plate-ship on his return-voyage, and towed into Plymouth Harbour a prize which was estimated at the value of 50,000*l.* But Raleigh was, indeed, at this time a veritable Danaë. As though enough gold had not yet been showered upon him, the Queen presented to him, on March 25, 1584, a grant of license to export woollen broad-cloths, a privilege the excessive profits of which soon attracted the critical notice of Burghley. Raleigh's grant, however, was long left unassailed, and was renewed year by year at least until May 1589. It would seem that his income from the trade in undyed broad-cloth was of a two-fold nature, a fixed duty on exportation in general, and a charge on 'over-lengths,' that is to say, on pieces which exceeded the maximum length of twenty-four yards. When Burghley assailed this whole system of taxation in 1591, he stated that Raleigh had, in the first year only of his grant, received 3,950*l.* from a privilege for which he paid to the State a rent of only 700*l.* If this was correct, and no one could be in a better position than Burghley to check the figures, Raleigh's income from broad-cloth alone was something like 18,000*l.* of Victorian money.

Such were the sources of an opulence which we must do Raleigh the credit to say was expended not on debauchery or display, but in the most enlightened efforts to extend the field of English commercial enterprise beyond the Atlantic. We need not suppose him to have been unselfish beyond the fashion of his age. In his action there was, no doubt, an element of personal ambition; he dreamed of raising a State in the West before which his great enemy, Spain, should sink into the shade, and he fancied himself the gorgeous viceroy of such a kingdom. His imagination, which had led him on so bravely, gulled him sometimes when it came to details. His sailors had seen the light of sunset on the cliffs of Roanoke, and Raleigh took the yellow gleam for gold. He set his faith too lightly on the fabulous ores of Chaunis Temotam. But he was not the slave of these fancies, as were the more vulgar adventurers of his age. More than the promise of pearls and silver, it was the homely products of the new country that attracted him, and his captains were bidden to bring news to him of the fish and fruit of Virginia, its salts and dyes and textile grasses. Nor was it a goldsmith that he sent out to the new colony as his scientific agent, but a young mathematician of promise, the practical and observant Thomas Hariot.

Some personal details of Raleigh's private life during these two years may now be touched upon. He was in close attendance upon the Queen at Greenwich and at Windsor, when he was not in his own house in the still rural village of Islington. In the summer of 1584, probably in consequence of the new wealth his broad-cloth patent had secured him, he enlarged his borders in several ways. He leased of the Queen, Durham House, close to the river, covering the site of the present Adelphi Terrace. This was the vast fourteenth-century palace of the Bishops of Durham, which had come into possession of the Crown late in the reign of Henry VIII. Elizabeth herself had occupied it during the lifetime of her brother, and she had recovered it again after the death of Mary. Retaining certain rooms, she now relinquished it to her favourite, and in this stately mansion as his town house Raleigh lived from 1584 to 1603. In spite of his uncertain tenure, he spent very large sums in repairing 'this rotten house,' as Lady Raleigh afterwards called it.

Some time between December 14, 1584, and February 24, 1585, Raleigh was knighted. On the latter date we find him first styled Sir Walter, in an order from Burghley to report on the force of the Devonshire Stannaries. His activities were now concentrated from several points upon the West of England, and he became once more identified with the only race that ever really loved him, the men of his native Devonshire. In July he succeeded the Earl of Bedford as Lord Warden of the Stannaries; in September he was appointed Lieutenant of the County of Cornwall; in November, Vice-Admiral of the two counties. He, appointed Lord Beauchamp his deputy in Cornwall, and his own eldest half-brother, Sir John Gilbert of Greenway, his deputy in Devonshire. In the same year, 1585, he entered Parliament as one of the two county members for Devonshire. As Warden of the Stannaries he introduced reforms which greatly mitigated the hardships of the miners.

It is pleasanter to think of Raleigh administering rough justice from the granite judgment-seat on some windy tor of Dartmoor, than to picture him squabbling for rooms at Court with 'Pecora Campi,' or ogling a captious royal beauty of some fifty summers, Raleigh's work in the West has made little noise in history; but it was as wholesome and capable as the most famous of his exploits.

In March, 1586, Leicester found himself in disgrace with Elizabeth, and so openly attributed it to Raleigh that the Queen ordered Walsingham to deny that the latter had ceased to plead for his former patron. Raleigh himself sent Leicester a band of Devonshire miners to serve in the Netherlands, and comforted him at the same time by adding, 'The Queen is in very good terms with you, and, thanks be to God, well pacified. You are again her "Sweet Robin."' It seems that the strange accusation had been made against Raleigh that he desired to favour Spain. This was calculated to vex him to the quick, and we find him protesting (March 29, 1586): 'I have consumed the best part of my fortune, hating the tyrannous prosperity of that State, and it were now strange and monstrous that I should become an enemy to my country and conscience.' Two months later he was threatened with the loss of his post as Vice-Admiral if he did not withdraw a fleet he had fitted out to harass the

Spaniards in the Newfoundland waters. About the same time he strengthened his connection with the Leicester faction by marrying his cousin, Barbara Gamage, to Sir Philip Sidney's younger brother Robert. This lady became the grandmother of Waller's Sacharissa. The collapse of the Virginian colony was an annoyance in the summer of this year, but it was tempered to Raleigh by the success of another of his enterprises, his fleet in the Azores. One of the prizes brought home by this purely piratical expedition was a Spanish colonial governor of much fame and dignity, Don Pedro Sarmiento. Raleigh demanded a ransom for this personage, and while it was being collected he entertained his prisoner sumptuously in Durham House.

On October 7, 1586, Raleigh's old friend Sir Philip Sidney closed his chivalrous career on the battle-field at Zutphen. Raleigh's solemn elegy on him is one of the finest of the many poems which that sad event called forth. It blends the passion of personal regret with the dignity of public grief, as all great elegiacal poems should. One stanza might be inscribed on a monument to Sidney:

England doth hold thy limbs, that bred the same;
Flanders thy valour, where it last was tried;
The camp thy sorrow, where thy body died;
Thy friends thy want; the world thy virtues' fame.

This elegy appeared with the rest in *Astrophel* in 1595; but it had already been printed, in 1593, in the *Phoenix Nest*, and as early as 1591 Sir John Harington quotes it as Raleigh's.

It was not till the following spring that Raleigh took possession of certain vast estates in Ireland. The Queen had named him among the 'gentlemen-undertakers,' between whom the escheated lands of the Earl of Desmond were to be divided. He received about forty-two thousand acres in the counties of Cork, Waterford, and Tipperary, and he set about repeopling this desolate region with his usual vigour of action. He brought settlers over from the West of England, but these men were not supported or even encouraged at Dublin Castle. 'The doting Deputy,' as Raleigh calls him, treated his Devonshire farmers with less consideration than the Irish kerns, and although it is certain that of all the 'undertakers' Raleigh was the one who, after his lights, tried to do the best for his land, his experience as an Irish colonist was on the whole dispiriting. By far the richest part of his property was the 'haven royal' of Youghal, with the thickly-wooded lands on either side of the river Blackwater. He is scarcely to be forgiven for what appears to have been the wanton destruction of the Geraldine Friary of Youghal, built in 1268, which his men pulled down and burned while he was mayor of the town in 1587. Raleigh's Irish residences at this time were his manor-house in Youghal, which still remains, and Lismore Castle, which he rented, from 1587 onwards, of the official Archbishop of Cashel, Meiler Magrath.

We have now reached the zenith of Raleigh's personal success. His fame was to proceed far beyond anything that he had yet gained or deserved, but his mere worldly success was to reach no further, and even from this moment sensibly to decline. Elizabeth had showered wealth and influence upon him, although she had refrained, at her most doting moments, from lifting him up to the lowest step in the ladder of aristocratic preferment. But although her favour towards Raleigh had this singular limit, and although she kept him rigidly outside the pale of politics, in other respects her affection had been lavish in the extreme. Without ceasing to hold Hatton and Leicester captive, she had now for five years given Raleigh the chief place in her heart. But, in May 1587, we suddenly find him in danger of being dethroned in favour of a boy of twenty, and it is the new Earl of Essex, with his petulant beauty, who 'is, at cards, or one game or another, with her, till the birds sing in the morning.' The remarkable scene in which Essex dared to demand the sacrifice of Raleigh as the price of his own devotion is best described by the new favourite in his own words. Raleigh had now been made Captain of the Guard, and we have to imagine him standing at the door in his uniform of orange-tawny, while the pert and pouting boy is half declaiming, half whispering, in the ear of the Queen,

whose beating heart forgets to remind her that she might be the mother of one of her lovers and the grandmother of the other. Essex writes:

I told her that what she did was only to please that knave Raleigh, for whose sake I saw she would both grieve me and my love, and disgrace me in the eye of the world. From thence she came to speak of Raleigh; and it seemed she could not well endure anything to be spoken against him; and taking hold of my word 'disdain,' she said there was 'no such cause why I should disdain him.' This speech did trouble me so much that, as near as I could, I did describe unto her what he had been, and what he was... I then did let her know, whether I had cause to disdain his competition of love, or whether I could have comfort to give myself over to the service of a mistress which was in awe of such a man. I spake, with grief and choler, as much against him as I could; and I think he, standing at the door, might very well hear the worst that I spoke of himself. In that end, I saw she was resolved to defend him, and to cross me.

It was probably about this time, and owing to the instigation of Essex, that Tarleton, the comedian, laid himself open to banishment from Court for calling out, while Raleigh was playing cards with Elizabeth, 'See how the Knave commands the Queen!' Elizabeth supported her old favourite, but there is no doubt that these attacks made their impression on her irritable temperament. Meanwhile Raleigh, engaged in a dozen different enterprises, and eager to post hither and thither over land and sea, was probably not ill disposed to see his royal mistress diverted from a too-absorbing attention to himself.

On May 8, 1587, Raleigh sent forth from Plymouth his fourth Virginian expedition, under Captain John White. It was found that the second colony, the handful of men left behind by Sir Richard Grenville, had perished. With 150 men, White landed at Hatorask, and proposed to found a town of Raleigh in the new country. Every species of disaster attended this third colony, and in the midst of the excitement caused the following year by the Spanish Armada, a fifth expedition, fitted out under Sir Richard Grenville, was stopped by the Government at Bideford. Raleigh was not easily daunted, however, and in the midst of the preparations for the great struggle he contrived to send out two pinnaces from Bideford, on April 22, 1588, for the succour of his unfortunate Virginians; but these little vessels were ignominiously stripped off Madeira by privateers from La Rochelle, and sent helpless back to England. Raleigh had now spent more than forty thousand pounds upon the barren colony of Virginia, and, finding that no one at Court supported his hopes in that direction, he began to withdraw a little from a contest in which he was so heavily handicapped. In the next chapter we shall touch upon the modification of his American policy. He had failed hitherto, and yet, in failing, he had already secured for his own name the highest place in the early history of Colonial America.

We now reach that famous incident in English history over which every biographer of Raleigh is tempted to linger, the ruin of Philip's Felicissima Armada. Within the limits of the present life of Sir Walter it is impossible to tell over again a story which is among the most thrilling in the chronicles of the world, but in which Raleigh's part was not a foremost one. We possess no letter of 1588 in which he refers to the fight.

On March 31, he had been one of the nine commissioners who met to consider the best means of resisting invasion. In the same body of men sat two of Raleigh's captains, Grenville and Ralph Lane, as well as his old opponent, Lord Grey. Three months before this, Raleigh had reported to the Queen on the state of the counties under his charge, and his counsel on the subject had been taken. That he was profoundly excited at the crisis in English affairs is proved by the many allusions he makes to the Armada in the *History of the World*. It is on the whole surprising that he was not called to take a more prominent part in the event.³

³ Mr. J. Cordy Jeaffreson has communicated to me the following interesting discovery, which he has made in examining the Assembly Books of the borough of King's Lynn, in Norfolk. It appears that the Mayor was paid ten pounds 'in respecte he did in the

It is believed that he was in Ireland when the storm actually broke, that he hastened into the West of England, to raise levies of Cornish and Devonian miners, and that he then proceeded to Portland, of which, among his many offices, he was now governor, in order that he might revise and complete the defences of that fortress. Either by land or sea, according to conflicting accounts, he then hurried back to Plymouth, and joined the main body of the fleet on July 23. There is a very early tradition that his advice was asked by the Admiral, Howard of Effingham, on the question whether it would be wise to try to board the Spanish galleons. The Admiral thought not, but was almost over-persuaded by younger men, eager for distinction, when Raleigh came to his aid with counsel that tallied with the Admiral's judgment. In the *History of the World* Raleigh remarks:

To clap ships together without any consideration belongs rather to a madman than to a man of war. By such an ignorant bravery was Peter Strozzi lost at the Azores, when he fought against the Marquis of Santa Cruz. In like sort had Lord Charles Howard, Admiral of England, been lost in the year 1588, if he had not been better advised than a great many malignant fools were that found fault with his demeanour. The Spaniards had an army aboard them, and he had none. They had more ships than he had, and of higher building and charging; so that, had he entangled himself with those great and powerful vessels, he had greatly endangered this kingdom of England.

Raleigh's impression of the whole comedy of the Armada is summed up in an admirable sentence in his *Report of the Fight in the Azores*, to which the reader must here merely be referred. His ship was one of those which pursued the lumbering Spanish galleons furthest in their wild flight towards the Danish waters. He was back in England, however, in time to receive orders on August 28 to prepare a fleet for Ireland. Whether that fleet ever started or no is doubtful, and the latest incident of Raleigh's connection with the Armada is that on September 5, 1588, he and Sir Francis Drake received an equal number of wealthy Spanish prisoners, whose ransoms were to be the reward of Drake's and of Raleigh's achievements. More important to the latter was the fact that his skill in naval tactics, and his genius for rapid action, had very favourably impressed the Lord Admiral, who henceforward publicly treated him as a recognised authority in these matters.

yere of his maioraltie [between Michaelmas 1587 and Michaelmas 1588] entertayn Sir Walter Rawlye knight and his companye in resortinge hether about the Queanes affayrs; the occasion being, it would seem, the furnishing and setting forth of a ship of war and a pinnace as the contingent from Lynn towards defence against the Armada. This is an important fact, for it is the only definite record that has hitherto reached us of Raleigh's activity in guarding the coast against invasion.

CHAPTER III. IN DISGRACE

For one year after the defeat of the Spanish Armada, Raleigh resisted with success, or overlooked with equanimity, the determined attacks which Essex made upon his position at Court. He was busy with great schemes in all quarters of the kingdom, engaged in Devonshire, in Ireland, in Virginia, in the north-western seas, and to his virile activity the jealousy of Essex must have seemed like the buzzing of a persistent gnat. The insect could sting, however, and in the early part of December 1588, Raleigh's attention was forcibly concentrated on his rival by the fact that 'my Lord of Essex' had sent him a challenge. No duel was fought, and the Council did its best to bury the incident 'in silence, that it might not be known to her Majesty, lest it might injure the Earl,' from which it will appear that Raleigh's hold upon her favour was still assured.

A week later than this we get a glance for a moment at one or two of the leash of privateering enterprises, all of them a little under the rose, in which Sir Walter Raleigh was in these years engaged. An English ship, the 'Angel Gabriel,' complained of being captured and sacked of her wines by Raleigh's men on the high seas, and he retorts by insinuating that she, 'as it is probable, has served the King of Spain in his Armada,' and is therefore fair game. So, too, with the four butts of sack of one Artson, and the sugar and mace said to be taken out of a Hamburg vessel, their capture by Raleigh's factors is comfortably excused on the ground that these acts were only reprisals against the villainous Spaniard. It was well that these more or less commercial undertakings should be successful, for it became more and more plain to Raleigh that the most grandiose of all his enterprises, his determined effort to colonise Virginia, could but be a drain upon his fortune. After Captain White's final disastrous voyage, Raleigh suspended his efforts in this direction for a while. He leased his patent in Virginia to a company of merchants, on March 7, 1589, merely reserving to himself a nominal privilege, namely the possession of one fifth of such gold and silver ore as should be raised in the colony. This was the end of the first act of Raleigh's American adventures. It may not be needless to contradict here a statement repeated in most rapid sketches of his life. It is not true that at any time Raleigh himself set foot in Virginia.

In the Portugal expedition of 1589 Raleigh does not seem to have taken at all a prominent part. He was absent, however, with Drake's fleet from April 18 to July 2, and he marched with the rest up to the walls of Lisbon. This enterprise was an attempt on the part of Elizabeth to place Antonio again on the throne of Portugal, from which he had been ousted by Philip of Spain in 1580. The aim of the expedition was not reached, but a great deal of booty fell into the hands of the English, and Raleigh in particular received 4,000*l*. His contingent, however, had been a little too zealous, and he received a rather sharp reprimand for capturing two barks from Cherbourg belonging to the friendly power of France. It must be understood that Raleigh at this time maintained at his own expense a small personal fleet for commercial and privateering ends, and that he lent or leased these vessels, with his own services, to the government when additional naval contributions were required. In the *Domestic Correspondence* we meet with the names of the chief of these vessels, 'The Revenge,' soon afterwards so famous, 'The Crane,' and 'The Garland.' These ships were merchantmen or men-of-war at will, and their exploits were winked at or frowned upon at Court as circumstances dictated. Sometimes the hawk's eye of Elizabeth would sound the holds of these pirates with incredible acumen, as on that occasion when it is recorded that 'a waistcoat of carnation colour, curiously embroidered,' which was being brought home to adorn the person of the adventurer, was seized by order of the Queen to form a stomacher for his royal mistress. It would be difficult to say which of the illustrious pair was the more solicitous of fine raiment. At other times the whole prize had to be disgorged; as in the case

of that bark of Olonne, laden with barley, which Raleigh had to restore to the Treasury on July 21, 1589, after he had concluded a very lucrative sale of the same.

In August 1589 Sir Francis Allen wrote to Anthony Bacon: 'My Lord of Essex hath chased Mr. Raleigh from the Court, and hath confined him to Ireland.' It is true that Raleigh himself, five months later, being once more restored to favour, speaks of 'that nearness to her Majesty which I still enjoy,' and directly contradicts the rumour of his disgrace. This, however, is not in accordance with the statement made by Spenser in his poem of *Colin Clout's come home again*, in which he says that all Raleigh's speech at this time was

Of great unkindness and of usage hard
Of Cynthia, the Lady of the Sea,
Which from her presence faultless him debarred,

and this may probably be considered as final evidence. At all events, this exile from Court, whether it was enforced or voluntary, brought about perhaps the most pleasing and stimulating episode in the whole of Raleigh's career, his association with the great poet whose lines have just been quoted.

We have already seen that, eight years before this, Spenser and Raleigh had met under Lord Grey in the expedition that found its crisis at Smerwick. We have no evidence of the point of intimacy which they reached in 1582, nor of their further acquaintance before 1589. It has been thought that Raleigh's picturesque and vivid personality immediately and directly influenced Spenser's imagination. Dean Church has noticed that to read Hooker's account of 'Raleigh's adventures with the Irish chieftains, his challenges and single combats, his escapes at fords and woods, is like reading bits of the *Faery Queen* in prose.' The two men, in many respects the most remarkable Englishmen of imagination then before the notice of their country, did not, however, really come into mutual relation until the time we have now reached.

In 1586 Edmund Spenser had been rewarded for his arduous services as Clerk of the Council of Munster by the gift of a manor and ruined castle of the Desmonds, Kilcolman, near the Galtee hills. This little peel-tower, with its tiny rooms, overlooked a county that is desolate enough now, but which then was finely wooded, and watered by the river Awbeg, to which the poet gave the softer name of Mulla. Here, in the midst of terrors by night and day, at the edge of the dreadful Wood, where 'outlaws fell affray the forest ranger,' Spenser had been settled for three years, describing the adventures of knights and ladies in a wild world of faery that was but too like Munster, when the Shepherd of the Ocean came over to Ireland to be his neighbour. Raleigh settled himself in his own house at Youghal, and found society in visiting his cousin, Sir George Carew, at Lismore, and Spenser at Kilcolman. Of the latter association we possess a most interesting record. In 1591, reviewing the life of two years before, Spenser says:

One day I sat, (as was my trade),
Under the foot of Mole, that mountain hoar,
Keeping my sheep among the coolly shade
Of the green alders, by the Mulla's shore;
There a strange shepherd chanced to find me out;
Whether allurèd with my pipe's delight,
Whose pleasing sound yshrilled far about,

(the secret of the authorship of the *Shepherd's Calender* having by this time oozed out in the praises of Webbe in 1586 and of Puttenham in 1589.)

Or thither led by chance, I know not right, —

Whom, when I askèd from what place he came
And how he hight, himself he did yleepe
The *Shepherd of the Ocëan* by name,
And said he came far from the main-sea deep;
He, sitting me beside in that same shade,
Provokèd me to play some pleasant fit,

(that is to say, to read the MS. of the *Faery Queen*, now approaching completion,)

And, when he heard the music which I made,
He found himself full greatly pleased at it;
Yet æmuling my pipe, he took in hond
My pipe, – before that, æmulèd of many, —
And played thereon (for well that skill he conned),
Himself as skilful in that art as any.

Among the other poems thus read by Raleigh to Spenser at Kilcolman was the 'lamentable lay' to which reference had just been made – the piece in praise of Elizabeth which bore the name of *Cynthia*. In Spenser's pastoral, the speaker is persuaded by Thestylis (Lodovick Bryskett) to explain what ditty that was that the Shepherd of the Ocean sang, and he explains very distinctly, but in terms which are scarcely critical, that Raleigh's poem was written in love and praise, but also in pathetic complaint, of Elizabeth, that

great Shepherdess, that Cynthia hight,
His Liege, his Lady, and his life's Regent.

This is most valuable evidence of the existence in 1589 of a poem or series of poems by Sir Walter Raleigh, set by Spenser on a level with the best work of the age in verse. This poem was, until quite lately, supposed to have vanished entirely and beyond all hope of recovery. Until now, no one seems to have been aware that we hold in our hands a fragment of Raleigh's *magnum opus* of 1589 quite considerable enough to give us an idea of the extent and character of the rest.⁴

In 1870 Archdeacon Hannah printed what he described as a 'continuation of the lost poem, *Cynthia*,' from fragments in Sir Walter's own hand among the Hatfield MSS. Dr. Hannah, however, misled by the character of the handwriting, by some vague allusions, in one of the fragments, to a prison captivity, and most of all, probably, by a difficulty in dates which we can now for the first time explain, attributed these pieces to 1603-1618, that is to say to Raleigh's imprisonment in the Tower. The second fragment, beginning 'My body in the walls captived,' belongs, no doubt, to the later date. It is in a totally distinct metre from the rest and has nothing to do with *Cynthia*. The first fragment bears the stamp of much earlier date, but this also can be no part of Raleigh's epic. The long passage then following, on the contrary, is, I think, beyond question, a canto, almost complete, of the lost epic of 1589. It is written in the four-line heroic stanza adopted ten years later by Sir John Davies for his *Nosce teipsum*, and most familiar to us all in Gray's *Churchyard Elegy*. Moreover, it is headed 'the Twenty-first and Last Book of *The Ocean to Cynthia*.' Another note, in Raleigh's handwriting, styles the poem *The Ocean's Love to Cynthia*, and this was probably the full name of it. Spenser's name for Raleigh, the Shepherd, or pastoral hero, of the Ocean, is therefore for the first time explained. This twenty-first book suffers from the fact that stanzas, but apparently not very many, have dropped out, in four places. With these losses, the canto still contains 130 stanzas, or 526 lines. Supposing the

⁴ In the first two numbers of the *Athenæum* for 1886, I gave in full detail the facts and arguments which are here given in summary.

average length of the twenty preceding books to have been the same, *The Ocean's Love to Cynthia* must have contained at least ten thousand lines. Spenser, therefore, was not exaggerating, or using the language of flattery towards a few elegies or a group of sonnets, when he spoke of *Cynthia* as a poem of great importance. As a matter of fact, no poem of the like ambition had been written in England for a century past, and if it had been published, it would perhaps have taken a place only second to its immediate contemporary, *The Faery Queen*.

At this very time, and in the midst of his poetical holiday, Raleigh was actively engaged in defending the rights of the merchants of Waterford and Wexford to carry on their trade in pipe-staves for casks. Raleigh himself encouraged and took part in this exportation, having two ships regularly engaged between Waterford and the Canaries. Traces of his peaceful work in Munster still remain. Sir John Pope Hennessy says:

The richly perfumed yellow wallflowers that he brought to Ireland from the Azores, and the Affane cherry, are still found where he first planted them by the Blackwater. Some cedars he brought to Cork are to this day growing, according to the local historian, Mr. J. G. MacCarthy, at a place called Tivoli. The four venerable yew-trees, whose branches have grown and intermingled into a sort of summer-house thatch, are pointed out as having sheltered Raleigh when he first smoked tobacco in his Youghal garden. In that garden he also planted tobacco... A few steps further on, where the town-wall of the thirteenth century bounds the garden of the Warden's house, is the famous spot where the first Irish potato was planted by him. In that garden he gave the tubers to the ancestor of the present Lord Southwell, by whom they were spread throughout the province of Munster.

These were boons to mankind which the zeal of Raleigh's agents had brought back from across the western seas, gifts of more account in the end than could be contained in all the palaces of Manoa, and all the emerald mines of Trinidad, if only this great man could have followed his better instinct and believed it.

Raleigh's habitual difficulty in serving under other men showed itself this autumn in his dispute with the Irish Deputy, Sir William Fitzwilliam, and led, perhaps, to his return early in the winter. We do not know what circumstances led to his being taken back into Elizabeth's favour again, but it was probably in November that he returned to England, and took Spenser with him. Of this interesting passage in his life we find again an account in *Colin Clout's come home again*. Spencer says:

When thus our pipes we both had wearied well,
... and each an end of singing made,
He [Raleigh] gan to cast great liking to my lore,
And great disliking to my luckless lot;

and advised him to come to Court and be presented to 'Cynthia,'

Whose grace was great and bounty most rewardful.

He then devotes no less than ninety-five lines to a description of the voyage, which was a very rough one, and at last he is brought by Raleigh into the Queen's presence:

The shepherd of the ocean ...
Unto that goddess' grace me first enhanced,
And to my oaten pipe inclined her ear,
That she thenceforth therein gan take delight,

And it desired at timely hours to hear,

finally commanding the publication of it. On December 1, 1589, the *Faery Queen* was registered, and a pension of 50*l.* secured for the poet. The supplementary letter and sonnets to Raleigh express Spenser's generous recognition of the services his friend had performed for him, and appeal to Raleigh, as 'the Summer's Nightingale, thy sovereign goddess's most dear delight,' not to delay in publishing his own great poem, the *Cynthia*. The first of the eulogistic pieces prefixed by friends to the *Faery Queen* was that noble and justly celebrated sonnet signed W. R. which alone would justify Raleigh in taking a place among the English poets.

Raleigh's position was once more secure in the sunlight. He could hold Sir William Fitzwilliam informed, on December 29, that 'I take myself far his better by the honourable office I hold, as well as by that nearness to her Majesty which still I enjoy, and never more.' The next two years were a sort of breathing space in Raleigh's career; he had reached the table-land of his fortunes, and neither rose nor fell in favour. The violent crisis of the Spanish Armada had marked the close of an epoch at Court. In September 1588 Leicester died, in April 1590 Walsingham, in September 1591 Sir Christopher Hatton, three men in whose presence, however apt Raleigh might be to vaunt his influence, he could never have felt absolutely master. New men were coming on, but for the moment the most violent and aggressive of his rivals, Essex, was disposed to wave a flag of truce. Both Raleigh and Essex saw one thing more clearly than the Queen herself, namely, that the loyalty of the Puritans, whom Elizabeth disliked, was the great safeguard of the nation against Catholic encroachment, and they united their forces in trying to protect the interests of men like John Udall against the Queen's turbulent prejudices. In March 1591 we find it absolutely recorded that the Earl of Essex and Raleigh have joined 'as instruments from the Puritans to the Queen upon any particular occasion of relieving them.' With Essex, some sort of genuine Protestant fervour seems to have acted; Raleigh, according to all evidence, was a man without religious interests, but far before his age in tolerance for the opinions of others, and he was swayed, no doubt, in this as in other cases, by his dislike of persecution on the one hand, and his implacable enmity to Spain on the other.

In May 1591, Raleigh was hurriedly sent down the Channel in a pinnace to warn Lord Thomas Howard that Spanish ships had been seen near the Scilly Islands. There was a project for sending a fleet of twenty ships to Spain, and Raleigh was to be second in command, but the scheme was altered. In November 1591 he first came before the public as an author with a tract in which he celebrated the prowess of one of his best friends and truest servants, Sir Richard Grenville, in a contest with the Spaniard which is one of the most famous in English history. Raleigh's little volume is entitled: *A Report of the Truth of the Fight about the Iles of the Açores this last Sommer betwixt the 'Reuenge' and an Armada of the King of Spaine*. The fight had taken place on the preceding 10th of September; the odds against the 'Revenge' were so excessive that Grenville was freely blamed for needless foolhardiness, in facing 15,000 Spaniards with only 100 men. Raleigh wrote his *Report* to justify the memory of his friend, and doubtless hastened its publication that it might be received as evidence before Sir R. Beville's commission, which was to meet a month later to inquire into the circumstances of Grenville's death. Posterity has taken Raleigh's view, and all Englishmen, from Lord Bacon to Lord Tennyson, have united in praising this fight as one 'memorable even beyond credit, and to the height of some heroical fable.'

The *Report* of 1591 was anonymous, and it was Hakluyt first who, in reprinting it in 1599, was permitted to state that it was 'penned by the honourable Sir Walter Raleigh, knight.' Long entirely neglected, it has of late become the best known of all its author's productions. It is written in a sane and manly style, and marks the highest level reached by English narrative prose as it existed before the waters were troubled by the fashion of Euphuus. Not issued with Raleigh's name, it was yet no doubt at once recognised as his work, and it cannot have been without influence in determining the policy of the country with Spain. The author's enmity to the Spaniard is inveterate, and he is careful

in an eloquent introduction to prove that he is not actuated by resentment on account of this one act of cruel cowardice, but by a divine anger, justified by the events of years, 'against the ambitious and bloody pretences of the Spaniard, who, seeking to devour all nations, shall be themselves devoured.' The tract closes with a passionate appeal to the loyalty of the English Catholics, who are warned by the sufferings of Portugal that 'the obedience even of the Turk is easy and a liberty, in respect of the slavery and tyranny of Spain,' and who will never be so safe as when they are trusting in the clemency of her Majesty. All this is in the highest degree characteristic of Raleigh, whose central idea in life was not prejudice against the Catholic religion, for he was singularly broad in this respect, but, in his own words, 'hatred of the tyrannous prosperity of Spain.' This ran like a red strand through his whole career from Smerwick to the block, and this was at once the measure of his greatness and the secret of his fall.

It was formerly supposed that Raleigh came into possession of Sherborne, his favourite country residence, in 1594, that is to say after the Throckmorton incident. It is, however, in the highest degree improbable that such an estate would be given to him after his fatal offence, and in fact it is now certain that the lease was extended to him much earlier, probably in October 1591. There is a pleasant legend that Raleigh and one of his half-brothers were riding up to town from Plymouth, when Raleigh's horse stumbled and threw him within the precincts of a beautiful Dorsetshire estate, then in possession of the Dean and Chapter of Salisbury, and that Raleigh, choosing to consider that he had thus taken seisin of the soil, asked the Queen for Sherborne Castle when he arrived at Court. It may have been on this occasion that Elizabeth asked him when he would cease to be a beggar, and received the reply, 'When your Majesty ceases to be a benefactor!' His first lease included a payment of 260*l.* a year to the Bishop of Salisbury, who asserted a claim to the property. In January 1592, after the payment of a quarter's rent, Raleigh was confirmed in possession, and began to improve and enjoy the property. It consisted of the manor of Sherborne, with a large park, a castle which had to be repaired, and several farms and hamlets, together with a street in the borough of Sherborne itself. It is a curious fact that Raleigh had to present the Queen with a jewel worth 250*l.* to induce her 'to make the Bishop,' that is to say, to appoint to the see of Salisbury, now vacant, a man who would consent to the alienation of such rich Church lands as the manors of Sherborne and Yetminster. John Meeres, afterwards so determined and exasperating an enemy of Raleigh's, was now⁵ appointed his bailiff, and Adrian Gilbert a sort of general overseer of the works.

Raleigh had been but two months settled in possession of Sherborne, with his ninety-nine years' lease clearly made out, when he passed suddenly out of the sunlight into the deepest shadow of approaching disfavour. The year opened with promise of greater activity and higher public honours than Raleigh had yet displayed and enjoyed. An expedition was to be sent to capture the rich fleet of plate-ships, known as the Indian Carracks, and then to push on to storm the pearl treasuries of Panama. For the first time, Elizabeth had shown herself willing to trust her favourite in person on the perilous western seas. Raleigh was to command the fleet of fifteen ships, and under him was to serve the morose hero of Cathay, the dreadful Sir Martin Frobisher. Raleigh was not only to be admiral of the expedition, but its chief adventurer also, and in order to bear this expense he had collected his available fortune from various quarters, stripping himself of all immediate resources. To help him, the Queen had bought *The Ark Raleigh*, his largest ship, for 5,000*l.*; and in February 1592 he was ready to sail. When the moment for parting came, however, the Queen found it impossible to spare him, and Sir John Burrough was appointed admiral.

It is exceedingly difficult to move with confidence in this obscure part of our narrative. On March 10, 1592, we find Raleigh at Chatham, busy about the wages of the sailors, and trying to persuade them to serve under Frobisher, whose reputation for severity made him very unpopular. He

⁵ Raleigh says that he appointed this man, 'taking him out of prison, because he had all the ancient records of Sherborne, his father having been the Bishop's officer.' —*De la Warr MSS.*

writes on that day to Sir Robert Cecil, and uses these ambiguous expressions with regard to a rumour of which we now hear for the first time:

I mean not to come away, as they say I will, for fear of a marriage, and I know not what. If any such thing were, I would have imparted it to yourself, before any man living; and therefore, I pray, believe it not, and I beseech you to suppress, what you can, any such malicious report. For I protest before God, there is none, on the face of the earth, that I would be fastened unto.

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