

problem of the Polar seas, which so long absorbed the ambition of brave sailors, until its secrets were at last revealed by Englishmen in the nineteenth century. At one time we find him searching for a North-west passage to Asia; at another, engaged in a wild-goose chase for gold ingots under the Arctic circle. Contemporary with him we see another brave man, who strikingly illustrated the zeal for maritime enterprise that arose in the days of the Virgin Queen. The voyage of the heroic Sir Humphrey Gilbert to this continent is to us of surpassing interest; for it was the first which was undertaken with the design of a permanent occupation of American territory. When Sir Humphrey Gilbert entered the port of St. John's, Newfoundland, he found no fewer than thirty-six vessels, of various nations, but chiefly French, which had come to fish in the rich waters that surround *Prima Vista*. The enterprising Englishman erected a pillar to which were affixed the Queen's arms engraven in lead, and thus formally took possession of the island, which has accordingly the honour of being the oldest colony of England. The story of the unfortunate return voyage of Sir Humphrey is well known to all. A violent storm arose, and the cockle-shell of a vessel in which the brave sailor was sailing went down into the depths of the augry sea.

He sat upon the deck,

The Book was in his hand;

"Do not fear! Heaven is as near,"

He said, "by water as by land."

A prominent figure in that Elizabethan age—so famous for its statesmen, its poets, and its heroes, stands Sir Walter Raleigh. No character in our history affords a more attractive theme for the pen of the historian or the biographer, than this chivalrous, leal-hearted, accomplished Englishman. Those who have read, "*Her Majesty's Tower*," that clever production of that able writer, Hepworth Dixon, will remember how the undaunted Englishman wiled away his time in scientific pursuits, and in writing a "*Historie of the World*," when he had been unjustly immured within the walls of the English Bastille, where so many crimes have been committed in those old despotic times, when kings ruled with unlimited sway, and the constitutional liberties of the people, as they now exist, had not been won. Raleigh was a thorough Englishman, always ready to vindicate the honour and dignity of his country. He was also imbued with that spirit of adventure that carried away into unknown seas and countries, so many of the brave men of those heroic times; but he represented the courtly, chivalric type of adventurer, and exhibited none of the roughness, though he had all the courage of Hawkins and Drake, and other naval worthies of his age. His name must always be associated with the first colonization of America, for it was through his energy and enterprize that the attention of Englishmen was directed to Virginia, which he himself so named in honor of that Queen, of whom he was ever the most devoted and courtly servant. No man of his day deserved more from his country and his king; yet all the reward he received, when he was a broken-hearted, crippled old man, was the cruel and unjust sentence.