



Nelson and the Centenary of Trafalgar.

By ELEANOR ROBINSON.

"Thine island loves thee well, thou famous man,
The greatest sailor since the world began."

These words of the Poet Laureate are no poetical exaggeration. It is the simple truth to say that Nelson stands first in his profession. Who is the greatest soldier, statesman—poet—that ever lived? We might get many different answers to these questions. But the question, "Who is the greatest of sailors?" one name comes from the lips of all. And this great man came in time to meet one of the greatest needs of his country, and to save her from one of the most terrible dangers by which she was ever threatened. October 21st, 1805, the day whose centenary we celebrate this month, was the day of a great deliverance. It was the object of the Emperor Napoleon to invade England; his army of 150,000 men was ready, but the success of the invasion depended on the French fleet getting control of the Strait of Dover. Through nearly all the summer of 1805 the people of Great Britain were in "bitter suspense and widespread panic." Then in November came the news that the naval power of France had been broken at Trafalgar. With the sense of relief, and pride at the glory of the victory, came the grief at the loss the country had sustained. "England has had many heroes,"

says Southey, "but never one who so entirely possessed the love of his fellow-countrymen as Nelson."

Horatio Nelson, son of Edmund Nelson, rector of Burnham Thorpe in Norfolk, was born at Burnham Thorpe on the 29th of September, 1758, and was the sixth in a family of eleven children. Several anecdotes are told of his courage and independence, and one that shows his sense of honour and perseverance. As he and a brother were on their way to school one stormy day, they found it so hard to get on that they returned home and told their father that it was impossible for them to reach the school. Their father replied, "If that be so, I have, of course, nothing to say; but I wish you to try again, and I leave it to your honour not to turn back, unless it is necessary." On the second trial, the elder brother wanted to give up again, but Horatio held out, repeating, "Remember, it was left to our honour," and the journey was accomplished.

The story is that when only twelve years old, and a very delicate boy, he asked his uncle, Captain Maurice Suckling, to take him to sea, in order to relieve his father of the support of one of his large family. "What has poor little Horatio done?" cried the uncle, "that he, being so weak, should be sent to rough it at sea. But let him come, and if a