

formed the acquaintance of a merchant-adventurer that was about to attempt the Northwest passage (as it is named, although none hath yet found it); and upon this voyage the knight also was set to go.

"His head is full of the design," said Simon, "so that those about him fear his wits unsettled, and indeed he spends the better part of every day poring upon books of navigation, treatises of Sir Humphrey Gilbert and the like, while his speech is ever of victualling and charts and ships' logs, but of other things, and even in the Justices' room at the Sessions, never a word."

"Say you he hath resigned his lease of our house at Combe?" cried I, interrupting him for the very impatience of my joy; and when I knew he certainly had so done, struck the spurs into my tired beast and galloped forward to the Inn.

Of the interval I say nothing, nor of the mutual delight with which my father and I embraced each other; and afterwards of the bestowal of his welcome upon Idonia, which he did with that accustomed courtly grace of his, and bound the maid to him in love by the simple manner of his doing it.

Within a week, or perhaps a little over, we were all returned to the Court, where Idonia was at once proclaimed mistress; and a week after Easter we were married. My father was for giving up to us the great room, hung about with tapestries, he had always used, but neither Idonia nor I would allow of it, preferring for our own chamber that high narrow attic in the tower that had been mine before, and was, moreover, as wholesome and sweet a place as any man could