

some most unruly spirits, and not a few pirates who had been condemned to service in the fleet, by way of punishment. These were the cause of great trouble to the leader, fostering disaffection, desertion and mutiny. The prospect of wintering on such a bleak coast was most distasteful to such men, and they began to desert in all directions. Sickness, too, invaded the little company, and the Admiral embarked those suffering from disease for England, in the *Swallow*. Soon after he set out on a surveying expedition along the coast. One of his vessels, the *Delight*, struck on a shoal and became a wreck. Only the *Golden Hind* and the *Squirrel* now remained, and there was nothing for it but to return to England.

Sir Humphrey was on board the *Squirrel*, a little nut-shell of ten tons. He was urged to go on board the other ship, but his heroic answer was, "No, I will not forsake my little company with whom I have passed through so many storms and perils." They reached the parallel of the Azores in safety; but there encountered a terrible storm, which made the hearts of the bravest quail. Sir Humphrey alone retained his self-possession. Those on board the *Golden Hind* could see the gallant, fearless knight sitting on the deck of his little barque, the Bible in his hand, and as they came within hail, his strong voice, full of cheerful courage, was heard across the angry billows ringing out these memorable words—"Cheer up, brothers, we are as near heaven by sea as by land." The storm increased with the night; the black billows roared around the little vessels like hungry beasts of prey. Suddenly, towards midnight, the lights in the *Squirrel* disappeared; the little barque was seen no more; and Sir Humphrey Gilbert, scholar, soldier, discoverer, colonizer and philosopher, pious and heroic in life and death, sank amid the dark waves of the Atlantic:

"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.'

"In the first watch of the night,

Without a signal's sound,

Out of the sea mysteriously

The fleet of death rose all around."

Thus tragically perished one of the bravest adventurers, who, in the glorious reign of Elizabeth, led the way in planting those English colonies which now dot the globe, and which, forming an outlet for a swarming population, have extended the dominion,