

IN THE DAYS OF THE GREAT ARMADA.

(By Crona Temple in Sunday at Home.)
CHAPTER VII.—(Continued.)

Dan Larvin, in after years, was never weary of telling how in St. James' palace he had stood with his cap in his hand "along with many other nobles and gentlemen," and how the queen came slowly by, with all her gallant train, and how she blazed with jewels, and how the small crown topped her royal head like the vane on a mast, and how she spoke to one and all, but specially and most particularly to him, Dan Larvin. "She held out her hand to me, and I squeezed it with all due respect," honest Dan would say, "and I went down on my bended knee while I held it tight, for I know what is due to a queen."

Earle Clatworthy who, as a gentleman-volunteer, was present at this famous reception, declared that Dan not only held the royal hand "tight," but pulled himself up from his knees by the help of it; but then Earle was always a graceless and a mischievous lad, and was not at all properly impressed by the dazzling dignity of the maiden queen.

"Her gown was very, very, very fine," he said afterwards to Doris, "but her face was as thin as my hatchet, and much about the same shape. She gave me her hand, too, and I kissed it, just as I had seen the Lord Admiral do, but it was hard and bony—not a bit like your hand, Doris. But her eyes—they were sharp! Like blue needles. It was good enough hearing to be praised by her, but I would rather face the Spanish fleet over again than earn a scolding from our Queen Elizabeth."

Sir Robert Bulteel was not able to go to St. James' palace. That wound of his went sore with him, and for many days he lay in the narrow cabin of the "Ark-Raleigh" too ill to heed either victory or queen. In the hurry and turmoil of those days immediately after the capture of "Santa Anna" there was only time for very rough and ready surgery. Robert's wound had been probed and the ball extracted, but no one had much leisure to spend on nursing and tending; and when the Admiral brought his ships into the Thames the man he had knighted "for conspicuous valor" was so near to death that it seemed certain he could never live to enjoy his share of the glory.

Effingham, as soon as he recollected him at all, did all in his power to save him. Like many extraordinarily brave men the Admiral was as gentle as a woman, and his visits to the dark little berth where poor Robert tossed in misery, were the first thing that made the sufferer wish to get better.

For he suffered tortures from his wounds; tortures also from the fever which had followed, and very dark and dreary thoughts took possession of him. Life seemed a queer tumbled thing to him as he lay there on the confines of that "undiscovered country" the looming of whose shore makes our world look so mean.

He had fought up through hardship and through disappointment; he had succeeded. And of what worth was success to him now?

He had earned a living honestly; and though an unknown, unfriended lad, had made himself a place amongst honorable men. He had won Doris's love, and at the thought of Doris that poor despairing heart of his thrilled painfully—it was, after all, hard to die when life held promise of things so sweet! And yet, so the half-formed thoughts went drifting on through his brain—and yet might not love itself prove to be as vain as all the rest?

How he had panted for victory over the Spaniards! Now they told him victory had been given; and what cared he? How he had longed to make for himself name and fame that the girl he loved might be proud of him! He had earned his title; a coat of arms, for a surety, should he wish to take them from the Herald's College; and like the rest he would be praised and rewarded as one of those who had saved England in her need. But how little he cared for it all!

Life, and its good things shrank until nothing remained for him except the dim sense of loss in place of gain, of failure where all had been success. And Robert Bulteel groaned in the bitterness of his spirit as the future rose before him, the

future which he was so ill-prepared to meet. And then to him came Lord Howard of Effingham.

Perhaps the Admiral had fought through some such experience himself—certainly he appeared to divine some part of the trouble that was weighing on Robert's soul.

"You must keep your pluck up," he said, smiling down on him with those dark eyes that always appeared to Robert as though they could see further and deeper than other men's eyes. "You must look forward to the days when your people down in Devon will nurse their hero back to strength, and soon patch up that angry spot on your shoulder. A whiff of Devon air will bring the life into you."

"I don't know that I want much more of life, my lord; and I have no people."

"But some one you have, who loves you, that I'll warrant, Bulteel. And as for life—why, my good fellow, you have not begun to know the meaning of it yet, and do you want to pack out of it without an inkling of its just value?"

"You have not begun to know the meaning of it yet." Had not Thomas Clatworthy, Doris's father, said some words like those long ago? What did they mean? Was it necessary to pass middle age before a man might comprehend such a simple thing as existence?

"You see," went on Effingham, speaking very quietly, almost coldly, but with an earnestness that showed symptoms of the fire below the snow, "you see we are deceived by our passions, blinded by our wills, tossed this way and that by 'circumstances' as we say, but really by the outcome of our ungoverned thoughts and ill-judged doings. Some men rail at what they call their 'fate,' some men follow what they think is pleasure, and strive to forget there is any 'beyond' at all. And some men just try to do their duty all round."

Robert gazed up at the speaker. Would he not say more? Were there not men who had got further than this? For Robert himself had tried to do his duty, and in these days (which might be the end) he found no comfort therein.

We cannot tell what were the deeper thoughts of the great Englishmen who fought these battles. But we to-day know that there is more than duty required of us: though perhaps that "more" may sound to be less. It is love. There lies the meaning of life. Our captain above has given all for us: He lived a man's life for us. He died a man's death for us. He loved us. He loves us; and he asks for our love in return.

Duty—well it seems that none who love him would wish to leave duty undone: not one of his servants would willingly fail in their service. But our sense of duty can never be the measure of his great love to us.

This wounded man who had found life a pleasant thing, a noble thing—who had faced death calmly half a score of times—felt that in his existence the thought of this love had no place. "The captain above" had had no service from him.

He had not known the meaning of a man's life. It is just that—to use our days and months and years for the service of him who has granted our time to us; not rendering ourselves up as bond-slaves, held by fear, or by duty, but loving him because he himself holds us dear. And in such loving service there is light, and joy, and exceeding liberty.

When Effingham left his cabin that day, Robert Bulteel fell into a long reverie. Higher thoughts came to him.

And Doris? Did she know the purpose for which her earthly years were given? "We will strive together," he said, "to make life more worthy, if so be that God will grant me yet a little while wherewith

to find his face." Presently, when the sailor who brought his food entered the cabin, Robert Bulteel was asleep; and at the sound of the step he stirred and smiled, and the man heard him murmur the broken words, "Love...and light...and joy..." and then his sleep fell more deeply on him, and he lay quite still; but the smile yet lingered on his lips.

"He will weather it now," the sailor said, as he looked down on the quiet face. "His life has come back to him."

And it was a truer and greater life that had come to him then; although even Robert himself did not know it for many and many a day.

CHAPTER VIII.

When all fear of the Armada was over, and the English ships safe in the Thames, the wounded were landed with all possible care and loving-kindness. It was not only the Devon folk who were anxious and proud to nurse their heroes back to health and soundness.

Queen Elizabeth had some excellent qualities; but open-handed generosity was not amongst them. It was therefore the more to her credit that she took pains to see that rewards and honors reached many of those who had deserved well of their country; adding names to lists with her own pen, making personal enquiry of the Admiral and of Drake as to who had most distinguished himself either for valor, or for devotedness; and as far as possible giving every one personal evidence of her pride in her sailors, and in their doings.

Sir Robert Bulteel was lodged in a house close by the Tower of London—a house reckoned to be in a fine situation in those days; though now, when the smoke of the huge town has spread north and south, and east and west, the neighborhood is scarcely what one would select for an invalid.

"At her Majesty's charges," was the order graciously given by the court messenger who was sent to arrange matters. "Sir Robert Bulteel is the Queen's guest here."

Earle Clatworthy came to see him the very day of the reception at St. James's. The boy was over-brimming with spirits!

Not six weeks since he had left Exmouth, and he had had such great doings as would last through the lifetimes of twenty such men as lived in these quiet Devon valleys where nothing ever happened.

Something like this he was saying when Robert cut him short.

"Things have happened in those quiet valleys, as I have heard from your father, Earle,—perhaps, if all was overcounted, we might find that he has shewn courage more staunch than either you or I."

Earle knew at once what he meant, and hung his head a little shamefacedly. Then his frank bright look flashed out again as he said, "I believe I've been boasting! But you know the things of which you speak happened long before I was born, and that it is hard to quite understand about them. And, my father never refers to them. My father never boasts."

Robert looked at the boy's ingenuous face and smiled. Earle would not "boast" much in the future either, he thought silently;—he was too weak and weary to talk any more.

"And it must have been hard to endure that torturing and taunting," the lad went on more to himself, than to Robert, "and all alone. Lonely pain. Pain getting sharper and more sickening every instant, when a few words would end it all, a few words of denial and recantation. Yes, Robert, you are right: God's courage is the best courage after all."

"God-given courage" was what he meant. And in the years that were coming

that "best courage" was granted in large measure to him also. For when his own hair was grey, and the pride of his manhood passed, he fell into the enemies' hands while fighting the king's battles in the untried southern seas. There was little generosity in those days, still less mercy; and Captain Clatworthy, of the English frigate "Triumph," was barbarously tortured to force him to reveal the whereabouts and plans of the British fleet. "You offer me my life to turn traitor?" he said slowly, between his set teeth. "A traitor's life is not worth the taking at your hands. Do your worst." His own men rescued him:—but not before those stalwart limbs of his were wrenched and twisted by pain. Perhaps he remembered in that time of trial what his father had borne, and gave God thanks that he, too, had been found strong enough to suffer for conscience sake.

(To be Concluded.)

TOUGHENING BOYS.

Prince Albert's father was of opinion that one of the most important things in education is to teach children to bear pain with composure. He never inflicted pain upon his sons, but if they suffered from toothache, or any other bodily inconvenience, he would not allow them to complain or cry out. They were expected to seek the proper remedy, but in the meantime, bear it in silence; that is, without inflicting pain upon others.

Prince Albert followed this system in bringing up his own children, and his son, the Prince of Wales, acted upon it also. A guest at Sandringham was much surprised when one of the Prince of Wales' children fell upon an oaken floor with great violence, to see him get up, rub himself a little, and limp away without assistance or sympathy from any one, though both the child's parents were present.

The guest was informed that this was the rule of the house, the idea being to accustom the children to endure pain and inconvenience, of which princes and princesses have an ample share. There is, in truth, no profession in Europe more arduous and exacting than that of prince.

But we all have to bear an immense amount of pain. We all have to do many things that we do not want to do, and to abstain from doing many things we very much want to do. This is the human lot, and there is no possibility of avoiding it. No people suffer so much as those who rebel against this law of our being, and no people suffer so little as those who cheerfully accept it.

The hardening system can be carried too far, but surely it is an essential part of training to acquire the power to endure inevitable pains with some resolution and dignity.

We heard the other day of a family of seven persons, no two of whom could take the same kind of drink at breakfast. One had to have coffee; one must have green tea; another would be wretched without black tea; another knew no joy in life until she had her chocolate; another compromised upon cocoa; the sixth could only drink milk, and the seventh water. These people had cultivated and indulged their preferences until they really thought their special beverage essential to the prolongation of their lives.

Many mothers sedulously nourish such fancies, and soften their darlings by bestowing torrents of sympathy upon every bruise and bump. Boys soon acquire the habit of exaggerating their mishaps, and learn how to get the dainties they delight in by pretending to loathe the food that is good for them.

"Don't give that puppy any meat," says the dog-doctor. "But he won't eat anything else," replies the boy.

"Then," rejoins the healer of dogs, "leave his meal with him till he does eat it."

As it is with dogs, so it is with boys. Foolish fancies depart from boys when they are so happy as to have a keen appetite, and the boy who knows that no one will pick him up and kiss him will get up himself and rub his own head if it is bruised.

—Youth's Companion.

YOUTH.

Youth is the only time To think and to decide on a great course; Manhood with action follows; but 'tis dreary To have to alter our whole life in age— The time past, the strength gone.

—Stratford, by Robert Browning.



WORDS OF CHEER.