

ELIZABETH.
1578.

returned back again for the Groyne; but * * * * * wind hath served these six or seven days * * * * * must look for them every hour if they mean to come hither.

Sir, I sent a fine Spanish carvell on, eight days ago, to the Groyne to learn intelligence, such a one as would not have been mistrusted; but when she was fifty leagues on her way, this southerly wind forced her back again unto us. Therefore I pray you, if you hear or understand of any news or advertisements by land, that I may hear of them from you with expedition.

I have divided myself here in three parts, and yet we lie within sight of one another; so as if any of us do discover the Spanish fleet, we give notice thereof presently the one to the other, and thereupon repair and assemble together. I myself do lie in the midst of the channel with the greatest force. Sir Francis Drake hath twenty ships and four or five pinnaces, which lie towards Ushant; and Mr. Hawkins, with as many more, lieth towards Scilly. Thus are we fain to do; or else, with this wind, they might pass by, and we never the wiser. Whatsoever had been made of the Sleeve, it is another manner of thing than it was taken for. We find it by experience, and daily observation, to be an hundred miles over: a large room for me to look unto. And whereas it is thought that we should have regard * * * * * forces of the Spanish fleet, if they should bend for Scotland, they would in their way thither keep so far away westward of Cape Clear, as they would be farther from us at any time than it is betwixt England and Spain; so that the best advertisements, that we must hope for, must be from you, by the knowledge that you shall have overland from Scotland, if they be discovered there; and then our best and nearest course will be unto them through the narrow seas. where I have no doubt but we shall defeat them of their fleet, whatever they do with * * * *. But, for my own part, I cannot persuade myself but their intent is * * * * *. Where there