

FOR REFERENCE

NOT TO BE TAKEN FROM THIS ROOM

**PUBLIC AND PATRIOTIC THEMES IN ELIZABETHAN
LITERATURE ENGENDERED BY THE SIXTEENTH
CENTURY ENGLISH MARITIME ENTERPRISE**

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PREFACE

This study is an attempt at analyzing patriotic and public themes running through Elizabethan literature inspired by the English success in the field of maritime enterprise. Although other public and patriotic themes in Elizabethan literature have been studied extensively by the critics, the same cannot be said of these two themes with respect to the subject of the naval heroes and their exploits. The impact of the sixteenth century maritime activity on the literature of the age has, in fact, received a comparatively small share of comprehensive critical attention. A survey of literary scholarship on the subject gives, in general, little indication of pervasive motifs to be pursued (outside of historical and geographical categorizations which in themselves obscure any unifying literary patterns). At first glance, the references to naval exploits in the sixteenth and early seventeenth century English literature do appear to be desultory. Certain common



modes of approach by Elizabethan writers to contemporary maritime activity emerge, however, upon extending the range of research to include as wide a sampling of major and minor Elizabethan writers as possible. No attempt has been made to evaluate this heterogeneous body of works, a number of which admittedly has little artistic value, on their individual literary merits; the approach has been thematic throughout.

Although the scope of this study is limited to Elizabethan literature, the date 1603 has not been taken as binding with respect to works written in the early Stuart period which exhibit a definite Elizabethan flavor and were produced by authors whose formation had been achieved in the late sixteenth century.

Richard Hakluyt and the travel literature of the age have been, for the most part, left out of this study in an effort to concentrate on imaginative literature as such. The historical background, which is familiar at least in its outlines to all, has also been left out; our emphasis here will not be on historical facts or the contemporary accounts of overseas ventures, but on their transmutation into literary works that often bear little resemblance to the actual events and personalities which provided the original inspiration.

Faced with the alternatives of leaving relevant arguments

and material which provide this study with a wider perspective on the one hand, and of losing structural and thematic unity by incorporating these into the text on the other, the middle course has been taken by presenting all such discussions in appendices whenever their length precluded their relegation to footnotes.

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INTRODUCTION

Public themes were a significant element of the Elizabethan literary tradition. In fact, the introspective mode was still the exception rather than the rule. Men of letters were attuned to public events and personalities, and they often felt called upon to comment on issues of social and political import. Among the prominent public figures and the significant events of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries which had a bearing upon Elizabethan literature were the famous English seamen and their exploits within the broader context of contemporary maritime enterprise and of the accompanying surge in patriotism.¹

Public themes were well-suited to the temper of the Renaissance theory of literature, with its ethical and utilitarian bent, based as it was on time-honored classical antecedents. Any literate Elizabethan was as well acquainted as we are, or even more so perhaps, with the aims of literature summed up in Sir Philip Sidney's

¹A history of Elizabethan maritime enterprise and expansion lies outside the scope of this study. A survey of literature on the subject will, however, be included in the bibliography.

Defense of Poesy -- namely, that poetry was a basically moral exercise which contained not only an element of delight but, more importantly, an element of instruction. The purpose of instruction was best served via the medium of exemplary figures. Hence, in an age which put a premium on individualism and personal achievement, Elizabethan writers often resorted to the creation of heroes larger than life-size to serve as uplifting examples to their readers. We must remember in this connection that these writers "were not in bondage to actuality, to dogmas about verisimilitude," but had a "positive faith in the efficacy of both moral precepts and exemplary heroes."² Behind this faith lies the Renaissance conception of the writer's role in not only voicing but in molding public opinion.

Elizabethan patriotism, already a force in the process of being enhanced by the success of maritime enterprise and the Armada victory, was another factor inciting writers to turn to public themes and personalities. Patriotism implies a keen sense of national greatness and gives rise to utterances in a necessarily public and heroic mode -- in expressions of love of

² Douglas Bush, Prefaces to Renaissance Literature (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965), pp. 95, 94.

country, in the celebration of national heroes, and of national history and/or destiny.

We find a distinct public and patriotic trend in Elizabethan literature in the wake of England's naval ventures and the exploits of her great sea-captains -- to which major writers contributed from time to time, but which was mainly the work of a handful of patriotically-inspired minor writers who felt that it was their duty as poets to record the great deeds of these exceptional men, with the hope that such models would incite other Englishmen to take part in similar worthwhile actions.

The celebration of heroes, or men of action, is one of the oldest functions of poetry, a function of which the Elizabethans were thoroughly conscious. The belief in heroism as "a possible and valuable image of man"³ was strong, and heroes were often conceived idealistically -- as they 'ought to be' in order to serve as models for admiration and emulation. This idealized concept of the hero which included the notion that "the life of virtue is the life of action"⁴ was "held in common by writers and readers -- held, to be sure, on varying levels of

³ Thomas R. Edwards, Imagination and Power: A Study of Poetry on Public Themes (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 15.

⁴ Hallet Smith, Elizabethan Poetry (Cambridge, Mass.: 1952), p. 301.

sophistication but held none the less."⁵

This was an age in which one could celebrate individual achievement and glory, either questioning at the same time its ethical basis, or in straightforward panegyric, as was the case with the praise of the great captains. The Elizabethan seamen, conceived as contemporary heroes of a martial and patriotic stamp, were thus celebrated in the panegyric mood for their accomplishments and heroic virtues. "The classical commonplace of Alexander's envy of Achilles because the Greek champion had a Homer to give him immortality never lost its point for sixteenth-century Englishmen."⁶ A number of writers who undertook the praise of the modern sea-going heroes were painfully aware of their inadequacy as latter-day Homers, but they justified their position by pointing out to the neglect of the illustrious captains by those major writers whose duty it was as poets to sing the praises of the great.

The challenge presented by antique models of heroic virtue was often at the back of the writers' minds when celebrating contemporary heroes. For a generation of writers immersed in classical lore, Drake and his fellowship became the

⁵Bush, p. 97.

⁶Smith, p. 290.

reincarnations of Ulysees and Jason, two revered heroes whose exploits were most easily translated into the terms of Elizabethan naval enterprise, with the addition of the requisite patriotic ingredients.

Elizabethan writers in their role as public guides also promoted imperialism as a heroic and patriotic ideal in the conviction that it was in the best economic and political interests of England to plant colonies across the ocean. They struggled to further the efforts by others, notably by Richard Hakluyt and Sir Walter Raleigh, to create a climate of opinion favorable to imperialistic expansion and the establishment of colonies on American soil. These men carried on their mission, undaunted by the discouraging facts of the early colonial ventures and pleading their cause to a none-too-receptive Queen and people.

The writer's further function as the spokesman for the people gave rise, in the Elizabethan period, to works full of patriotic sentiment and self-congratulation after the Armada victory, expressing the growing sense of national self-awareness and the parallel hatred of Spain then current among Englishmen. The Queen came to represent in these writings a centripetal symbol on which patriotic sentiment arising from naval success could be focused; to her attributes as Gloriana

was added her distinction of being the Mistress of the Ocean.

Here we must repeat again that many of the men engaged in patriotic and public writing in the wake of the Elizabethan maritime enterprise were minor writers. Although some of the major literary figures of the day would occasionally join in the glorification of England's Queen, of her great captains and of her manifest destiny as an imperial power, works of this nature were generally produced by a small number of minor writers and non-professionals. In the Elizabethan period literature was not the domain of a solely professional class; men from many different walks of life who felt they had a literary contribution to make could expect to be published and to be read. Alongside the distinguished examples of Bacon, Sidney and Raleigh, there were among the ranks of Elizabethan writers also veteran soldiers like Thomas Churchyard and ex-sailors like Henry Robarts (both of whom later turned into professional writers), and when occasion demanded, even the famous captains of the day like Drake, Hawkins and Frobisher tried their hand at verse. Hence many of the works we shall be referring to have no artistic merit as literature, but they do have a historical interest which justifies their study. They afford an interesting reflection of the mood of the times and stand as testimony to

even the minor writers' attitude towards their public role as commentators and guides.

The minor writers under consideration lacked, by definition, the talent of a Shakespeare or a Spenser, but there was nevertheless room in the Elizabethan literary scene for their writings. Very few of these men were without the benefit of a university education; they were in any case well-grounded in classical and contemporary literature as well as being conscious of the writer's role according to Renaissance precepts.⁷ Whether they should have arrogated to themselves and to each other the role of 'poet' is besides the point. And if the lack of artistic merit in their writings excluded the select reader, they still had a rather large middle-class audience which "craved verse rather than poetry, entertainment rather than profundity. . . . It was an audience which sought the fare supplied in our century by newspapers and magazines"⁸-- the last being a very suitable medium for both delight and instruction. To this we may add the audience's interest not only in current events but

⁷ Edwin Haviland Miller, The Professional Writer in Elizabethan England (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1959), Ch. I.

⁸ Ibid., p. 243.

in colorful public personalities, and its taste for heroes beyond life-size and their daring exploits. And finally we should point out that minor writers employing the public-patriotic mode of writing catered not only to the needs of this audience, but also gave voice to its sentiments -- which they themselves shared in large measure -- and tried to 'educate' the views of their readers on the subject of maritime enterprise and colonization.

CHAPTER I

A NEW HEROIC IDEAL

The two dominant and often merging strains which one observes immediately when reviewing the literature engendered by Elizabethan maritime enterprise are the evolution of a new heroic cult and an intense patriotism in response to an emerging consciousness of English naval strength and its potential for power and greatness. England had been tentative and slow in entering the field of maritime enterprise, and hence her 'public' poets were slow to pick up the theme, but with the visible successes of her great captains the hearts of patriotic-minded writers were stirred and their enthusiasm found expression in poems of celebration.

The age had indeed produced many noteworthy seamen, and the English poets took pride in recounting their exploits. In his Albion's England, William Warner praises one by one the achievements of the English captains who ventured both

East and West. After paying his tributes to "world admired Drake" and his renowned fellowship, he exclaims that never could a realm "in the raigne of one,/ Boast worthy men like store."¹ Michael Drayton, with his Poly-Olbion, is not far behind Warner in his celebration of the exploits of individual captains, hardly missing a single noteworthy name. He, too, is particularly warm in his praise of the "Globe-engirdling" Drake, whom he exalts as "this Demie-god at Sea."² Another patriot, William Browne, rejoices in the English captains who bested the Spaniards in practically every encounter:

Time neuer can produce men to ore-take
The fames of Greenuill, Dauies, Gilbert, Drake,
Or woorthy Hawkins, or of thousands more,
That by their powre made the Deuonian shore
Mocke the proud Tagus; for whose richest spoyle
The boasting Spaniard left the Indian soyle
Banckrupt of store, knowing it would quit cost
By winning this though all the rest were lost.³

¹ Book XI, Ch. LXXI, in The Works of the English Poets from Chaucer to Cowper, ed. Alexander Chalmers (London: n.p., 1810), Vol. IV, pp. 643-44.

² Song XIX, ll. 307-317, The Works of Michael Drayton, ed. J. William Hebel, introd. Kathleen Tillotson and Bernard H. Newdigate (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1961), Vol. IV, p. 405.

³ Britannia's Pastorals, Book II, Song 3, William Browne, The Whole Works, ed. William Carew Hazlitt, 2 vols. in one (1868-9; rpt. Hildesheim and New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1970), p. 43. Although Browne wrote in the early Stuart era, we are justified in considering him among the Elizabethan poets. He was a dedicated follower of Michael Drayton and praised England's naval heroes in the same patriotic spirit.

The mood and the circumstances during the last decades of the sixteenth century were just right for the emergence of a new ideal of manhood and of an exuberant patriotism. The Renaissance fostered individual effort and the passion for personal reputation which was praised in 'public' poetry. This was an age in which there was immense scope for action for those who dared, and the recognition accorded to individual achievement must, in part at least, have inspired and sustained the great seamen of the day. The Raleghs and Drakes of the age flourished under this favorable set of circumstances. It was the day of the heroes, and the Elizabethan poets, many of whom had the benefit of a classical education, were familiar with the time-hallowed tradition of celebrating heroes in verse; to them, the association between Ulysees and Drake came easily.

Nationalism, on the other hand, was already a force in English life and thought. We need not analyze here the roots of English nationalism.⁴ The development of the vernacular, the long wars with France, and the establishment of the Church of England had done their work in weakening the universal Christian ideal of the Middle Ages and in fostering a national

⁴For a good discussion of the subject, see E. D. Marcu's Sixteenth Century Nationalism (New York: Abaris Books, Inc., 1976).

consciousness. Expressions of love of country, the most eloquent of which is perhaps Shakespeare's "This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,/ This other Eden, demi-paradise. . ."⁵ are frequent in the literature of the Elizabethan period, ranging from Spenser's "Deare Countrey, O how dearely deare/ Ought thy remembraunce, and perpetuall band/ Be. . ."⁶ to Browne's "Haile, thou my native soile! thou blessed plot/ Whose equall all the world affordith not."⁷ The exploits of the English captains and especially the events of the Armada years brought this patriotism to a higher pitch, which is well attested in the in the works we shall be reviewing in this chapter and in the one following.

The theme of public and patriotic writing in praise of the naval heroes will take us over the whole range of Elizabethan maritime enterprise. The writers of the day did not distinguish between diverse activities such as exploration,

⁵Richard II, Act II, Scene i, ll. 41-42, William Shakespeare, The Complete Works, ed. Peter Alexander (London and Glasgow: Collins, 1951), p. 454.

⁶Faerie Queene, Book II, Canto X, Stanza LXIX, The Works of Edmund Spenser (A Variorum Edition), ed. Edwin Greenlaw et. al. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1933), Vol. II, p. 143.

⁷Britannia's Pastorals, Book II, Song 3, William Browne, The Whole Works, p. 43.

privateering, colonization and war as we in retrospect tend to do. They regarded them all of a piece, as actions bearing witness to the glory of the English captains and of England herself. After all, they were right: England's venturing out onto the seas played a major role in bringing about the Anglo-Spanish confrontation which culminated in the Armada affair, and the men who explored the unknown coasts, searched for gold in the New World and sent out the first colonies were the same men who privateered on the Spanish Main and fought the Armada battles.

Not all Elizabethan writers joined the patriotic chorus of celebration, or with the same zeal. However, the few who did, sound authentically sincere. They are not mere flatterers but men moved by patriotic impulses. Indeed they are sensitive to charges that their praises are self-serving and are quick to denounce such slander. Thomas Churchyard exclaims in his "A welcome-home to Master MARTIN FROBUSER":

O Frobusher! thy bruit and name shal be enrold in bookes,
That whosoever after comes and on thy labour lookes,
Shall muse and marvell at thyne actes, and greatnesse
of thy minde.
I say no more, least some affirm I fanne thy face with
winde,
I flatter for affections sake: well, God shall witnesse be,
In this thy prayse (and other bookes) I speak but right
of thee. 8

⁸John Nichols, ed., Progress, Public Processions,...

These men felt themselves to be public poets carrying on a time-honored duty -- that of recording the deeds of great men to perpetuate their fame through the ages. As Thomas Greepe tells his readers, "there is nothing can more profite thy posteritie hereafter, then the leauing in memory so worthy a thing, for how shoulde we know the woorthy deeds of our Elders, if those learned Poets and Historiographers had not sette them downe in wryting."⁹ Thomas Mychelborne congratulates his friend Fitzgeoffrey on his elegy for Sir Francis Drake:

Many great honours, many a virtuous prize
 DRAKE won, unto his foe-men's great disease,
 And many souls and ships did sacrifice
 Unto the ireful Regent of the seas:
 But Time's hard iron teeth have worn out these,
 He wrought his virtues in the liquid maine,
 New waves still raising what he wrought in vain.

But well hast thou, faire friend, with stronger quill,
 Incarved them in time-rebating brass,
 That Fame might through the world resound them still,
 As far as DRAKE's large sepulchre doth pass,
 That all might know how great his glory was:

of Queen Elizabeth (1823; rpt. New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1969), Vol. II, p. 234. The date of the poem is 1578.

⁹The True and Perfecte Newes of the Woorthy and Valiaunt Exploytes, Performed and Doone by that Valiant Knight Syr Frauncis Drake, ed. David W. Waters, reproduced in facsimile (Hartford: privately printed, 1955), n. pag.

Well hast thou raught from that infernal lake,
The high deserts of now immortal DRAKE.¹⁰

In the epistle dedicatory to A Most Friendly Farewell to Sir Francis Drake, Henry Robarts wishes that his "abilitie were answerable to [his] wil, then shuld [Drake's] honourable name liue eternally amongst vs men on the earth." He goes on to lament the fact that "none of the learned sort haue vndertaken to write according to custome" in praise of Drake, so that he, Robarts, with his poor skills, must take it on himself to celebrate this worthy hero. As he readily admits his verses are poor, but his zeal was rich:

O noble Knight, what should I say, my pen is to too base,
To write thy fame, it rather doth thy worthy deeds disgrace.
What wrong hath poets done to thee that learning hath at wil
That haue in giuing thee thy due not shewed forth their skill.
Who liueth now within the lande that merite doth such fame?
Then learned poets giue it Drake that doeth deserue the same.¹¹

Fitzgeoffrey also chides the poets of his day who fill large volumes exclusively with love poems, with "songs patheticall" and "speech methodicall," and bids them to "Leave Venus,/ / And to heroique DRAKE do sacrifice." Then he turns on "the

¹⁰"To C. F." in The Poems of the Rev. Charles Fitzgeoffrey, ed. Alexander B. Grosart (Manchester: privately printed, 1881), Part II, p. vii.

¹¹A Most Friendly Farewell to Sir Francis Drake, ed. E. M. Blackie (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1924), n. pag.

quaint tragedians of our time" and admonishes them:

Cease to eternize in your marble verse
 The fals of fortune-tossed Venerists;
 And straine your tragicke Muses to rehearse
 The high exploites of love-borne Martialists,

 Be DRAKEs heroique deedes the argument,
 His name the prologue of your tragedie,
 The acts and scenes, his acts all excellent,
 Himselfe chiefe actor of Spaines misery,
 His launce the scorpion-scurge of Hesperie;
 Fettring with golden chaines their principates,
 And leading captive Spaines chief potentates.

 And when DRAKEs death ends the Catastrophe,
 Heaven shall clap hands, and give the plaudite.¹²

After commending Gervase Markham for having written
 Grenville's name "in lasting registers of memorie," Fritzgeoffrey
 calls on Spenser, Daniel, Drayton and Sidney to sing of Drake,
 surely a subject worthy of their great talents:¹³

Let famous RED CROSSE yield to famous DRAKE,
 And good Sir GVION give to him his launce;
 Let all the MORTIMERs surrender make
 To one that higher did his fame advance;
 Cease LANCASTERs + YORKEs iars to enhaunce;
 Sing all, and all to few to sing DRAKEs fame,
 Your poems neede no laurell save his name.¹⁴

¹² Sir Francis Drake, His Honorable lifes commendation, and his Tragicall Deathes lamentation, The Poems of the Rev. Charles Fitzgeoffrey, Part I, pp. 27-28; the above edition of the poem hereafter cited as Sir Francis Drake.

¹³ See Appendix A.

¹⁴ Sir Francis Drake, p. 22.

Had Drake been born in that first golden age of heroes:

When stout Achilles launce scourg'd Troies proud towres;
 When men gainst men, and Gods gainst Gods did rage,
 Ænaes, Achilles, nor Vlysees powres,
 Had beene so famous in this age of ours:
 All poets would have written in his praise,
 Their Æneads, Iliads, and Odysseys.¹⁵

Fitzgeoffrey gets quite carried away in his youthful enthusiasm,¹⁶
 and claims that Homer is indeed the only poet fit to do justice to
 Drake's glory, and even then:

... after-ages should a question make,
 Wheth'r DRAKE grac'd HOMER more, or HOMER DRAKE.¹⁷

What captivated the minds of the patriotic Elizabethan
 writers were the warlike deeds and the heroic character of the
 captains, rather than their strange and exciting experiences on
 the main and in faraway lands -- a theme which was perhaps the
 main point of interest in a number of travel books of the day.
 The poets' preference seems inevitable, given the physically
 limited and insular experience of the average writer, whose only
 acquaintance with the wonders of the world was through travel

¹⁵Ibid., p. 23.

¹⁶Fitzgeoffrey wrote this elegy in 1596 while he was a
 student at Oxford; the poem proved to be popular and was
 reprinted a few months after its publication. (See Grosart's
 Introduction, Part II, p. vi.)

¹⁷Sir Francis Drake, p. 62.

books or hearsay, and whose creative talents were not great.

What he read or heard might intrigue him or excite his curiosity, but oftentimes he was incapable of that imaginative flight required to transform this second-hand information into poetry.¹⁸

However, he could comprehend well and respond to the courage and daring of the seamen. Judging by their exploits, he imputed to these men of action all the requisites of a heroic character.

The new heroic ideal, with its emphasis on valor, prowess and endurance, is closer to the ideal of manhood we find in the epic and the average English romance than it is to the more exacting ideal set forth in The Courtier, The Book Named the Governor or Spenser's Faerie Queene. The contemplative aspects and social graces of the Renaissance gentleman are generally missing in our hero, given the poets' almost exclusive focus on warlike achievement. There is indeed hardly any room for such refinements in the celebration of action, written not in the leisurely pace of the epic, but often in shorter verse forms. The following is typical of the heroic portrait which emerges in these works, an image which could just as well apply to the heroes of old as it does to Frobisher:

¹⁸See Appendix B.

A Martiall Knight, aduenturous,
 whose valure great was such,
 That hazardes hard he light esteemed,
 his country to inrich.
 No chaunces dire could him dismay,
 no doubt could daunt his hart,
 No peruerse haps could force him feare,
 nor yet his mind reuart.¹⁹

Prowess is stressed at every turn; a hero's true mettle, after all, is shown in battle and adversity, and the captains were often engaged in one form or another against the Spaniards. Thus Thomas Greepe calls on England to rejoice in the "valors woone by a famous knight":

Syr Frauncis Drake by dreadful sworde
 Did foyle his foes in forraine lande,
 Which did contemne Christes holy word.²⁰

Fitzgeoffrey's picture of Drake projects an even stronger martial image:

Great God of prowesse, thunderbolt of war,
 Bellona's darling, Mars of chivalrie,
 Bloody Enyo's champion, foe-mene feare,
 Fames stately Phorus, map of dignitie,
 Joves pearle, pearls pride, prides foe, foes enemye:

¹⁹"Iohn Kirkham in the praise of M. Martine Frobisher" in The Three Voyages of Martin Frobisher, ed. Vilhjalmur Stefansson [from the 1578 text of George Best] (London: The Argonaut Press, 1938), Vol. II, p. 48.

²⁰The True and Perfecte Newes, n. pag. The poem celebrates Drake's 1587 raid on Cadiz, in which he singed the beard of the King of Spain.

Spaine-shaking feaver, regent of wars thunder,
Vndaunted DRAKE, a name importing wonder.²¹

The poet compares the Armada battles to the battles fought by
Gods in ancient mythologies, praising Drake's part in them:

Such as were they, such was our worthy DRAKE,
Whose head a store-house was of pollicies,
That (like his valour) forc'd his foes to quaky
Making their hulkes to caper in the skies,
And quiver in the aire their Argoseies:²²

The poets were also struck by the captain's fortitude and
powers of endurance in the face of the perils of the deep and of
the unknown. Henry Robarts marvels at Drake's hardihood:

Great paines abroad our Knight endured, w̄ perils on y^e seas.
The dangers he hath passed through would make a many muse
That keeps their chābres close w̄ shame to hearken after nuse,
But lōg may good sir Francis liue which hath enricht our lād,
The like was neuer seene nor heard since England first did
stād.²³

In "Iohn Kirkham in the praise of M. Martine Frobisher," the
captain's voyages to North America are seen as a brave venture
into the unknown:

He ventred not to knowen coastes,
nor landes devoide of feare,
Nor ciuill realmes he seemd to touch,
nor to his Countrie neare.

²¹Sir Francis Drake, p. 16.

²²Ibid., p. 50.

²³A Most Friendly Farewell to Sir Francis Drake, n. pag.

To vncoth coastes his steppes he bent,
 and places distant farre,
 Even to the colde congealed Pole,
 and Northerne frozen starre:²⁴

The sea-going heroes of the Elizabethan age could no longer fight the elements or their foes single-handed as the older heroes were allowed to do. The very nature of naval enterprise necessitated group effort; each venture involved a number of ships, each with its own captain and officers, as well as a large number of common sailors. The poets were aware of this, yet the greatest glory of the enterprise naturally goes to the hero without whose skilled leadership nothing could be achieved. In a note appended to his "A welcome-home to Master MARTIN FROBUSER," Thomas Churchyard admits that although his men also contribute greatly to the success of the enterprise, it is commonly the captain who carries the day after a successful venture. "Nevertheless," says he, "some one generall or Captayne is more happier and more necessary than a number of the mercenary people. . . but yet for al that, it is good to have wise and stoute soldiours, whose obedience and manhoode deserves as much commendation as their Captaines can wish to them selves." He then claims that he would have

²⁴ The Three Voyages of Martin Frobisher, Vol. II, p. 49.

liked to praise all those who accompanied Frobisher, had he known their names, not only to give these brave men the public recognition that is their due, but, significantly, "to the encouragynge of others to the like adventure."²⁵ In another poem entitled "Sir Humfrey Gilbarte's Journey,"²⁶ he makes good his vow by paying brief but individual tribute to Gilbert's companions on his voyage to America. On the other hand, a reading of Abraham Fleming's and Thomas Ellis's poems²⁷ in commendation of Frobisher gives the impression that he must have ventured out all alone.

As a rule, the companions of the hero and his relations with them serve as a backdrop against which the hero performs his feats. Even when they are celebrated individually alongside their admiral, the men do not come across with any force.

Greepe's tribute to the captains serving under Drake is typical:

The Bonaventure a shyp royall
 Cheefe Admiral then of the fleete
 Sir Frauncis Drake chiefe Generall
 As by desertes he was most meete.

²⁵ Progresses, Public Processions, . . . of Queen Elizabeth, Vol. II, p. 235.

²⁶ Ibid., pp. 227-32.

²⁷ The Three Voyages of Martin Frobisher, Vol. II, pp. 43 and 45-46.

Most worthy Captaynes of hand and hart
In thys boon voyage then took his part.

The Primrose next, wize-Admirall
Appointed by theyr best deuce
Captaine Frobisher wize Generall
A valiant Captayne ware and wyse.
Captayne Carelell they did ordayne
Liefetenant Generall on the mayne.

The Ayde a royall shyppe and hotte
The Gallien wyll conuict her foes,
The Sea-Dragon she spares no shott
The Talbott barks where ere she goes
The Whyte Lyon her foes wyll smart
And all the rest wyll take her part.²⁸

One notices in these lines that the ships which take part in the enterprise are celebrated in the manner of the swords or steeds of the ancients. The patriotic Robarts also makes a point of celebrating the ships as well as the captains, apologizing to the rest of the men for being unable to praise them individually, not knowing the names of all:

The best of worth, which charge hath in this fleet,
I would recount, to do them honour meet:
But for I cannot name them as I would,
Whereby their virtues rare should be extoll'd,
The greater part, of force, I must omit,
Till their return, their honour gained to write.²⁹

²⁸ The True and Perfecte Newes, n. pag.

²⁹ Henry Robarts, The Trumpet of Fame; or Sir F. Drake's and Sir John Hawkins' Farewell (Kent: privately printed, 1818), p. 5.

The ports of the Western English coast from which many of the expeditions started out, and especially Plymouth, sometimes get their share of praise as the soil which nurtures heroes. Thus, further on in the poem from which we have just quoted Robarts exclaims:

O famous men of Plymouth's happy town!
Yours is the gain of honour and renown.
From you these men of worth most part did spring,
Whose fames throughout the world doth daily ring.³⁰

Fitzgeoffrey hails Plymouth in the same spirit:

Now Plymouth (great in nothing, save renowne,
And therein greater far, because of DRAKE)
Seemes to disdaine the title of a towne,
And lookes that men for cittie should her take;
So prowd her patrons favour doth her make:³¹

The quality of leadership in captains is taken for granted by the poets, and rightly so -- their ability to lead and to discipline men is the secret to the success of the expeditions. We know from history and travel literature the brutal conditions of life on board the ships and the tendency of crews to mutiny. The English annals are full of such incidents -- from John Rastell's expedition to America in 1516-17 which was forced to turn back by a faint-hearted crew to Henry Hudson's last voyage

³⁰Ibid., p. 7.

³¹Sir Francis Drake, p. 57.

of exploration for a North-West passage in 1610 which came to an end with the captain being set adrift in a small boat by his mutinous followers. We must also remember that Drake had been forced to order the execution of Thomas Doughty, one of his officers, for insubordination at Port St. Julian in 1579. In the idealized picture presented by the poems, however, all relations of this sort, briefly touched upon if at all, are assumed to be smooth -- with loyalty on one side and benevolence on the other:

You men of worth, that ventures voluntary,
And thereby shews what minds all ought to carry;
Address yourselves, to follow those brave Knights,
Whom God had blest, in many hardy fights:
Whose fortunes great, and love unto their men,
I cannot rightly paint with my rude pen.³²

Peele likewise congratulates the men who accompanied Drake and Norris on the 1589 campaign for their good fortune:

O, ten-times-treble happy men, that fight
Under the cross of Christ and England's queen,
And follow such as Drake and Norris are!³³

If Sir Richard Grenville was indeed hated by his men and if he actually threatened to hang them, we get no hint of such

³² The Trumpet of Fame, p. 2.

³³ "A Farewell to the Famous and Fortunate Generals of Our English Forces," ll. 70-72, The Works of George Peele, ed. A. H. Bullen (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1888), Vol. II, p. 240.

goings-on from a reading of Markham's elegy. The poem presents quite a different picture of Grenville, a captain ministering in person even to the spiritual needs of his men in their last hour:

Those whom long sickness taught of death contempt,
He visits, and from Iones great Booke doth reede.³⁴

The only allusion to the unheroic and remote possibility of mutiny occurs in Henry Robarts' poem in praise of Drake and Hawkins setting off on their fatal voyage of 1595:

Go then with him, and love him as you ought,
Let not your minds to mutiny be wrought,
Lest Justice' sword do cut off vital days,
Whose power is such, fro to command at seas -
Be free from follies, and serve your God aright,
And honour truly this renowned Knight.³⁵

These poets were probably acquainted with the true nature of the captain-crew relationship; such news travelled fast by word of mouth. They must have also been aware of the fact that the illustrious captains generally possessed, alongside their heroic virtues, few scruples, a markedly competitive streak and a certain ruthlessness to survive and

³⁴Gervase Markham, The Most Honorable Tragedie of Sir Richard Grinuile, Knight, in The Last Fight of the 'Revenge' and the Death of Sir Richard Grenville, ed. Edmund Goldsmith, 2 vols. in one (Edinburgh: Bibliotheca Curiosa, 1886), Vol. II, p. 19.

³⁵The Trumpet of Fame, p. 3.

succeed in the face of insubordination, desertion and violence. Neither were the daily hardships of life at sea a secret -- the bad food, the filthy condition of the sailors' quarters, the rampant diseases which took so many lives. The poets, however, are mute on these points with the exception of Churchyard in his "Sir Humfrey Gilbarte's Journey." Indeed one of the difficulties of celebrating the exploits of contemporary heroes must have been that the poets were too close to the realities of those events which look so glamorous in retrospect. Such obstacles appear however to have been easily surmounted by these enthusiastic patriots who had opened up their hearts to the glory of the ventures, and who soared above such sordid details in their expansive vision of English greatness.

Like the heroes of old, the English captains are spurred on to action by a thirst for fame. The poets were probably right in assuming that fame was one of the prime motivating factors behind the ventures, as they were right in their basic approach to the character of the captains -- these men must have possessed many of the heroic virtues imputed to them by the poets in order to accomplish the deeds which made them famous through the ages. The pursuit of glory and everlasting fame is indeed the appropriate goal for a hero, particularly in

an age which set such great store by individual achievement.

The poets, as we have noticed, were quick at every turn to draw attention to the fame and honor achieved by their heroes. Fitzgeoffrey's final words in his elegy, within his Drake-poem, to the famous Elizabethan captains will serve well to illustrate the point once again:

Live, o live ever, ever-living Sprites,
Where ever live the sp'rites of vertuous livers,
Heavens have your soules, the Earth your fame inherits:
But when earths massive apple turn to shivers,
And fire conioins that nature now dissevers,
That hold's your souls shall then your fames containe,
For erth shall end, your praise shall still remaine.³⁶

The pursuit of fame always transcends any desire for material gain:

Some people happily thinke a greedy hope of gayne,
And heapes of gold you hope to find, doth make you take this
payne,
Oh sure that cannot be, conceyve the case who list,
For, having that which thousands want alreadie in your fist,
You meane to clime for fame as high as eye may looke,
And search the creekes and privie portes, and every secret
nooke,
As far as shippe may sayle, I trust for countreys good.³⁷

Death itself is not too great a price for the purchase of honor and fame, and hence George Peel can declare:

³⁶Sir Francis Drake, p. 79.

³⁷Thomas Churchyard, "Sir Humfrey Gilbert's Journey," in Progresses, Public Processions, . . . of Queen Elizabeth, Vol. II, p. 229.

Sail on, pursue your honours to your graves:³⁸

Markham makes Sir Richard Grenville defy death in a Roland-like manner:

Shall than my lifes regard taynt that choice faire?
First will I perrish in the liquid round,
Neuer shall sunne burnt Spanyards tongue endeare
Iberian eares with what shall me confound,
The life I haue, I for my Mistris beare,
Curst were that life, should it her scepter wound,
And trebble cursed by that damned thought,
Which in my minde hath any faintness wrought.³⁹

Grenville's courage and his regard for fame are reasserted once again when Markham portrays his hero striving to instill the same contempt for death in his men:

Nothing he left vnsaid that tongue could say,
To breede contempt of death, or hate or thrall,
Honours reward, fame for a famous day,
Wonder of eares, that men halfe gods shall call:
And contrarie, a hopelesse certaine way,
Into a Tyrants damned fists to fall,
Where all defame, base thoughts, and infamie,
Shall crowne with shame their heads eternally.⁴⁰

The facts of Grenville's famous last fight may have been as Linschoten asserts they were -- that in his arrogant and

³⁸"A Farewell to the Famous and Fortunate Generals of Our English Forces," The Works of George Peele, 1. 47, p. 239.

³⁹The Most Honourable Tragedie of Sir Richard Grinuile, in The Last Fight of the 'Revenge', pp. 38-39.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 43.

reckless courage, he did not follow Lord Admiral Howard's orders and found himself in an impossible situation.⁴¹ Yet a number of Grenville's contemporaries, ignoring the facts, responded in full measure to the heroic quality of his fatal resistance (so reminiscent, to us, of the battle of Maldon and the glorious defeat of Byrhtnoth). Bacon shares Markham's heroic point of view in his stirring account of the last fight of the 'Revenge': a man fighting against insuperable odds, his spirit unbroken to the end:

In the year 1591 was that memorable fight of an English ship called the Revenge, under the command of Sir Richard Greenvil; memorable, I say, even beyond credit, and to the height of some heroical fable: and though it were a defeat, yet it exceeded a victory. . . . This ship, for the space of fifteen hours, sat like a stag among hounds at the bay, and was sieged, and fought with, in turn by fifteen great ships of Spain, part of a navy of fifty-five ships in all; the rest, like abettors, looking on afar off. . . . This brave ship, the Revenge. . . never came to be entered, but was taken by composition; the enemies themselves having in admiration the virtue of the commander, and the whole tragedy of that ship.⁴²

Captain Richard Hawkins' account of the same incident is an

⁴¹ See the excerpt from Jan Huygen van Linschoten's Discours of voyages into the Easte and West Indies [1596, trans. from the Dutch in 1598], in The Last Fight of the 'Revenge', Vol. I, p. 30 ff.

⁴² "Considerations touching a war with Spain," The Works of Francis Bacon, ed. Basil Montagu (Philadelphia: Parry and McMillan, 1889), Vol. II, p. 210.

Elizabethan testimony to the creed of the unyielding will, and also to the faith in the efficacy of exemplary models:

In this poynt, at the Ile of Flores, Sir Richard Greenfield got eternall honour and reputation of great valour, and of an experimented souldier, chusing rather to sacrifice his life, and to passe all danger whatsoever, then to fayle in his Obligation. . . All which may worthily be written in our chronicles in letters of Gold, in memory for all Posterities, some to be ware, and others by that example in the like occasions, to imitate the true valour of our Nation in these Ages.⁴³

Dazzled by such heroic achievements the poets felt confident that the English captains would compare favorably with any hero, ancient or modern. George Gascoigne, who personally knew Gilbert and Frobisher, and who was instrumental in the publishing of Gilbert's Discourse of a Discoverie for a New Passage to Cataia (1576), declares the English captain to be far greater than the famous Iberian seamen of the age of discovery (though, to us, this praise seems much exaggerated in view of the failure of the North-West passage discovery ventures):

Men praise Columbus for the passing skil
Which he declared, in Cosmographie,
And nam'd him first (as yet we cal him stil)
The 2. Neptune, dubd by dignity.
Americus Vesputius, for his paine,
Neptune the 3. ful worthely was named,
And Magellanus, by good right did gaine,

⁴³ Observations in a Voyage to the South Sea, in The Last Fight of the Revenge! Vol. I, pp. 27-28.

Neptune the 4. ful fitly to be famed.
 But al those three, and al the world beside,
 Discovered not, a thing of more emprice,
 Then in this booke, is learnedly describe,
 By vertue of my worthie friends device.
 Yf such successe, to him (as them) then fall,
 Neptune the 5. we justly may him call.⁴⁴

The more zealous poets were fond of comparing the English captains to the heroes of Greece and Rome, often to the advantage of the former, as we have already seen in Fitzgeoffrey's elegy to Drake. Ulysees and Jason are, for obvious reasons, the poets' favorite yardsticks for comparison. Thus Thomas Greepe claims:

Vlisses with his Nauie great,
 In ten yeeres space great valour wonne:
 Yet all his time did no such feate,
 As Drake within one yeere hath doone.⁴⁵

Martin Frobisher, who had made three voyages to North America in search of gold, invited comparison with Jason. Even after Frobisher's ore had been declared to be fool's gold, many continued to believe it was the real thing:

He shund no tedious travells hard,
 but toild with troublous paine,

⁴⁴"A Prophetical Sonnet," appended to Humphrey Gilbert's Discourse (1576), The Complete Works of George Gascoigne, ed. John W. Cunliffe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1907), Vol. II, p. 567.

⁴⁵The True and Perfecte Newes, n. pag.

Till he the way to golden Fleece,
 to Brittane had made plaine:
 A Fleece in value that exceedes,
 the Fleece of Colchis ground,
 Or golden fruite of Hesperis land,
 . which Hercules out found.
 Though Perseus stout from Indians blacke
 a conquest brave did bring,
 Yet well he may to Frobisher,
 give place in everie thing.⁴⁶

Thomas Ellis is just as confident in his assertion of the superiority of his English hero to those of ancient Greece:

His heart as valiant is, as theirs:
 his hazardes, were more harde:
 His good successe, doth theirs surpasse:
 if they be well comparde.
 The glittering fleece that he doth bring,
 in value sure is more,

 Give place, therefore, you Graecians now,
 and to me geue assent:
 This worthie wight excelles your impes,
 the which before him went.⁴⁷

And even the notorious Thomas Stukeley is accorded heroic stature by the well-intentioned Robert Seall, who likens him to "A yong Eneas bolde," thus putting the English captain on par with the illustrious Roman hero.⁴⁸

⁴⁶"Iohn Kirkham in the praise of M. Martine Frobisher," in The Three Voyages of Martin Frobisher, Vol. II, pp. 48-49.

⁴⁷"Thomas Ellis inpraise of Maister Martin Frobisher," in The Three Voyages of Martin Frobisher, Vol. II, p. 46.

⁴⁸"A Cōmendation of the aduētures Viage of the wurthy Captain M. Thomas Stutely Esquyer" [1563], in Ballads and

The English captains, whose exploits rival those of ancient Greece and Rome, are not engaged in the quest for fame solely for self-realization or for the praises of men. They are portrayed as having embraced patriotism as an ideal of life. It is neither hope for personal recognition nor profit which drives them on, but a desire to serve their Queen, their country and their God. "'Tis England's honour that they have in hand,"⁴⁹ or as George Peele puts it:

In God's name venture on; and let me say
To you, my mates, as Caesar said to his,
Striving with Neptune's hills; "You bear," quoth he,
Caesar and Caesar's fortune in your ships.
.....
You fight for Christ, and England's peerless queen,
Elizabeth, the wonder of the world,
Over whose throne the enemies of God
Have thunder'd erst their vain successful braves.⁵⁰

John Donne stresses similarly the patriotic dimension which a hero's career ought to contain:

Broadsides Chiefly of the Elizabethan Period, ed. Herbert L. Collman (1912; rpt. New York: Burt Franklin, 1971), p. 236. Seall, like others, could not have known that Stukeley's ostensible voyage to Florida was merely a disguise to cover up his real intention of privateering on the French with what amounted to the tacit approval of the Queen. See Sir Thomas Stukeley's biography in The School of Shakespeare, ed. Richard Simpson (London: Chatto and Windus, 1878), Vol. I, pp. 32-35.

⁴⁹ The Trumpet of Fame, p. 13.

⁵⁰ "A Farewell to the Famous and Fortunate Generals of Our English Forces," ll. 53-56, 66-69, The Works of George Peele, pp. 239, 240.

I know not how Desert more great can rise,
 Then out of Danger t'aue for good mens Good;
 Nor who doth better winne th' Olympian prize,
 Than he whose Countryes Honor stirres his blood;
 Private respects have private expectation,
 Publicke designes, should publish reputation.⁵¹

It is not difficult to believe that patriotism played a role in the undertakings of at least some of the English captains after a reading of Drake's letter of 1587 addressed to the Reverend John Fox:

. . . it is most certayne, that the king doth not onely make speedy preparatiō in Spayne, but like wise expected a verye great fleete from the Straytes, and dyuers other places, that shold ioyn with his forces to invade England: We purpose to sette apart all feare of daunger, and by Gods furtheraunce to proceede by all the good meanes we can deuise to preuent theyr coming, wherefor I shall desire you to continue faithfull in remembraunce of vs in your prayers, that our purpose may take that good effect, as God may be glorified, his Church, our Queene and Country preserued, and these Enemies of the trueth vtterly vanquished, that we may haue continuall peace in Israel.⁵²

Thus heroic patriotism in that day meant serving one's country, one's sovereign and one's God. The service

⁵¹"To his friend Captaine John Smith, and his Worke," in The Travels of Captaine John Smith, John Smith (Glasgow: James MacLehose and Sons, 1907), Vol. I, p. xxx.

⁵²"To the right reuerende, godly learned Father, my very good freend, M. Iohn Fox, preacher of the word of GOD," in The True and Perfecte Newes, n. pag.

rendered by the captains to England involved fighting the foes of God and of the English Queen, and also venturing "both their goods and life/ Their contrey to enriche."⁵³ Henry Robarts applauds Drake:

Who by his trauille on the seas vnto his endlesse fame,
Did purchase for his countrey wealth, and credit to his
name.⁵⁴

In those days one 'enriched' one's country most directly by privateering which meant conducting raids on feasible Spanish ports in South America and attacking the Spanish treasure fleets. During the Armada years such activity was considered a form of economic warfare resulting in either the destruction or the capture of Spanish wealth. Spain may have viewed them as acts of piracy, but to the English, the seizing of Spanish goods was a service to their country, especially after it became known in 1587 that an Armada was being prepared against England. What we now call privateering appeared to the average Englishman as part and parcel of the ongoing fight against the popish enemy, which continued even

⁵³Robert Seall, "A Cōmendation of the aduētures Viage of . . . Thomas Stutely," in Ballads and Broad-sides, pp. 239-40.

⁵⁴A Most Friendly Farewell to Sir Francis Drake, n. pag.

in times of ostensible peace. He might not have known of the unpublicized though active sanction (including letters of marque) given to privateering by the Queen, but he knew that she had knighted Drake in person upon his return from his circumnavigation with Iberian booty. As far as the man in the street was concerned, Spain had come between England and the wealth of the New World, and it was up to the English captains to right the balance. Thus Fitzgeoffrey has no qualms about congratulating Drake for enriching his country in this manner:

So DRAKE (divine Elisa's Champion)
 Ceazing upon a praie of Indian gold,
 Meaning to ship it home to Albion,
 Ballasts his barke with treasures manifold;
 Which when the griev'd Iberians do beholde,
 They swarme in troopes to take his prize awaie,
 And to disrob him of his gained praie.

A thousand hel-mouth'd canons deadly shot,
 A thousand ratling muskets hayle-stones flie,
 Yet thousand deadlie canon hurt him not,
 Nor thousand ratling muskets reckneth he,
 But still rebeats them all as eagerlie.
 And, maugre all their beards, brings home the spoile,
 Riching ELISA, and ELISAs soile.⁵⁵

Henry Robarts was even more outspoken in his praise of what

⁵⁵Sir Francis Drake, p. 51.

seems to us buccaneering expeditions.⁵⁶ However, both the poets whose works we have reviewed and other Elizabethan writers drew a firm line between actions which enriched England and acts of plain piracy which brought no gold into the royal treasury.⁵⁷

We have seen in the preceeding pages the importance attached to the captains' triple loyalty to God, Queen and country. In the eyes of the patriotic writer, the service performed in their name and against their joint enemy, Spain, is the only assured way to win honor and everlasting renown. Just as Queen Elizabeth rewarded Drake's services with knighthood, so God has crowned the efforts of the English captains by granting them victory, a visible sign of His sanction and blessings. All of these motifs are summed up in Thomas Greepe's tribute to Drake, in which the heroic ideal is reasserted briefly but forcefully, ending with a patriotic prayer:

His valiant minde, his secrete skill,
By flying Fame eche where is spred:
His loyall loue his moore good will.

⁵⁶ See Louis B. Wright's article, "Henry Robarts, Patriotic Propagandist and Novelist." in Studies in Philology, 29 (1932), pp. 176-99, for the texts of two poems dated 1592 and 1594.

⁵⁷ See Appendix C.

To Queene and Realme both seene and read.
 Sith God is dooer of the fame:
 Let vs all prayse his holy name.

Through him he got great victories,
 Through him he did his foes dismay:
 Through him he scapt great ieorperdies,
 And perrill both by Land and Sea.
 Who hath preserued by his great might:
 Our Queene and realme yeeres twenty eyght.

God saue our Queene of merry England,
 His sacred word long to maintaine:
 Her Graces Naui and royall bande,
 Through his good grace may long remaine.
 Lord blesse her counsell and keepe them aye:
 With all true Subiects night and day.⁵⁸

If England were to become a maritime power, she would require the services of many such exemplary seamen as those praised by the poets. Thus the celebrations of individual naval heroes were intended to serve also as models for emulation. However there were other works which fulfilled this end more directly by promoting sea-faring as an exalted profession and by urging men to take part in the overseas ventures. Thomas Churchyard eagerly upheld the life of a seaman as a new ideal for Elizabethan men to follow:

The world throwout, breeds men of sundrie kinds,

 But such that seekes, for fame in forren place,

⁵⁸The True and Perfecte Newes, n. pag.

Forsakes great ease, and wealth where they were bred,
 Are speshall men, and do deserue more grace,
 Than all the rest, what euer may be sed.⁵⁹

A number of poets, again with Thomas Churchyard in the forefront,⁶⁰ were severe in their condemnation of idle land-fold who prefer the safety and comfort of their hearths to the braving of the dangers of the sea in pursuit of honor and glory. The following poem by an anonymous author is a typical example of its kind, setting forth seamanship as an ideal way of life with heroic overtones:

Who seeks the way to winne renowne,
 Or flieth with winges of high desire
 Who seekes to weare the Lawrell crowne,
 Or hath the minde that would aspire,
 Let him his natiue soyle eschewe
 Let him goe range and seeke anew.

 To tosse the Seas some thinkes a toyle,
 Some thinke it straunge abroad to rome,
 Some thinke it grieffe to leaue their soyle,
 Their parents, kinsfolkes, and their home.
 Thinke so who list, I like it not,
 I must abroad to trye my Lott.

 If Iason of that minde had binne,

⁵⁹"A Commendation of All Those, that. . . seekes the aduancement of their Prince and countrey," in his Frondes Caducae (England : privately printed by Alexander Boswell, 1816), no pag.

⁶⁰See the aforementioned poems by Thomas Churchyard in praise of Gilbert and Frobisher.

Or wandring Prince that came from Greece
 The golden fleece had binne to winne,
 And Pryams Troy had byn in blisse,
 Though dead in deedes and clad in clay,
 Their woorthie Fame will nere decay.⁶¹

Thomas Middleton, who grew up during the years of concerted maritime activity, argues likewise that:

Travel is the golden mine that enricheth the poorest country, and filleth the barrenest with abundant plenty . . . The Portugalls have hereby crowned themselves and their posterity with garlands of never-dying honor. The Spaniards have their names (for this) so deeply engraven in the chronicles of fame, that they can never be forgotten. The French likewise and the Dutch, have raised their glories to a nobler height, only by these adventures. In imitation of all whose labors, or rather in emulation of all their fame, our Englishmen have not only stepped as far as any of them all, but gone beyond the most and the best of them.

Clearly, Middleton takes a patriot's pride in those Englishmen "whose voyages and travels by sea and land to set down were able to fill whole volumes," and is also confident that England stands to gain from their efforts.⁶² Robert Seall, writing in

⁶¹No. 123, ll. 1-6, 19-24- 31-36, The Paradise of Dainty Devices (1576-1606), ed. Hyder Edward Rollins [from the 1585 ed.] (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1927), pp. 129-30.

⁶²"Sir Robert Sherley, sent ambassadour in the name of the King of Persia, to Sigismond the third. . . " [1609], The Works of Thomas Middleton, ed. A.H. Bullen (1885; rpt. New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1964), Vol. III, pp. 305-6.

praise of Thomas Stukeley's voyage to Florida, upholds the ideal of seamanship and defends the venture against those who "... do it mock/ As at a foolish game," by the example of Columbus.⁶³ The praise and the defense hold good not only for Stukeley, but for all men engaged in the overseas ventures:

Columbus, as I reed,
 The space of many yeeres
 Was counted as unwise also,
 As in writers appeeres.

 At thend in savety home
 A length he did retourn,
 And quenched all their mocking harts,
 Whiche erst did seem to burn.

 Now, Stuetley, hoice thy sail,
 Thy wished land to finde,
 And never doo regard vain talke,
 For wurds they are but winde.

 And in reproof of all,
 I will not once refrain
 With prayer for the wish that thou
 Maist safely come again.⁶⁴

Gabriel Harvey, writing in support of the seamen and of maritime enterprise, has only contempt for the detractors of the naval ventures and of the men who undertake them:

⁶³See Appendix D.

⁶⁴"A Cōmendation of the aduēterus Viage of . . . Thomas Stutely," in Ballads and Broad-sides, pp. 237-38.

But read the report of the worthy Westirne discoueries, by the said Sir Humfry Gilbert: the report of the braue West-Indian voyage by the conduction of Sir Frauncis Drake: the report of the horrible Septentrionall discoueryes by the trauail of Sir Martin Frobisher: the report of the politique discouery of Virginia, by the Colony of Sir Walter Raleigh: the report of sundry other famous discoueryes, aduentures, published by M. Rycharde Hackluit in one volume, a worke of importance: . . . who of reckoning, can spare anye lewde, or vaine tyme for corrupt pamphlets; or who of iudgement, will not cry? away with these paultringe fidle-fadles.⁶⁵

In his Syrinx, William Warner puts forth both the negative and positive points of view concerning those who venture overseas, tilting the balance heavily in favor of the latter. According to Warner a career at sea is a heroic and patriotic endeavor which brings in its wake both glory and gain:

Of whom, I pray you, should we censure well, yf not of Trauelers: I saye not of land-leapers, . . . but I meane of men betaking themselves to painefull trauels, eyther by their prowes and actiuitie (wanting the like occasion at home) to purchase renowne: by their skill and venter to discouer obscure people and places beneficiall to themselves and commodius to their countries.⁶⁶

⁶⁵Pierce's Supererogation [1593] (Menston, Yorkshire: A Scholar Press Facsimile, 1970), pp. 48-49.

⁶⁶Syrinx or Sevenfold History [1597], ed. Wallace E. Bacon (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1950), "Belopares": Ch. XV, pp. 60-61. It may be of interest to note that Warner's father was a seaman who went with Chancellor on the North-East passage attempt of 1553, and who died on Towerson's voyage to the Gold Coast. See W.E. Bacon's Introduction.

CHAPTER II

THE PATRIOTISM OF THE ARMADA YEARS

We shall now pass on from the celebration of a new heroic ideal created by the achievements and the character of the Elizabethan seamen to patriotic works which interpret the ebullient mood of the English people following the sea-war with Spain. These jubilant works celebrating the Armada victory tend not to dwell so much on the deeds of the individual heroes or of the military leaders but praise England's might and glory as symbolized in the person of the Queen who successfully defied the Spanish King. They rejoice in an England which is superior to all other nations -- particularly to Spain, enjoying the sanction and blessings of a God ever watchful over the fortunes of that country. In these works, Queen Elizabeth shines forth as the emblem of England's naval power and of all that the country now stands for in the eyes of the patriots.

The newly-won laurels of England as a sea-power transformed Queen Elizabeth into the Mistress of the Ocean.

This English Cynthia, like many concepts in Renaissance poetry, is begotten on ancient imaginative forms by the new energies and needs of Elizabethan Englishmen. . . . It was inevitable that the captain of the Elizabethan ship of state should be idealized as the "Ladie of the Sea" by poets who spoke for a nation imbued with the voyaging spirit. . . . Cynthia is witness to the profoundly national quality of the idealization of Elizabeth.¹

That the queen of an island kingdom should be celebrated thus was indeed inevitable. However English success in maritime enterprise and in the Armada war gave the metaphor a new force:

Your Rock claims kindred of the Polar Star,
Because it draws the Needle to the North;
Yet even that Star gives place to Cynthia's rays,
Whose drawing virtues govern and direct
The flots and re-flots of the ocean.
But Cynthia, praised be your wat'ry reign,
.....
In the Protection of this mighty Rock,
In Britain land, whilst tempests beat abroad,
The lordly and the lowly shepherds both,
In plenteus peace have fed their happy flocks.
Upon the force of this inviolate Rock,
The giant-like attempts of Power unjust

¹Elkin Calhoun Wilson, England's Eliza (1939; rpt. New York: Octagon Books, Inc., 1966), pp. 273-74, 318-19.

Have suffer'd wreck.²

Queen Elizabeth emerges in many works in a heroic guise, as the wise and powerful ruler of a seagoing nation. Fulke Greville ascribes the success of the English overseas enterprise to the policies and the good leadership of Queen Elizabeth:

Nay in the Indian's East and West again,
What great things men may with sea forces do,
Not only in the suppressing of the main,
But in possessing land and cities too,
By undertakings of a maiden Queen,
May as in models to the world be seen.³

In Drayton's Poly-Olbion, the Queen appears again as a mighty ruler and the extender of her realm:

Elizabeth, the next, this falling scepter hent;
Digressing from her Sex, with Man-like government
This Iland kept in awe, and did her power extend
Afflicted France to ayde, her owne as to defend;
Against th' Iberian rule, the Flemings sure defence:
Rude Ireland's deadly scourge; who sent her navies hence
Unto the either Inde, and to that shore so greene,
Virginia which we call, of her a Virgin Queen.⁴

² From the Gesta Grayorum [1594], in Progresses, Public Processions, Vol. III, pp. 316-17.

³ A Treatise of Monarchy: Of War, verse 578, The Works in Verse and Prose Complete of Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke, ed. Alexander B. Grosart (1870; rpt. New York: AMS Press Inc., 1966), Vol. I, p. 204.

⁴ Song XVII, ll. 341-8, The Works of Michael Drayton Vol. IV, pp. 337-38.

Other writers besides Drayton have attributed a heroic spirit and a "man-like" mind to Queen Elizabeth. Thus in Heywood's If you know not me, the Queen addresses her men on the eve of the Armada in the following words:

. . . Know, my subieckts,
Your Queene hath now put on a masculine spirit,
To tell the bold and daring what they are,
Or what they ought to be; and such as faint,
Teach them, by my example, fortitude.
Nor let the best proou'd soldier here disdain
A woman should conduct an host of men,
To their disgrace or want of president.⁵

In the next breath, we find the "vndaunted Queene" devising a strategy of war with her lords "Hunsdon" and "Lester," and declaring:

Oh had God made vs man-like like our mind,
We'd not be here fenc'd in a mure of arms,
But ha' been present at these sea alarms.⁶

Sir Francis Bacon writes admiringly of Queen Elizabeth's courage and fortitude in the face of the approaching Armada attack, two virtues which she shares in common with her heroic captains:

⁵If you know not me, you know no body, Part II, The Dramatic Works of Thomas Heywood (1874; rpt. New York: Russel and Russel Inc., 1964), Vol. I, p. 337, [no act or scene divisions indicated].

⁶Ibid., p. 338.

Lastly, see a queen, that when her realm was to have been invaded by an army, the preparation whereof was like the travel of an elephant, the provisions infinite, the setting forth whereof was the terror and wonder of Europe; it was not seen that her cheer, her fashion, her ordinary manner was any thing altered: not a cloud of that storm did appear in that countenance wherein peace doth ever shine; but with excellent assurance, and advised security, she inspired her council, animated her nobility, redoubled the courage of her people, still having this noble apprehension, not only that she would communicate her fortune with them, but that it was she that would protect them, and not they her: which she testified by no less demonstration than her presence in camp. Therefore, that magnanimity that neither feareth greatness of alteration, nor the views of conspirators, nor the power of the enemy, is more than heroical.⁷

George Chapman's verses echo Bacon's image of the Queen as a strong leader in the years of the Armada threat, and the bulwark of England:

Whose dores thou guardst against Imperious fate,
Keeping our peacefull households safe from sack,
And free'st our ships, when others suffer wracke.⁸

As we have earlier pointed out, Queen Elizabeth stood as the ultimate symbol of England's power and greatness, and the Armada victory, which ended the threat of a much-feared

⁷"Mr. Bacon's Discourse in the Praise of his Sovereign," The Works of Francis Bacon, Vol. II, pp. 445-46.

⁸The Shadow of Night: Hymnus in Cynthiam, ll. 506-8, The Poems of George Chapman, ed. Phyllis Brooks Bartlett (London: Oxford University Press, 1941), p. 42.

Spanish invasion, was ascribed by her grateful subjects directly to the Queen herself. Long after the Armada year, the elegies on her death pay the highest tribute to her victory over Spain which was perceived by the nation as the most significant event of her reign:

England may mourne, as many Kingdoms may,
A losse of late, that Gold nor Pearle redeemes,
A gale of winde, that made Kings hoyse vp Sayles,
When blustering blasts, brought Barkes in great extreme[s].⁹

John Lane's lines are similar in spirit:

Esther our Queene, whose fame (with triumph crownd)
Haman of Spaine had neuer force to wound,
In spite of whom although he dar'd to striue
She has preserude her people all aliue;¹⁰

A memorial poem composed by a noble lady again puts special emphasis on the Queen's unforgettable victory over the Spanish King:

So did shee beate him with her distaffe; so
By Sea and Land Shee him did overthrow;
Yea, so that the Tyrant on his knees Shee Brought,

⁹Thomas Churchyard, "Sorrowful Verses made on the death of our most Soueraigne Lady Queene Elizabeth," in Ballads and Broad-sides, p. 96.

¹⁰"An Elegie vpon the death of the high and renowned Princesse, our late Soueraigne Elizabeth," in Fugitive Tracts Written in Verse . . . (1600-1700), 2nd ser., ed. William Carew Hazlitt (London: Chiswick Press, 1875), no pag.

That of brave England Peace he beg'd, and thought
Himselfe most happie, that by begging so
Preserv'd all Spaine from beggery and woe.¹¹

The Armada affair was indeed a crucial event which prompted a new sense of unity and solidarity among the English -- with even the suspect Catholic subjects of Elizabeth rushing to arms. The nation's loyalty to England, symbolized in the person of the Queen, was absolute. Two Armada ballads¹² commemorating her visit to the camp at Tilbury -- the camp referred to by Bacon in his "Discourse" -- are tributes to her subjects' loyalty to their beloved Queen. The first ballad depicts the enthusiastic welcome accorded to the Queen by her soldiers, each of whom is ready to lay down his life in her service:

To tell the ioy of all and some,
When that her Maiestie was come,
Such playing on piphes and many a drum
To welcome the Queene of England:
Displaying of ensignes very braue,
Such throwing of hats, what would ye have?
Such cryes of ioy, "God keepe and save
Our noble Queene of England!"
.....
Then might she see the hats to flye,

¹¹"A Chaine of Pearle" (1603), in Progresses, Public Processions, Vol. III, p. 650.

¹²See Appendix E.

And euerie souldier shouted hye,
 "For our good Queene we'll fight or dye,
 On any foe to England."

.....

And thus her Highnesse went away,
 For whose long life all England pray,
 King Henrie's daughter and our stay,
 Elizabeth Queene of England.¹³

The second ballad by Thomas Deloney portrays the Queen as the guide and mainstay of her troops:

And then bespake our noble Queene, "My loving friends
 and counciemen,
 I hope this day the worst is seene, that in our wars ye
 shall sustaine:

But if our enimies doe assaile you,
 Neuer let your stomackes faile you,
 For in the midst of all your troupe, we our selues will
 be in place,
 To be your ioy, your guide and comfort, euen before our
 enimies' face."¹⁴

Those men who enjoy the Queen's guidance and favor were inspired by their loyalty to dare all for her sake:

Peace in their hearts, and youth raignes in their faces:
 Health strengths their bodies, to subdue the seas,
 And dare the Sunne, like Thebane Hercules

¹³I. T., "A Joyful Song of the Royal Receiving of the Queenes most excellent Majestie into her Highnesse Campe at Tilsburie in Essex" [1588], in Roxburghe Ballads, ed. J. W. Ebsworth (1886; rpt. New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1966), Vol. VI, pp. 396-97.

¹⁴"The Queenes visiting of the Campe at Tilsburie" [1588], in Roxburghe Ballads, Vol. VI, p. 392.

To calme the furies, and to quench the fire:¹⁵

The victories, great and small, won against the Spaniards during the reign of Queen Elizabeth had a tonic effect on the pride and self-assurance of a nation which but a few decades earlier was of little consequence, overshadowed by the might of Iberia. However as early as the 1580's England was becoming a force to be contended with. Practically no encounter with the Spaniards went unnoticed as a look at the Stationer's Register for those years attests.¹⁶ The good news were published forth in black letter pamphlets such as The Primrose of London (with her valiant aduenture on the Spanish coast, beeing of the burthen of 150. Tunne) by Humphrey Mote (1585) or The Sea-Mans Triumph (Declaring the honorable actions of such gentlemen Captaines and Sailers, as were at the takinge of the great Carrick, lately brought to Dartmouth, with her burthen and commodities, with the maner of their fight, and names of men of accompt) by an anonymous author (1594).¹⁷

¹⁵ George Chapman, The Shadow of Night: Hymnus in Cynthiam, ll. 125-8, The Poems of George Chapman, p. 33.

¹⁶ Edward Arber, ed., A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London, 1554-1640, 5 vols. (London and Birmingham: privately printed, 1875-94).

¹⁷ Occasional Fac-Simile Reprints of Rare and Curious Tracts of the 16th and 17th Centuries, ed. Edmund Ashbee, 2 vols. in one (London: privately printed, 1868-72), Vol. II, Nos. 20 and 27, n. pag.

Even the dubious English victory at Cadiz (1596) under Essex and Howard transported the English into a state of euphoria, as witnessed by "The Winning of Cales." This ballad rejoices in the exploits of "Knights coragious and Captaines full good" under the leadership of the "most valyant and hardy" Essex and ends with a boastful description of the looting and burning which ensued upon the capture of the town.¹⁸ The Islands Voyage against the Azores (1597) which ran a scandalous course thanks to the quarrel between Essex and Raleigh and which, having failed inexcusably to capture the Spanish plate fleet, had only a few galleons to show for its pains, was hailed by some as a resounding victory. Thus in Thomas Heywood's Fair Maid of the West the voyage is invested with "a spirit of heroism in excess of [its] actual achievement,"¹⁹ in all good faith. It was only later that Englishmen were acquainted with the true facts of these expeditions.²⁰

¹⁸ Roxburghe Ballads, Vol. VI, pp., 402-3.

¹⁹ Robert K. Turner, Jr., ed., The Fair Maid of the West, Parts I and II (London: Edward Arnold, Ltd., 1968), p. xv. This, by the way, was the expedition in which John Donne took part under Essex. He later recorded his experiences in two verse-letters, "The Storme" and "The Calme."

²⁰ See Ben Jonson's Epicoene or the Silent Woman (1610), ed. Edward Partridge, The Yale Ben Jonson Series (New

The Armada affair, however, was an entirely different matter. What it meant to the English is movingly clear in Thomas Deloney's ballad entitled "A ioyful new Ballad, declaring the happie obtaining of the Great Galleazzo" written in the first flush of the great Spanish threat and published August 10th, 1588. The patriotic English forces, small in number (as Deloney and everyone else seemed to believe), but armed with faith in God achieved the victory in the name of their Queen:

In happie houre our foes we did descry,
And vnder saile with gallant winde as they cam passing by.
Which suddaine tidings to Plymouth being brought,
Full soone our Lord high Admirall for to pursue them sought.
And to his traine coragiously he said:
'Now for the Lord and our good Queene to fight be not afraide.
Regard our cause, and play your partes like men:
The Lord no doubt will prosper vs, in all our actions then.'²¹

"The Spanish Armada," an anonymous ballad of 1588, is a supplication to God for aid against the feared enemy, yet one which the English fully intend to resist to death:

From mercillesse invaders,
From wicked men's device,
O God! arise and helpe us,
To quele owre enemies.

Haven: Yale University Press, 1971) for a denigrating view of both the Cadiz and the Azores campaigns.

²¹ Naval Songs and Ballads, ed. C.H. Firth (London: Publications of the Navy Records Society, Vol. 33, 1907), p. 19.

Sinke deepe their potent naviës,
 Their strength and corage breake,
 O God! arise and arm us,
 For Jesus Christ, his sake.

.....
 We will not change owre Credo
 For Pope, nor boke, nor bell;
 And yf the Devil come himself,
 We'll hounde him back to hell.²²

The works penned after the victory are full of patriotic pride and rejoicing. In William Warner's account of the battle, the Spanish forces look formidable indeed as they approach England:

The Spanyard's long time care and coste,
 Inuincible surnam'd,
 Was now a flote, whilst Parma to
 From Flanders hither aim'd.

Like fleete, of eightscore ships and od,
 The ocean neuer bore,
 So huge, so strong, and so compleate,
 In euery strength and store:

Carikes, gallions, argosies,
 And galliasses, such
 That seem'd so many castles, and
 Their tops the cloudes to touch.²³

The English forces fighting an epic battle under "Lord Charles

²² The Percy Folio of Old English Ballads and Romances (London: The De La More Press, 1905-1910), Vol. II, pp. 17-18.

²³ Albions England, Book IX, Ch. XLIX, in The Works of the English Poets, Vol. IV, p. 613.

our admiral and Drake," attack the enemy fiercely, united in their "common courage" and their loyalty to the Queen:

Our common courage wisht no less,
 So lightly feard we foes,
 Such hope in God, such hate of them,
 Such hearts to barter blowes.

.....

Her royall-selfe, Elizabeth
 Our soueraigne lawfull queene,
 In magnanimious maiestie
 Amidst her troopes was seene.

Which made vs weepe for ioy: nor was
 Her kindnes lesse to vs.
 Thinke nothing letting then that might
 The common cause discus,
 Wheare a prince and people haue in loue
 A sympathie as thus.²⁴

Then the English navy performs such wonders with fifty ships that:

Euen God, to glorifie Himselfe,
 Our gayned cause pursew'de,²⁵

God is, in fact, always on the English side because the popish Spaniards are not only the enemies of England, but of God:

"Blinded with the vale of ignorance, they attempted against the Gospell, the trueth, and the Defendresse of them both, Queene Elizabeth, the Lords chosen and his annointed: and

²⁴Ibid., p. 614.

²⁵Ibid.

English patriots is perhaps best summed up in Thomas Heywood's play, If you know not me, you know no body.

Heywood also puts great emphasis on the overpowering naval strength of Spain as opposed to the relative weakness of the English forces. The English continued to believe in the years after the war (this play was first printed in 1606) that they had won the battles with few ships and with a handful of men against insuperable odds. As the Duke of Medina puts it in the play:

"And what can all their barges, cockboats, oares,/ Small vessels (better to be said to creepe/ Then sail vpon the ocean) doe 'gainst these?/ They are o'ercome already." Heywood ascribes the English victory to the valor of captains like Drake ("Sir Francis Drake, Vice-Admiral, was first/ Gave an onset to this great Armado of Spaine;") to the Queen who "hath now put on a masculine spirit," and to God ("For though our enemies be ouer thrown,/ 'Tis by the hand of Heauen, and not our own.")²⁹

A corollary to English patriotism in the Elizabethan period was a fierce hatred of Spain, and a number of writers gave voice to public sentiment in works reviling in the harshest

²⁹ The Dramatic Works of Thomas Heywood, Vol. I, pp. 335, 339, 337, 343.

terms those detested foes of the English people. Writing against the vanquished Spanish enemy, whom England had once feared for its strength and still envied for its American gold, became yet another exercise in patriotism. A glance at Dekker's note of explanation appended to The Whore of Babylon (1607) will make our point clear:

The Generall scope of this Drammaticall Poem, is to set forth (in Tropicall and shadowed collours) the Greatnes, Magnanimity, Constancy, Clemency, and other the incomparable Heroical vertues of our late Queene. And (on the contrary part) the inueterate malice, Treason, Machinations, Vnderminings, and continual bloody stratagems, of that Purple whore of Roome.³⁰

Dekker dramatizes the whole course of the Armada battle in the play, highlighting at every opportunity the dishonor of Spain as opposed to the glory of England. The whole work, including the following tribute to Drake, is rife with contempt for Spain. When Tytania (Queen Elizabeth) asks one of her followers, Fideli: "Why swels this fleete?" he answers:

Thus they giue out, that you sent forth a Drake,
Which from their riuers beate their water-fowle,
Tore siluer feathers from their fairest Swannes,
And pluckt the Halcions winges that roue at sea,
And made their wilde-duckes vnder-water diue,

³⁰ The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker, ed. Fred Bowers (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), Vol. II, p. 497.

So long, that some neuer came vp aliue.
 This Sea-pie Babylon, her bug-Beare calls,
 For whom her bastards cry, let the nurse cry
 But this, the Drake comes, they hush presently.³¹

The Spaniards are not only England's and God's enemies, but, to add to their sins, cruel and greedy -- as anyone could tell judging by their conduct in America. The misdeeds of the Spaniards in the colonies were a favorite topic among the English:

In this Conquest of the Indies, did the Spaniard shewe his courage, his faith, his clemencie: his courage, in performing so haughtie and dangerous Conquest: for being armed at al points with his Curets, his Corslet, Burganet, his horse, his Pike, his speare, with store of men at armes, and demilance, he inuaded a company of naked Moores without armour or knowledge of vse of weapon, but a few fish bones. His faith, in that these naked men flying into the woods and Mountaines, whether the Spaniard neither could nor durst march, was perswaded vpon his oath by the Christian God, to come and yeeld, with promise of life and libertie: who no sooner were in his reach, and circuit with his souldiours, but breaking his oath, as one ^ty sware by none of his friends, he caused his Souldiers to apprehend their Nobility as prisoners: His clemencie, in vsing the victory, not as Caesar, that gloried in his courtesies vsed to his foes, but like brute beasts, caused the Indians to be hunted with dogs, some to be torne with horses, some to haue their handes cut off, and so many sundry Massaquers as greeueth any good minde to reporte.

In the next breath, the author passes on to Drake's courtesy to the Indians in his raids "into the country

³¹Ibid., Act V, scene ii, p. 569.

neer Carthagene and Sancto Domingo" which contrasts sharply with these Spanish atrocities: "vsing the Moores, conquered, with such courtesie, as they thought the English Gods, and the Spaniardes both by rule and conscience halfe Deuils." ³²

Judging by John Donne's casual reference, Spanish cruelty to Indians must have been a byword in England:

If they stand arm'd with seely honesty,
With wishing prayers, and neat integritie,
Like Indians 'gainst Spanish hosts they bee. ³³

Even Bacon who ought to have been better informed about the legal, if not the actual, status of the Indians accuses the Spaniards of having reduced the American natives into cruel slavery: "The poor Indies, whereas the Christian religion generally brought enfranchisement of slaves in all places where it came, in a contrary course, are brought from free-men to be slaves, and slaves of most miserable condition." ³⁴

³²Robert Greene, The Spanish Masquerado, The Life and Complete Works in Prose and Verse of Robert Greene, Vol. V, pp. 281-83.

³³Verse letter "To Sir Henry Wootton" [1597 or 1598], The Complete Poetry and Selected Prose of John Donne, ed. Charles M. Coffin (New York: The Modern Library, 1952), p. 131.

³⁴"Mr. Bacon's Discourse in the Praise of his Sovereign," The Works of Francis Bacon, Vol. II, p. 448.

both in history and literature, were severe in their condemnation of Spanish greed. Dekker's Spanish King in The Whore of Babylon gloats in satisfaction over his American wealth but still covets more:

The Indian and his gold are both my slaues,
Vpon my sword (as on the Axell tree)
A world of kingdomes mooue: and yet
I write non sufficit.³⁷

Speaking together on the eve of the Armada battle, one of Heywood's Spanish characters asks the Duke of Medina: "Can England satisfie our auarice,/ That worlds cannot suffice?"³⁸

Lyly's play Midas (1590) is another product of the exuberant nationalism of the day and a scathing attack on King Philip II.³⁹ All the greed of Spain is projected unto the King, or Midas, who is made to condemn his own lust for gold:

Miserable Midas, as unadvised in thy wish as in thy success unfortunate! O unquenchable thirst for gold, which

³⁷Act I, scene ii, The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker, Vol. II, p. 512.

³⁸If you know not me, you know no body, The Dramatic Works of Thomas Heywood, Vol. I, p. 333.

³⁹For the non-extant anti-Spanish plays of this period see: Eleanor Grace Clark, Raleigh and Marlowe (New York: Fordham University Press, 1941), p. 63 ff; Alfred Harbage, Annals of English Drama, 975-1700, rev. by S. Schoenbaum (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1964).

turneth men's heads to lead and makest them blockish,
 their hearts to iron and makest them covetous, their
 eyes to delight in the view and makest them blind
 in the use. . . . what should I do with a world of
 ground, whose body must be content with seven foot
 of earth, or why did I covet to get so many crowns,
 having myself but one head?⁴⁰

Lyly then puts a justification of English privateering into the King's mouth: "Those that took small vessels at the sea I accounted pirates, and myself, that suppressed whole fleets, a conqueror, as though the robberies of Midas might mask under the names of triumphs, and the traffic of other nations be called treachery."⁴¹ Since Lyly's patriotic indignation is still unappeased, the King has to go through with a humiliating confession of his cruelty, his wars of aggression and his lust for power. The last blow delivered by the loyal John Lyly is a paean of praise to the English sovereign in the mouth of England's greatest enemy:

. . . a prince protected by the gods, by Nature, by his own virtue and his subjects' obedience. Have not all treasons been discovered by miracle, not counsel? That do the gods challenge. Is not the country walled with huge waves? That doth Nature claim. Is he not

⁴⁰ Act III, scene i, Gallathea and Midas, ed. Ann Begor Lancashire (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1969), pp. 107-8.

⁴¹ Ibid., Act III, scene i, p. 108.

through the whole world a wonder, for wisdom and temperance? That is his own strength. Do not all his subjects, like bees, swarm to preserve the king of bees? That their loyalty maintained. . . .⁴²

With this final outburst of patriotism penned by Lyly, we come to the end of our discussion. Such was the patriotic-minded writers' interpretation of the joyous public reaction to the proud victory over Spain.

⁴² Ibid., Act III, scene i, p. 110.

CHAPTER III

THE DREAM OF EMPIRE

The patriotic strain in Elizabethan literature which idealized the great seamen of the age into national heroes and gloried in a Virgin Queen who commanded the oceans also gave prophetic utterance to England's destiny as an overseas empire. The imperial vision cherished by men like Hakluyt, Raleigh and Walsingham was mirrored in the works of those writers who possessed the same faith in the expansion of England. Drayton's lines bear eloquent testimony to the imperial aspirations of his age:

A thousand kingdoms will we seek from far,
As many nations waste with civil war,
Where the dishevell'd ghastly sea-nymph sings,
Or well-rigg'd ships shall stretch their swelling wings,
And drag their anchors through the sandy foam,
About the world in ev'ry clime to roam,
And those unchristen'd countries call our own,
Where scarce the name of England hath been known.¹

¹England's Heroical Epistles [1597], ll. 75-81, The Works of Michael Drayton, Vol. II, p. 170.

The late sixteenth century witnessed the first English attempts at establishing overseas colonies on American soil. Behind these early endeavors, all of which proved abortive at the time, was the sustaining ideal of empire-building. English enthusiasm for colonial enterprise was not to be dampened by the discouraging experiences of this early phase. In the Elizabethan period imperialism was a dream of territorial expansion to be translated into fact in that very day. This vision incorporated various economic, political, strategic and psychological factors into a national mission. Imperialism implied first and foremost national aggrandizement and economic prosperity, but it also had in view the altruistic purpose of converting the Indians to Christianity and thereby to civilization — ideals which were shared at this time by all the Western maritime nations, above all Spain.² Fulk Greville, urging the adoption of a public policy of colonization, cast the imperialistic argument into poetic form with special emphasis on eminent classical antecedents:

See we not even among the brutish Nations,
If men to them transport civility,
Those colonies are dear in reputation,

²See Hakluyt's Discourse on Western Planting, in The Original Writings and Correspondence of the Two Richard Hakluyts, ed. E. G. R. Taylor (London: The Hakluyt Society, 2nd ser. No. 77, 1935), Vol. II, No. 46; see also John Rastell's Interlude of the Four Elements in A Select Collection of Old English Plays, ed. W. C. Hazlitt (1874-76; rpt. New York: Benjamin Bloom, 1964), Vol. I, pp. 5-50, an early Tudor work which anticipates all the later expansionist arguments.

And soon link't with them in affinity?

Their comings construed not to spoil, or take,
But as come from their dwellings for their sake.

So Athens with Ionian colonies

Did people Asia; Lacedemon spread

Her Dorian tribes thorough fertile Italy,

[Ruling benignant where he conquerèd]

And so by her that Euxine barbarous sea

Made hospitable is unto this day.

This the chief pillar is of policy,

That ever by the Romans was invented,

Envyless to uphold their monarchy,

And make the stranger with their yoke contented;

Prodigal of Rome they to their neighbors were,

Whereby her own womb did the empire bear.³

The English might enhance the dignity of their imperial cause by invoking the glorified precedent of Greek expansion or of the Roman Empire, but uppermost in their minds was the hope of rivaling modern Spain rather than that of emulating ancient Rome. In the eyes of many of her subjects, England's successes in maritime enterprise and in the sea struggle against Spain were proof that she could rival her greatest foe also in empire-building across the Atlantic. Thus Chapman urges Queen Elizabeth on:

So let thy soueraigne Empire be encreast,

And with Iberian Neptune part the stake,

³A Treatise of Monarchy: Of Peace, Verses 503-505, The Works in Verse and Prose Complete of Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke, Vol. I, pp. 179-80.

Whose Trident he the triple worlde would make.⁴

We often find patriotic Elizabethans regretting the fact that Spain had been able to make good her claim to the riches of the New World by establishing a colonial empire there, while the English were lagging piteously behind. Captain Richard Bingham puts the case bluntly in his plea for colonization:

Our forren neighbours, like it to their gaine:
And sucke the sweete, while sleeping we remaine.⁵

True, says Sir William Pelham, the Iberians have had a head-start in America and have been "inricht by this abounding land,/ While pent at home, like sluggards we remaine," Yet it is not too late for the English to "thrust among them for a share. . . . Inough is left, our cofers yet to fill."⁶ Iberia's prior claim to America had always chafed the English, and we hear them lamenting the vagary of fortune which had placed the wealth of the west in Spanish hands. Warner claims that if

⁴De Guiana, Carmen Epicum [1596], ll. 63-65, The Poems of George Chapman, p. 354.

⁵"Maister Captaine Bingham, his commendation uppon this Treatise," in The Voyages and Colonizing Enterprises of Sir Humphrey Gilbert, ed. David Beers Quinn (London: The Hakluyt Society, 2nd ser. no. 84, 1940), Vol. II, p. 439; hereafter cited as The Voyages.

⁶"Sir William Pelham Knight, in commendation of the discourse following," in The Voyages, Vol. II, p. 437.

Cabot's lead had been followed, England, and not Spain, would now be in possession of those coveted lands:

Caboto (whose cosmographie
And selfe prooffe brake the ise
To most our late discoverers,
Debtors to his aduise)

Had vs, eare Spayne, possest of that
Which Spanyards now abuse,
But, he inuiting, idly we
Did offerd gold refuse.⁷

Michael Drayton, following Hakluyt, goes further and declares the legendary Madoc the true discoverer of America and resolves the issue of priority in favor of England:

This brave adventurous Youth, in hote pursute of fame,
With such as his great spirit did with high deeds inflame,
Put forth his well-rigg'd fleet to seeke him forraine ground,
And sayled West so long, untill that world he found
To Christians then unknowe (save this adventrous crue)
Long ere Columbus liv'd, or it Vesputius knew;
And put the now-nam'd Welsh on India's parched face,
Unto the endlesse praise of Brutes renowned race,
Ere the Iberian Powers had toucht her long-sought Bay,
Or any eare had heard the sound of Florida.⁸

Pelham is even more emphatic on this point. In the same poem from which we quoted above, he exhorts England to establish colonies in America, "Since title just, and right is

⁷ William Warner, Albion's England [1586], Book IX, Ch. LXIII, in The Works of the English Poets, Vol. IV, p. 634.

⁸ Poly-Olbion, Song IX, ll. 311-320, The Works of Michael Drayton, Vol. IV, p. 177.

wholie" hers⁹ -- though he refrains from enlarging on the nature of the title he claims for his country.

The initial Elizabethan efforts at empire-building in the New World were private ventures on a rather modest scale, to which the Queen contributed little more than royal patents. Nevertheless these early attempts stirred a nation-wide excitement and drew an enthusiastic response from many a writer of the age. Spenser dedicated the Faerie Queene (1596) to Elizabeth, "Queene of England Fraunce and Ireland and of Virginia."¹⁰ In one of Lyly's conceits, America leaps to the shore of England, eager to come under Elizabeth's sway:

And with me came gould-brested India,
Who daunted at your sight, leapt to the shoare,
And sprinkling endlesse treasure on this Ile,
Left me this iewell to present your Grace,¹¹

John Donne expressed in an epigram the English yearnings for a share in the New World. Entitled "Cales and Guyana," this

⁹"Sir William Pelham Knight," The Voyages, Vol. II, p. 437.

¹⁰The Works of Edmund Spenser, Vol. I, p. 2.

¹¹The Honorable Entertainement giueu to the Queenes Maiestie in Progresse, at Eluetham: The Second Daies entertainment: The Oration of Nereus to her Maiesty [1591], The Complete Works of John Lyly, ed. R. Warwick Bond (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1902), Vol. I, p. 442.

epigram is addressed jointly to Essex and Raleigh, and was written in 1596 -- the year in which Raleigh's famous plea for Guiana was published.

If you from spoyle of the old worlds farthest end
To the new world your kindled valors bend,
What brave Examples then do prove it trew
That one things end doth still beginne a new.¹²

Samuel Daniel, too, must have entertained the Elizabethan dream of empire; in Musophilus he predicts the dissemination of the English tongue to a western world which was destined to come under English sway:

And who, in time, knowes whither we may vent
The treasure of our tongue, to what strange shores
This gaine of our best glory shall be sent,
T'inrich vnknowing Nations with our stores?
What worlds in th' yet vnformed Occident
May come refin'd with th' accents that are ours?¹³

George Chapman whose imagination was fired by Raleigh's visionary schemes sang a paeon to the English imperial ideal in De Guiana:

What worke of honour and eternall name,
For all the worlde t'enuie and vs t'atchieue,

¹²John Donne, The Satires, Epigrams and Verse Letters, ed. W. Milgate (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), p. 51.

¹³Ll. 957-62, The Complete Works in Verse and Prose of Samuel Daniel, ed. Alexander B. Grosart (1885; rpt. New York: Russel and Russel Inc., 1963), Vol. I, p. 255.

Filles me with furie, and giues armed handes
 To my heartes peace, that els would gladlie turne
 My limmes and euery sence into my thoughtes
 Rapt with the thirsted action of my mind?

Riches, and Conquest, and Renowme I sing,
 Riches with honour, Conquest without bloud,
 Enough to seat the Monarchie of earth,
 Like to Ioues Eagle, on Elizas hand.¹⁴

Underneath its shimmering surface, De Guiana is an earnest public appeal to Queen Elizabeth, seeking her support for Raleigh and for turning his Guiana venture into a state-sponsored enterprise, to "shroude it with broad leaues of Rule oregrowne."¹⁵ Chapman's enthusiasm seems to have lost none of its intensity with the passing of years, and in 1613 he was to champion Raleigh's imperial cause once again in The Masque of the Middle Temple and Lincoln's Inn.¹⁶ This masque, featuring Virginian priests in resplendent native costume and composed on the occasion of Princess Elizabeth's marriage, ends with a prophecy of riches and honor, echoing

¹⁴Ll. 1-6, 14-17, The Poems of George Chapman, p. 353.

¹⁵Ibid., l. 43, p. 354.

¹⁶By then, the first permanent settlement had already been established on North American soil (Jamestown, 1607). Chapman was urging for greater official support for the growing Virginia colony.

the "Riches with honour, Conquest without bloud" theme of De Guiana.

Raleigh, an accomplished writer himself, could plead his own cause eloquently when occasion demanded. Thus the account of his 1595 voyage to Guiana is no mere narrative of events, but an impassioned appeal to the Queen for the acquisition of that "large and bewtiful Empire" by the British crown:

For whatsoever Prince shall possesse it, shall be greatest, and if the King of Spayne shall enioy it, he will become vnresistable. Her Maiesty heereby shall confirme and strengthen the opinions of al nations, as touching her great and princely actions. I trust in God, this being true, will suffice, and that he which is king of all kings and Lorde of Lords, will put it into her hart which is Lady of Ladies to possesse it.¹⁷

It is interesting to note at this point that the zeal for empire had, on one occasion, turned a number of great Elizabethan seamen including Drake and Hawkins into poets -- or rather versifiers. Though they were certainly far less gifted with the pen than Raleigh, their fervent wish for the success of Gilbert's efforts to establish a colony at Newfoundland prompted them to contribute a commendatory poem each -- all furthering the cause of imperialism -- to A True Report of the

¹⁷The Discoverie of the large and bewtiful Empire of Guiana, ed. V. T. Harlow (London: The Argonaut Press, 1928), pp. 75-76.

Late Discoveries of the New-Found Lands (1583), brought out by Gilbert's close associate, Sir George Pecham.¹⁸ This group of poems furnishes us with one of the most telling examples of the public role of poetry and of the tradition of promoting various causes via the medium of literature in the Elizabethan period. Finally, on a far different artistic scale and a decade after the death of the Queen, we have Shakespeare's formulation of the imperial dream of the late sixteenth century. Henry VIII ends with Cranmer's prophecy of empire, to be realized by the Virgin Queen's successor who will carry on the quest in a spirit befitting the Elizabethan vision:¹⁹

Nor shall this peace sleep with her; but as when
 The bird of wonder dies, the maiden phoenix,
 Her ashes new-create another heir
 As great in admiration as herself,
 So shall she leave her blessedness to one, -
 When heaven shall call her from this cloud of darkness, -
 Who, from the sacred ashes of her honour,
 Shall star-like rise, as great in fame as she was
 And so stand fix'd. Peace, plenty, love, truth, terror,
 That were the servants to this chosen infant,

¹⁸The poems are printed in The Voyages, Vol. II, pp. 437-42. The two poems by Richard Bingham and Sir William Pelham already referred to are among these commendatory verses.

¹⁹See Appendix F.

Shall then be his, and like a vine grow to him:
 Wherever the bright sun of heaven shall shine,
 His honour and the greatness of his name
 Shall be, and make new nations; he shall flourish,
 And like a mountain cedar, reach his branches
 To all the plains about him; our children's children
 Shall see this, and bless heaven.²⁰

Empire meant wealth and power, as the Elizabethans could infer from the dazzling Spanish example before their eyes. After England came into her own as a naval power and gained a new confidence in her potential, Englishmen began to entertain thoughts of conquest and riches. Marlowe's Tamburlaine is the poetic fulfillment of the Elizabethan phantasy of dominion and gold, though the hero is the fourteenth-century conqueror, Timur, and the theater of action, Asia.²¹

As one scholar rightly claims,

Marlowe sat out in the audience as he wrote this play. . . Englishmen were in a humor to be excited by the broad scope of Tamburlaine's ambitions and the qualities of leadership which made possible his conquests. Their knowledge of an expanding earth had by this time given their vision a sweep comparable to that of Marlowe's hero, and their inability to share in the new

²⁰William Shakespeare, Henry VIII, Act V, scene v, ll. 39-55, William Shakespeare, The Complete Works, p. 785.

²¹Yet one should be wary of extending too far the parallels between life and art. It is difficult, for instance, to agree with E. G. Clark's assertion in her Raleigh and Marlowe that Tamburlaine's character is based on that of Raleigh.

wealth to any considerable extent had made them as avid for conquest as Tamburlaine.²²

The theme of conquest and power runs through Marlowe's entire play, whose hero "meanes to be a terrour to the world, / Measuring the limits of his Emperie / By East and west, as Phoebus doth his course."²³ The reader may perhaps go so far as to hear the echoes of the Spanish conquests in America in Marlowe's lines:²⁴

And kingdom at the least we all expect,
Besides the honor in assured conquestes:
Where kings shall crouch unto our conquering swords,
And hostes of souldiers stand amaz'd at us,
When with their fearfull tongues they shall confesse,
Theise are the men that all the world admires.²⁵

Marlowe makes conquest and gold go hand in hand. The profusion of gold in Tamburlaine, which strikes the reader even at a casual glance at the play, may well be construed as a testimony to the unsatisfied gold-lust of the Elizabethans. The

²²Franklin T. McCann, English Discovery of America to 1585 (New York: King's Crown Press, 1952), pp. 198-99.

²³Tamburlaine, Part I, Act I, scene ii, ll. 38-40, The Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe, ed. Fredson Bowers (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), Vol. I, p. 86.

²⁴Perhaps a bold reader could go even farther and suggest that the tales of Spanish cruelty to Indians are echoed in the murders and atrocities committed by Tamburlaine at every turn.

²⁵Tamburlaine, Part I, Act I, scene ii, ll. 218-23, The Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe, pp. 91-92.

principal source of this precious and much coveted metal, implies Marlowe, is America:

A thousand Gallies, maun'd with Christian slaves,
I freely give thee, which shall cut the straights,
And bring Armados from the coasts of Spaine,
Fraughted with golde of rich America.²⁶

Thoughts of conquest and wealth attend Tamburlaine even unto his death-bed:

Give me a Map; then let me see how much
Is left for me to conquer all the world.²⁷

The land of Tamburlaine's final dream was the very land which the Elizabethan visionaries yearned for:

Looke here, my boies; see, what a world of ground
Lies westward from the midst of Cancers line
Unto the rising of this earthly globe,
Whereas the Sun, declining from our sight,
Begins the day with our Antypodes:
And shall I die, and this unconquered?
Loe, here, my sonnes, are all the golden mines,
Inestimable drugs and precious stones,
More worth than Asia and the world beside,²⁸

One of the strongest enticements to English colonization in America was the hope of finding gold, expressed unabashedly in the following lines:

²⁶ Ibid., Part II, Act I, scene ii, ll. 32-35, pp. 157-58.

²⁷ Ibid., Part II, Act V, scene iii, ll. 123-24, p. 216.

²⁸ Ibid., Part II, Act V, scene iii, ll. 145-53, p. 217.

The Metall heere is showne that with a quences fire,
Inflames our thirsting hartes unstaunched in desire.²⁹

We should at this point remind ourselves once again of the heady excitement created by Drake's return with quantities of Spanish gold, and by Frobisher's samples of the so-called auriferous ore. The references in Elizabethan drama to the wealth of the West Indies are too numerous to count. The common man, the men of letters and the men of action alike were under the spell of gold. What lured venturers like Raleigh, Sir Robert Dudley and George Somers to Guiana was the glittering legend of El Dorado. Raleigh's account of his voyage there, written in the hope of promoting his colonial schemes, is replete with gold: "Guiana is a Countrey that hath yet her Maydenhead, neuer sackt, turned, or wrought, . . . the graves haue not beene opened for gold, the mines not broken with sledges, nor their Images puld down out of their temples."³⁰ The English will surely discover soon the golden city of Manoa and "more rich and bewtifull cities, more temples adorned with golden Images, more sepulchers filled with treasure, then

²⁹"Arthur Hawkins in commendation of this Treatise," in The Voyages, Vol. II, p. 442.

³⁰The Discoverie of the large and bewtiful Empire of Guiana, p. 73.

either Cortez found in Mexico, or Pazzarro in Peru: and the shining glorie of this conquest will eclipse all those so farre extended beames of the Spanish nation."³¹ Raleigh frequently adds to his account details which are calculated to encourage at least some of his readers to take part in his Guiana project: "The common soldier shal here fight for gold, and pay him-selfe in steede of pence, with plates of halfe a foote brode, whereas he breaketh his bones in other warres for prouant and penury."³² Raleigh's dream was irresistable. Chapman surrendered himself to its golden charm, and sang of "Guiana, whose rich feet are mines of golde," declaring boldly:

But we shall foorth I know; Golde is our Fate,
Which all our actes doeth fashion and create.³³

Alas, the English were soon to be undeceived in their hopes of the imminent discovery of El Dorado and of finding gold on the American coast. Yet the dream of gold died hard. In his "Ode to the Virginian Voyage," written in 1606, but inspired by the poet's Elizabethan zest for empire, Michael

³¹ Ibid., p. 71.

³² Ibid.

³³ De Guiana, ll. 18, 146-47, The Poems of George Chapman, pp. 353-56.

Drayton still dangles the "the pearle and gold" before the hungry eyes of the Jamestown venturers.³⁴

America, with or without her stores of gold, featured always as a land of promise and natural bounty in the literature imbued with the vision of empire -- thus we find in the Faerie Queene the "fruitfullest Virginia" of Raleigh as opposed to the "rich Peru" of the Spaniards.³⁵ In the portrayal of America as an Earthly Paradise, the poets' ardor was amply justified by the eye-witness reports of travellers to the New World. Even without the benefit of the Spanish and French literature on the subject, a glowing picture of America and, particularly of North America to which the English had directed their colonial ambitions, emerges in the contemporary accounts by Englishmen, lending credibility and strength to the imperialistic argument. Raleigh, Drake, Barlowe, Hariot, Lane, to cite a few well-known names, all speak of a paradisiacal land abounding in natural resources of all varieties and inhabited by a race of primitive but peaceful and upright men. The ancient legend of

³⁴L. 21, The Works of Michael Drayton, Vol. II, p. 363.

³⁵Book II, Proem, The Works of Edmund Spenser, Vol. II, p. 1.

western realms of bliss and riches, and the myth of the noble savage also contributed to America's radiant image in Elizabethan literature, reinforcing the impact of the voyage narratives. The appearance of less sanguine accounts after the 1590's -- given greater experience of the land, its climate and its natives together with the practical difficulties of planting colonies across the ocean -- could not blight the ideal picture; in the works dedicated to the cause of empire, paradise did not yield to wilderness while the Elizabethan vision lasted.³⁶

Thus the land so effusively described in the following lines is Newfoundland by one who had not yet tasted its rigors:

The journey is but easie to bee gonne,
 The frozen Pole disjoyned farre dooth lye:
 We shape our course, farre from the burning Zonne,
 The soile is subject to a milder skye.
 And by prooffe, of many recordes tride;
 The Paradise, of all the world beside:³⁷

In Drayton's ode, Virginia is a second Eden, holding out the promise of a golden age for the English colonists:

Where nature hath in store,
 Fowle, venison, and fish,
 And the fruitfull'st soyle,
 Without your toyle,

³⁶ See Appendix G.

³⁷ "Maister Captaine Bingham, his commendation uppon this Treatise," in The Voyages, Vol. II, p. 439.

Three harvests more,
All greater than you wish.

And the ambitious vine,
Crownes with his purple masse,
The Cedar reaching hie
To kisse the sky,
The Cypresse, pine
And use-full Sassafras.

To whose, the golden age
Still natures lawes doth give,
No other cares that tend,
But them to defend
From winters age,
That long there doth not live.³⁸

And who could doubt, surveying Raleigh's idyllic landscape that
Guiana was indeed paradise on earth where the English would
enjoy the bliss of a second Eden:

On both sides of this riuer [that is, the Orinoco], we
passed the most beautifull countrie that euer mine eies
beheld: . . . plaines of twenty miles in length, the grasse
short and greene, and in diuers parts groues of trees
by themselues, as if they had been by all the art and
labour in the world so made of purpose: and stil as
we rowed, the Deere came downe feeding by the waters
side, as if they had beene vsed to a keepers call. . . .³⁹

In Chapman's vision, Guiana figures as the land where the

³⁸"Ode to the Virginian Voyage," ll. 25-42, The Works of Michael Drayton, Vol. II, pp. 363-64.

³⁹The Discoverie of the large and bewtiful Empire of Guiana, p. 42.

English may realize the ultimate utopian dream, and "create/
A golden worlde in this our yron age."⁴⁰ The poem's finale
brings to life an Elizabethan's version of utopia in the projected
colony:

There Learning eates no more his thriftlesse books,
Nor Valure Estridge-like his yron armes.
There Beautie is no strumpet for her wantes,
Nor Gallique humours putrifie her bloud:
But all her youth take Hymens lightes in hand,
And fill each roofe with honor'd progenie.
There makes Societie Adamantine chaines,
And ioins there harts with wealth, whom wealth disioyn'd.
There healthfull Recreations strowe their meades,
And make their mansions daunce with neighborhood,
That here were drown'd in churlish Auarice.
And there do Pallaces and temples rise
Out of the earth, and kisse th' enamored skies,
Where new Britania, humblie kneeles to heauen,
The world to her, and both at her blest feete,
In whom the Circles of all Empire meet.⁴¹

The inhabitants of this new Earthly Paradise, "a verie
goodlie people and verie valiant" according to Raleigh,⁴² are
noticed in the works promoting the cause of empire only in so
far as they are to be the beneficiaries of the missionary zeal of
English emperialism, "where Christian cause hath cheefe

⁴⁰De Guiana, ll. 31-32, The Poems of George
Chapman, p. 354.

⁴¹Ibid., ll. 169-84, p. 357.

⁴²The Discoverie of the large and bewtiful Empire of
Guiana, p. 38.

Unto your Prince good service you shall doo,
And unto God, a worke right gratefull to.⁴⁶

George Chapman, too, responded to the cause of conversion, so much a part of the imperial ideal from its inception, with a magnificent spectacle of Virginian priests being exhorted by Eunomia to turn their devotions to the Christian God and to his emissary on earth, the British monarch:

Virginian princes, you must now renounce
Your superstitious worship of these Suns,
Subject to cloudy dark'nings and descents;
And of your fit devotions turn the events
To this our Briton Phoebus, whose bright sky
(Enlighten'd with a Christian piety)
Is never subject to black Error's night,
And hath already offer'd heaven's true light
To your dark region, which acknowledge now,
Descend, and to him all your homage vow.⁴⁷

The English were confident that their imperial cause was destined to enjoy divine sanction. "A zeale to God, with countries good, and private gaines regarde"⁴⁸ would surely merit heaven's grace: "No doubt but God will blesse th'

⁴⁶"Maister Captaine Chester, his commendation of this Treatise," in The Voyages, Vol. II, p. 440.

⁴⁷The Masque of the Middle Temple and Lincoln's Inn, ll. 306-15, The Plays and Poems of George Chapman, ed. Thomas Marc Parrot (London: George Routledge and Sons, Ltd., 1910), Vol. II, p. 455.

⁴⁸"M. John Hawkins. . .," in The Voyages, Vol. II, p. 438.

attempt"⁴⁹ — "And he that in the heavens doth raigne,/
will blesse the sequell of theyr payne."⁵⁰

Service rendered in the name of one's God and of one's country would bring in its wake both personal gain and fame. Thus Sir Francis Drake's verses call all those who "thristeth after Fame" and who seek "by worthie deedes, to gain renownme"⁵¹ to join the colonial enterprise. Any man who takes part in the venture, be he sailor, planter or merchant-investor, may win honor thereby:

If honour and reward, may moove the minde,
By noble actions, highlie to aspire:
The forward man in this discourse shall finde,
Reward and honour, propos'd for hire.⁵²

The colonial enterprise was indeed interpreted by some as a heroic and noble undertaking. In Drayton's ode, the men embarking on the 1606 expedition are hailed as:

You brave heroique minds,
Worthy your countries name,

⁴⁹"John Achelley Cyttyzen and Marchantailour of London, for conclusion," in The Voyages, Vol. II, p. 442.

⁵⁰"Maister Anthony Parkhurst. . .," in The Voyages, Vol. II, p. 441.

⁵¹"Sir Fraunces Drake Knight in commendation of this Treatise," in The Voyages, Vol. II, p. 438.

⁵²"Maister Captaine Bingham, . . .," in The Voyages, Vol. II, p. 439.

That honour still pursue,
 Goe, and subdue,
 Whilst loyt'ring hinds
 Lurke here at home, with shame.⁵³

Drayton further admonishes the planters to raise in Virginia
 new generations of noble Britons, to be a credit to their nation:

And in regions farre
 Such heroes bring yee foorth,
 As those from whom we came,
 And plant our name,
 Under that starre
 Nor knowne unto our north.⁵⁴

The ode ends with the hope that the deeds of the venturers will
 be immortalized by Hakluyt's pen, inspiring other Englishmen
 to equally heroic efforts:

Thy voyages attend,
 Industrious Hackluit,
 Whose reading shall inflame
 Men to seeke fame,
 And much commend
 To after-times thy wit.⁵⁵

George Chapman viewed imperial expansion from an
 even loftier perspective. In De Guiana Raleigh's venture is
 given an epic dimension, and his men are cast into the

⁵³ "Ode to the Virginian Voyage," ll. 1-6, The Works of Michael Drayton, Vol. II, p. 363.

⁵⁴ Ibid., ll. 55-60, p. 364.

⁵⁵ Ibid., ll. 67-72, p. 364.

traditional heroic mold. They are held up to the reader's admiration in their valiant struggle to serve their country, scorning even death in the selfless quest for a greater England:

But you Patrician Spirites that refine
 Your flesh to fire, and issue like a flame
 On braue endeouours, ...

 You that know death liues, where power liues vnusde,
 Ioying to shine in waues that burie you,

 And skorne to let your bodies chooke your soules,
 In the rude breath and prisoned life of beastes:
 You that heerin renounce the course of earth,
 And lift your eies for guidance to the starres,
 That liue not for your selues, but to possesse
 Your honour'd countrey of a generall store;
 In pitie of the spoyle rude self-loue makes,
 Of them whose liues and yours one aire doth feede,
 One soile doeth nourish, and one strength combine; -
 You that are blest with sence of all things noble
 In this attempt your compleat woorthes redouble.⁵⁶

But the greatest hero of them all, in Chapman's estimation, is the noble Raleigh, "(heroike Author of this Act)" and the bridegroom espoused to England's imperial destiny.⁵⁷ John Marston also had high regard for Sir Walter Raleigh's dedication to the cause of empire. In his defense of the latter's controversial colonial ventures, he hails the author of the "heroyick"

⁵⁶ Ll. 86-88, 95-96, 106-16, The Poems of George Chapman, pp. 355-56.

⁵⁷ Ibid., ll. 124, 155-62, pp. 356-57.

and "diuine" Guiana enterprise as one who is moved not only by a thirst for fame but by exemplary patriotic motives to enhance his country's good:

Euge! some gallant spirit, some resolved blood
will hazard all to worke his countries good.
And to enrich his soule, and raise his name
will holdly saile vnto the rich Guiane.⁵⁸

Sir Walter Raleigh's expansive vision inspired even Richard Hakluyt, his staunch supporter and fellow visionary – and a man ordinarily not given to poetic utterance – to express his admiration for the pioneer of empire-building in these verses:

The Portuguese subdued the tracts of China,
And the stout Spaniard the fields of Mexico:
Florida was yielded to the noble French:
VIRGINIA now to thy scepter, Elizabeth!

The illustrious race of Portugal celebrates its Gama,
And the land of Spain boasts its Cortes,
France gives the palm to Laudonnière and brave Ribault,
But we, noble Raleigh, assign first place to thee.⁵⁹

Thus it was in a mood of jubilation and breathless

⁵⁸Certaine Satyres: IV: Reactio, ll. 124, 111-14, The Poems of John Marston, ed. Arnold Davenport (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1961), p. 84.

⁵⁹The English translation of Richard Hakluyt's Latin poem in praise of Raleigh printed in the French edition of Laudonnière's History of Florida (1586), in The Original Writings, Vol. II, No. 53, p. 349.

expectancy that many Elizabethan writers greeted the cause of empire-building. At the time of its inception, the spread of English power appeared to these men as a patriotic ideal of pristine worth and beauty; they gave it their wholehearted support, with no inkling of how grossly the vision would be blighted once the work of colonization got underway and took root.

CONCLUSION

We have surveyed in the foregoing chapters public and patriotic themes in Elizabethan literature inspired by the maritime and colonial enterprise of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Many of the works studied here were produced by a small group of minor writers. Though often lacking in artistic merit, they do point, however, to the impact of the events, the personalities and the spirit of the age on imaginative writing.

These works are generally idealistic and conscious of a public errand. A significant theme running through many of them is the exaltation of the great Elizabethan seamen, in their various roles as explorers, privateers, colonizers and leaders of the Armada battle, into national heroes whose primary goal is construed to be the enhancement of England's greatness. The aim of the authors appears to transcend hopes of patronage and personal gain through literary compliment.

Imbued with the Renaissance conception of the role of the poet, these men were seeking to preserve worthy deeds from oblivion and felt an obligation to publish the fame of those daring seamen whose exploits had helped bolster English pride and confidence and served to make England a successful contender against Spain. They proudly beheld in the English captains their own Columbus and Magellan, and they fervently hoped that the English colonial ventures would yield the same golden harvest reaped by Pizarro and Cortés. In their enthusiasm, they declared their native heroes to be deserving of greater fame and honor than even the much-acclaimed heroes of antiquity.

The English captains are, in fact, cast into a heroic mold by these authors, consciously inviting comparison with the epic heroes. They are endowed with all the virtues and attributes an ideal martial figure ought to possess; a further attribute, patriotism, is often the only trait which distinguishes the modern hero from his classical counterpart. The portraits of the captains are not individualized; they share in common all the qualities of the ideal seagoing hero of the age: courage, daring, prowess and patriotism. The quest for personal glory and gain is superseded by a primary concern for Queen,

Country and God. Here is then a model for virtuous emulation; the authors must have deemed the encouragement provided by these models necessary since the continued success of maritime activity and expansion required that many such high-minded and daring individuals take part in the enterprise.

Another trend outlined in our study is the interpretation of the public's jubilant and patriotic mood following the Armada victory in works celebrating this singular success and the Queen under whose aegis it had come to pass. English patriotism engendered by naval enterprise and war found its most potent symbol in the person of Queen Elizabeth as the monarch who ruled the sea, and defended the realm and the true faith against the Spanish enemy. She is depicted in works of this nature as a great and mighty queen beloved of her people and the patroness of heroes. We also notice that the patriotism of the Armada years, which can be defined as pride in and loyalty to one's queen, country and religion, is frequently expressed in terms of hatred and contempt for Catholic Spain, or in comparisons which flatter the English ego. Here the authors were again giving voice to the sentiments of the public at large, as well as to their own feelings.

A third trend noticed in the works which have been

included in our discussion is the promotion of imperialism as a means for the enhancement of England's glory, as well as of her prosperity and the welfare of her people. Colonization was given a heroic and patriotic dimension which encompassed the ideal of an English empire rivaling that of Spain. Those writers who embraced the cause of imperial expansion sought to impress upon their public the significance and the desirability of an ideal whose far-reaching future repercussions they themselves were blissfully incapable of visualizing. They painted Eden-like pictures of America, emphasizing at every turn its actual and hoped-for natural resources, often corroborated in all fairness by eye-witness accounts of the New World. England's evangelical and civilizing mission with respect to the American Indians appears in a number of works devoted to the promotion of the imperial ideal, but the theme of the white man's burden did not gain full-force until the propagandistic sermons of the Stuart era, including one preached by John Donne. Those few but vocal Elizabethan writers who joined the efforts to create a favorable public response to the colonial enterprise entertained an unwavering vision of empire which they were able to sustain in the face of set-backs suffered in Virginia and elsewhere. Reality could

not intrude upon their dream or undermine their faith in the destiny of England as a maritime empire. Yet it is a fact that the persistent efforts of the Elizabethan seamen did not yield many immediate returns for England -- barring of course the Armada victory and a number of privateering ventures. The North-East and the much sought for North-West passages to the fabled riches of the East remained undiscovered; the late offensives against Spain did not fare too well; North America defeated the heady expectations of gold and easy settlement. Yet the psychological impact of this early phase of maritime and colonial activity on the patriotically-minded writers was profound. These men sought dilligently to do their part in transforming such activity into an object of public policy. And, once awakened, the hope of English success in naval undertakings and colonization never forsook them. It is significant that many of the works we have reviewed in this study are valedictions to upcoming ventures, paeans to hope rather than to success -- and hence their air of poignancy in retrospect.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Why indeed did the major poets of the day in general ignore this call? An answer to this question must necessarily be conjectural. Part of the reason is perhaps that there was no established tradition in English literature of eulogizing living celebrities, with the exception of the royalty and the nobility. Or we might say that the major writers of the age found their true inspiration elsewhere -- in history, in the classical heritage of Greece and Rome and in the literature of Renaissance Italy. Charles Fitzgeoffrey supplied a rather ungenerous answer of his own along these lines:

Such is the worlde, as one dotes with yeares,
Liking that which is past and not appeares,
And saies, the elder age was far more wise,
Of higher worth, and of more sound advice:
All that it sees, it thinks not worth the sight,
But what it wants, it craves with maine and might.¹

¹Sir Francis Drake, p. 30. Full reference will not be given in the appendices for works cited in the text of this study.

Thus the major literary figures of the age might have been too preoccupied with other matters and other aspects of Elizabethan culture to take more than passing note of the new breed of naval heroes. Or a snobbery towards rehandling material already covered by those whom they considered second-raters could have made them reluctant to devote major effort to the subject. Another partial answer might lie in the fact that the official playing down of maritime activity and privateering (in view of Queen Elizabeth's policy of ostensible peace with Spain) kept down the volume of literature devoted to the naval heroes and their exploits by those poets enjoying court favor. We must not forget that even Hakluyt's famous collections came out after the year 1589. The Spaniards considered Drake an outright pirate and were so enraged by Raleigh's Guiana ventures that they demanded and eventually got his head. The fact that Sir Walter Raleigh was for long spells out of favor with the Queen as well as his unpopularity with the circles of Essex and of Southampton may account, in part at least, for his neglect by these poets with the notable exceptions of George Chapman and Edmund Spenser. It is interesting that Spenser, who knew Raleigh well, praised "the Shepheard of the Ocean" as a poet,²

²Colin Clouts Come Home Againe, The Works of Edmund Spenser, Vol. VII (1) (1943), p. 143 ff.

but chose to stay mute on the subject of his friend's colonial efforts. We should bear in mind that, viewed through the eyes of his contemporaries, Raleigh's ventures consisted of a series of failures. How could they have known at the time that he would be considered by posterity one of the founding fathers of the British Empire? Only Chapman seems to have had a prophetic vision of Raleigh as an empire builder.³ Among the major poets of the age, Donne is practically the only one to spare a line of tribute for Raleigh's Guiana obsession,⁴ the fascinating Raleigh who was seeking "new worlds, for golde, for prayse, for glory."⁵ John Marston was one of those few who defended Raleigh against his critics in the matter of Guiana:

What then? must straight some shameles satyrist
with odious and approbrius termes insist
To blast so high resolu'd intention
with a malignant vile detraction?
.....

So Enuy still doth barke at clearest shine

³Chapman's De Guiana is discussed in Chapter III.

⁴Donne's "Cales and Guyana" is quoted in Chapter III.

⁵The 11th: and last booke of the Ocean to Scinthia, l. 61, The Poems of Sir Walter Raleigh, ed. Agnes Lathain (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1951), p. 27.

And striues to staine heroyick acts, diuine.⁶

As for the rest, there is only Thomas Churchyard who celebrates Raleigh as a great seaman, while at the same time rebuking his detractors:

Then step in place, sir Walter Rawlegh now,
Show foorth thy face, among the worthiest sort,
Thy trauell long, thy charge and labor throw,
Crowns thy great pains, with prais and good report.
Bid enuy blush, for vertue hits the white,
Malice may barke, but hath no powre to bite.
World babbles much, but wit doth all behold,
The touchstone must, at length try out the gold.
Who reads his booke, and waies what he hath don,
Shall sound his fame, as far as shines the sun.⁷

The few surviving elegies on Raleigh do not emphasize his overseas ventures. It is interesting that a late seventeenth century version of the famous ballad "Sailing In the Lowlands" names Sir Walter Raleigh as the captain who does not keep his word to the brave young sailor.⁸

⁶ Certaine Satyres: IV: Reactio, ll. 115-18, 123-24, The Poems of John Marston, p. 84. Arnold Davenport, the editor, identifies the "shameles satyryst" as Bishop Hall. See also pp. 106-7 of this study.

⁷ "A Commendation to All Those, that . . . seekes the aduancement of their Prince and countrey," Frondes Caducae, n. pag.

⁸ "Sir Walter Raleigh Sailing in the Low-Lands," The Euing Collection of English Broadside Ballads, introd. John Holloway (1922; rpt. Glasgow: University of Glasgow Publications, 1971), No. 334, pp. 553-54.

And finally, there is Shakespeare's neglect of Drake and other famous heroes. E. M. W. Tillyard provides a partial answer by pointing out that Shakespeare had realized at some point in his career that the man of action was not his real hero, and had turned instead to "the type of man who fundamentally attracts him, the man whose interests are private not public, whose sphere of thought is the universe and not the body politic."⁹

⁹Shakespeare's History Plays (London: Chatto and Windus, 1944), p. 320.

Appendix B

There are, though, a few outstanding exceptions:

Marlowe's mind ranged with a zest unparalleled in Elizabethan literature over the world many times from Persepolis, Damascus, India and Zanzibar to the Straits of Gibraltar, then on to Canaria, Mexico and America, and eastward again from the Antarctic Pole (Tamburlaine). Unlike the average writer, Marlowe could comprehend the overwhelming curiosity and the spirit of self-assertion which lured men in the Elizabethan period over the ocean onto strange shores (Doctor Faustus). Another exception is Shakespeare, who, perhaps inspired by his reading of travel literature, makes Othello traverse "antres vast and deserts idle,/ Rough quarries, rocks, and hills whose heads touch heaven," and see "Cannibals that each other eat,/ The anthropophagi, and men whose heads/ Do grow beneath their shoulders."¹ Then we have Robert Burton who, travelling in his mind's eye through his maps, shares all the geographical enthusiasm of the Elizabethans although

¹Othello, Act I, scene iii, ll. 140-41, 143-44, William Shakespeare, The Complete Works, p. 1119.

he was writing in the early Stuart era.²

However let us leave these exceptions, and turn to Fitzgeoffrey's elegy, Sir Francis Drake, which is typical of its kind. In a poem of 258 stanzas, Drake's voyages and the strange peoples, customs and lands he must have encountered during his circumnavigation are hurried over in ten stanzas in which the poet dutifully enumerates Drake's ports of call -- Cuba, Coquimbo, China, the Fogo Islands, Brava, Taurapaza, Molucca. . . but he is quite immune to the exotic attraction these names:

At Cuba silver, at Coquimbo gold;
At China cloth, and precious silks he found,
Pearle at the Pearled Isles did he behold;
Rich Couchanelo hoarded did abound
Embosom'd in Tichamachalco's ground;
Thus his industrious labours still did raise
The publique profite, and his private praise.³

What primarily interests Fitzgeoffrey are Drake's exploits and his heroic stature -- reiterated many times in superlatives. There is a long section in the poem in which Fitzgeoffrey momentarily puts aside his hero to pay his tribute to other illustrious English captains of the day. They are celebrated

²The Anatomy of Melancholy, Part II, Section II, nos. iii and iv, ed. A. R. Shilleto (London: George Bell and Sons, 1896), Vol. II, p. 40 ff.

³Sir Francis Drake, p. 84:

individually and at length for their heroic exploits, while their experiences in strange and faraway lands get the same bland treatment. To take but one example, the lands explored by Frobisher have no interest in themselves, but serve merely as a suitable backdrop for the exploits of a seagoing hero:

Rich China, and faire Met' Incognita,
 Admir'd his valour, and extold his fame,
 Cathaia, and the great America,
 The dangerous Straits that yet doe bear his name,
 Are monumental annals of the same;
 Annals, wherein posteritie shall reade,
 How fame the living salves, revives the dead.⁴

For Fitzgeoffrey and others, the romance of travel and of the sea did not exist. What mattered, first and foremost, was the hero and his exploits.

⁴ Ibid., p. 75.

Appendix C

We should at this point distinguish between privateering and common piracy:

Private citizens who wished to engage the enemy on their own account, by sending out what later came to be called "privateers" are normally, from 1585 to 1603, entitled to do so only in redress of private wrongs suffered at the hands of Spain or Spanish subjects. A minority of privileged persons like the Earl of Cumberland and John Chidley were able to obtain special commissions from the Queen, issued as letters patent, but the majority had to obtain letters of reprisal from the Lord Admiral.¹

Thus privateering was, unlike piracy, an orderly affair administered by the Court of Admiralty - at least in theory.

As A. L. Rowse puts it, "privateering means depredations upon the trade of an enemy power by licence of lawful authority, under letters of marque; piracy is plain robbery. But the two ran inextricably into each other."²

The stories about pirates, which reflect the seamy side of maritime activity, were the special province of the ballad

¹Kenneth R. Andrews, ed., English Privateering Voyages to the West Indies, 1588-1595 (Cambridge: The Hakluyt Society, 1959), 2nd ser., no. III, p. 6.

²A. L. Rowse, The Expansion of Elizabethan England (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, n.d. preface dated 1955), p. 256.

writers. Denunciations against pirates generally date from the years when privateering lost ground to black-flag piracy. The ballads are severe in their condemnation of the atrocities commonly practiced by pirates, even on their own countrymen:

There is not any Kingdom,
 In Turkey or in Christendom,
 But by these pirates have received loss;
 Merchantmen of every land,
 Do daily in great danger stand,
 And much do fear the ocean main to cross.

They make children fatherless,
 Woeful widows in distress,
 In shedding blood they take too much delight;
 Fathers they bereave of sons,
 Regarding neither cries nor moans,
 So much they joy to see a bloody fight.

.....
 England suffers danger,
 As well as any stranger,
 Nations are alike unto this company;
 Many English merchantmen,
 And of London now and then,
 Have tasted of their vile extremity.³

In "The Seamans song of Captain Ward," the pirate Ward, Dansekar's one-time partner, is denounced heavily for attacking not only "the Turkish Gallies" and the ships of "stately Spain and Portugal," but also those of his native country. The ballad laments the fact that so courageous and strong a man

³"A Ballad of Dansekar the Dutchman," in A Sailor's Garland, ed. John Masefield (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1924), pp. 327 -28.

should abuse "men of his own Countrey" rather than put himself in the service of his prince.⁴ The ballad warns the reader that the likes of Ward seldom come to a good end:

Such as live by theeving,
Have seldom times good ending,
as by the deed of Captain Ward is shown,
Being drunk among his drabs,
His nearest friends he sometimes stabs,
such wickedness within his heart is grown.⁵

In another ballad, "A Famous Sea Fight between Captain Ward and the Rain-bow," Ward is condemned less severely because, in his own words:

I never wronged an English ship,
But the Turk and King of Spain,
And the jovial Dutchman,
As I met on the Main;⁶

However writers were sometimes unable to resist the special glamour of pirates. Thus a late sixteenth century version of "Sir Andrew Barton" (a Scottish pirate who flourished during the reign of Henry VIII and had to be suppressed by the king's command), ends with King Henry's lament over Barton's severed head:

⁴The Euing Collection of English Broadside Ballads, no. 327, p. 540.

⁵Ibid., p. 541.

⁶Ibid., no. 108, p. 165.

"I wold give," quoth the king, "a thousand markes,
 This man were alive as hee is dead:
 Yett for the manfull part hee playd,
 Which fought soe well with heart and hand,
 His men shall have twelvecence a day,
 Till they come to my brother king's high land." ⁷

Elizabethan dramatists would sometimes allow their heroes to practice piracy, but always providing some justification for it and making sure they harmed no English vessel.

Fortune by Land and Sea, a tragicomedy written by Thomas Heywood and William Rowley, thus pointedly highlights the distinction between the pirate who will not spare even his own countrymen and the honorable rover in the figures of Clinton and Young Forrest. ⁸

⁷ A Sailor's Garland, p. 58. See Masfield's Introduction for a discussion of the poem and its hero on pp. xv-xvi.

⁸ The Dramatic Works of Thomas Heywood, (1874; New York: Russel and Russel, Inc., 1964), Vol. VI.

Appendix D

Promoting such an ideal was a difficult matter even in the hey-day of Elizabethan maritime activity. The English seem to have been more impressed by the dangers of the sea than by its beauty or its promise.¹ The following passage from Spenser's Colin Clout illustrates well the Englishman's distaste for the sea and his bemused response to the dare-devils who would venture forth into its dangers:

So to the sea we came; the sea? that is
 A world of waters heaped vp on hie,
 Rolling like mountaines in wide wildernesses,
 Horrible, hideous, roaring with hoarse crie.

 And yet as ghastly dreadfull, as it seemes,
 Bold men presuming life for gaine to sell,
 Dare tempt that gulf, and in those wandring streames
 Seek waies vnknowne, waies leading down to hell.²

One can sympathize with this view; after all the facts of life at the sea did conform closely to the pictures painted by John Donne

¹ A glance at the selections in Anne Treneer's The Sea in English Literature from Beowulf to Donne (Liverpool: The University Press of Liverpool Limited, 1926) will make our argument clear.

² Colin Clouts Come Home Againe, ll. 196-99, 208-11, The Works of Edmund Spenser, Vol. VII (1, 1943), p. 154.

in his verse letters, "The Storme" and "The Calme,"³ and seamen must have faced even greater hardships on the oceanic voyages.

The negative attitude towards voyaging and exploration begins early in the century, perhaps with Alexander Barclay's Ship of Fools (1509) -- a satirical work based on Brant's Narrenschiff and containing a poem entitled "Of the folysshe description and inquisition of dyuers contrees and regyons."⁴ Barclay's mantle fell on Joseph Hall. Hall had little sympathy for venturers like Raleigh who follow fickle fortune "to Guiane land to fish for gold,"⁵ or for "The brain-sick youth. . . . who with discourses breaks his midnight sleep, / of his adventures through the Indian deep."⁶ The foolish adventurer will surely come to rue his useless undertakings, and wish "for home a thousand sithes a day. / And now he deemes his home-bred fare as lief / As his parch'd biskit, or his barrel'd beef."⁷

³John Donne, The Satires, Epigrams and Verse Letters, pp. 55-59.

⁴Sebastian Brant, The Ship of Fools, trans. Alexander Barclay, ed. T. H. Jamieson (Edinburgh: William Paterson, 1874), Vol. I.

⁵Book IV; satire iii, Satires [1597], ed. Samuel Weller Singer (London: R. Triphook, 1824), p. 91.

⁶Ibid., Book IV, satire vi, pp. 114-15.

⁷Ibid., pp. 117-18.

Bishop Hall's Mundus alter et idem (1605), translated into English by John Healey as The Discovery of a New World (1609), is a burlesque of contemporary voyage narratives including Hakluyt's works. We cannot dismiss Hall as an ignorant bigot; the maps included in his book conform to those of Mercator and Ortelius, and his text shows that he was well read in the voyage literature of his day.⁸ Yet he had an insular bent and was incapable of responding to the exciting possibilities of geographical expansion. He simply failed, like many others, to see the significance of such ventures, as urged by Hakluyt,⁹ for the future of England.

Then we have Thomas Dekker, who produced a patriotic play celebrating the Armada victory and its naval heroes, but who was nevertheless unsympathetic to the idea of overseas travel and seamanship as a career — witness the Newes from Hell in which he puts the metaphor of the sea-voyage to good

⁸See Richard E. Byrd's Introduction; Joseph Hall, The Discovery of a New World, trans. John Healey, ed. Huntington Brown (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1937), pp. xx1-xxv.

⁹See Richard Hakluyt's Discourse on Western Planting (1584) and also his dedicatory preface to Divers Voyages (1582) addressed to Sir Philip Sidney, in the Original Writings... of the Two Richard Hakluyts, Vol. II, pp. 211-326, Vol. I, pp. 175-81.

use for his satirical purposes.¹⁰ Thomas Nashe makes his negative attitude to any form of travel plain in The Unfortunate Traveller, declaring flatly at one point: "The first traueller was Cain, and he was called a vagabond runnagate on the face of the earth."¹¹

Even Drake's feats must have had their detractors since he was moved to defend himself in an epistle dedicatory to Queen Elizabeth in 1592; he was troubled because "diuers haue diuersly reported, and written of these voyages and actions which I haue attempted and made, euery one endeuoring to bring to light, what soeuer inklings or coniectures they haue had; whereby many vntruths haue bene published, and the certaine truth concealed."¹²

As is well known, Elizabethan comedy did not take kindly to the sea or to seafaring as an occupation. The ordinary captain is an all too familiar figure of fun in the comedies, a

¹⁰Newes from Hell, The Non-Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker, ed. Alexander B. Grosart (1886; New York: Russel and Russel, Inc., 1963), Vol. II.

¹¹The Works of Thomas Nashe, ed. Ronald B. McKerrow (London: A.H. Bullen, 1904), Vol. II, p. 297.

¹²"The Dedicatory Epistle, intended to Q. Elizabeth, Written by Sir Francis Drake, deceased," in Sir Francis Drake Reuiued (London: Printed by E.A. for Nicholas Bourne, 1626), n. pag.

far cry from the heroic seamen of Drake's stamp. He is represented as a hard-swearing, hard-drinking old tar, who speaks in a peculiar jargon of his own and who is forever worried about his wife's fidelity, with good reason. The comedy writers also had a shrewd eye for ventures which came to nothing and for the harsh routine of life at sea, what with the storms, the bad food and the pirates.¹³

As we have seen in Chapter I, however, the enthusiasts for the overseas ventures and for sea-faring as an occupation were just as vocal as their opponents.

¹³The following plays illustrate well the derisive attitude towards seamen common in Elizabethan comedy: Thomas Dekker, Satiro-mastix (1602), Thomas Dekker and John Webster, Westward Ho (1605) and Northward Ho (1607), The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker, Vol. I (1953), Vol. II (1955); John Fletcher (and Francis Beaumont?), The Captain (1609-1612), The Works of Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher, ed. A.R. Waller, Cambridge English Classics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1907), Vol. V; Thomas Middleton, The Phoenix, The Works of Thomas Middleton, Vol. I. References which make fun-figures out of seamen also occur in the tragedies, as in Webster's The White Devil (Act V, scene i) and Tourneur's The Atheist's Tragedy (Act III, scene i), John Webster and Cyril Tourneur, Four Plays, ed. John Addington Symonds (New York: Hill and Wang, Inc., 1956), pp. 90 and 262.

Appendix E

We must redefine the term 'ballad' at this point. During the Elizabethan age, the term could refer either to traditional ballads like "Sir Patrick Spens" or to broadside ballads taking their subjects from current events, like those of Thomas Deloney. They were composed for the common people by professional rhymsters. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries there were ballads written on any and every subject, generally news-items in the form of songs. The authors of many are unknown. These ballads were printed on black-letter broadsides, and were often illustrated with wood cuts. They were sold in the bookshops around St. Pauls, and also on the streets by professional singers.

A relatively small number of Elizabethan ballads, and hence naval ballads, have survived owing to their perishable, newspaper-like nature. The extant naval ballads generally deal with adventures on the sea, battles and piracy, and also with the vicissitudes of the ordinary sailor's life, whom the

polite poets left unsung.¹

¹The above information has been condensed from the following sources: C.H. Firth, ed., Naval Songs and Ballads, pp. vi-xviii; J. Holloway, ed., The Euing Collection of Broadside Ballads, pp. vi-xv; Hyder E. Rollins, ed., A Pepysian Garland (1922; rpt. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971), pp. x-xii.

Appendix F

A word of caution is needed at this point: Although Shakespeare did celebrate in Henry VIII the imperial expansion of England, he took elsewhere a skeptical view of the blessings of colonization and was conscious of the grim realities involved in such an undertaking. The author of The Tempest had little faith in Gonzalo's version of Montaigne's ideal commonwealth. Shakespeare seems to have sensed the difficulties which were to beset the colonial enterprise from the first, and his misgivings were substantiated by a growing number of reports published in the early Stuart era. Shakespeare could not dismiss the natives as innocent savages, quickly to be tamed into 'civility'; he did not expect the relations between the Calibans and the Prosperos to run a smooth course, nor did he think that the mother country stood to gain from the colonial ventures if the likes of Alonso and Ferdinand were to be sent out as planters to the young settlements. The world of The Tempest is not a brave new world at all.

See the following books for discussions relating the theme of The Tempest to English colonial ambition, to the

European views of the Natural Man and to current phantasies of a New World utopia, as well as to the perennial theme of civilization versus primitivism which had become a topical issue in Shakespeare's day:

Leslie A. Fiedler, The Stranger in Shakespeare (New York: Stein and Day, 1972), pp. 228-50.

D. G. James, The Dream of Prospero (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), pp. 72 - 123.

Frank Kermode, ed., The Tempest (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1954), Introduction.

Hallet Smith, Shakespeare's Romances (San Marino, California: The Huntington Library, 1972), pp. 121-44.

W. Gordon Zeeveld, The Temper of Shakespeare's Thought (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), passim.

The Tempest's sources in travel literature and the parallels between the story of the play and the various accounts of the 1609 Virginia expedition which ended in a shipwreck off Bermuda have been exhaustively documented by Frank M. Bristol and Louis B. Wright:

Frank M. Bristol, Shakespeare and America (1898; rpt. New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1971).

Louis B. Wright, A Voyage to Virginia in 1609, Two Narratives: William Strachey's "True Repertory" and Silvester Jourdain's "Discovery of the Bermudas" (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1964).

Shakespeare's doubts were shared by a number of other dramatists, many of whom seem to have been especially

concerned over the sale of colonial offices and the practice of sending debtors, criminals and never-do-wells to America as immigrants:

Ben Jonson (in collaboration with Chapman and Marston), Eastward Hoe, III. iv.

Ben Jonson, The Divell Is an Asse, III. iii., and The Silent Woman, II. v.

The Works of Ben Jonson, ed. C. H. Herford et al. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), Vol. IV, p. 547; Vol. VI, p. 217; Vol. V, p. 196.

Philip Massinger, City Madam, V. iii., The Dramatic Works of Massinger and Ford, introd. Hartley Coleridge (London: Edward Moxon, 1848), p. 339.

Thomas Middleton, The Spanish Gypsy, The Works of Thomas Middleton, Vol. I, p. 202, (no act or scene divisions indicated).

Appendix G

For English as well as Spanish and French voyage narratives and reports which paint Eden-like pictures of the New World, see the following which are of special interest:

Richard Hakluyt, Divers Voyages touching the discovery of America and the Islands Adjacent 1582, ed. John Winter Jones (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1950) includes reports by Robert Thorne, Verrazano and Ribault.

Old South Leaflets (Boston: Directors of the Old South Work, 1902): Columbus's Letter to Gabriel Sanchez (1493), Vol. II, no. 33; Cortés's Account of the City of Mexico (1520), Vol. II, no. 35; Sir Francis Drake on the coast of California, from "The World Encompassed by Sir Francis Drake," Vol. V, no. 116; Raleigh's First Roanoke Colony, the account by Ralph Lane, Vol. V, no. 119; Gosnold's Settlement at Cuttyhunk: "The Relation of Captain Gosnold's Voyage to the North Part of Virginia. . . in 1602 . . . by Gabriel Archer," Vol. V, no. 120.

David Beers Quinn, ed., The Roanoke Voyages, 1584-1590, Documents to Illustrate the English Voyages to North America under the Patent Granted to Walter Raleigh in 1584 (London: The Hakluyt Society, 2nd ser. No. 104, 1955), in 2 vols.

Louis B. Wright, The Elizabethans' America: A Collection of Early Reports by Englishmen on the New World (London: E. Edward Arnold Ltd., 1965) includes highly favorable reports and letters by Anthony Parkhurst (1578; no. 8), Arthur Barlowe (1584-5; no. 12), Ralph Lane (1585; no. 13), Thomas Harriot (1588; no. 14), John Brereton (1602; no. 16).

The belief in western realms of fabulous riches and perfection has a long tradition behind it -- the Hesperides, the Fortunate Islands, Avalon. . . Taking the early travel narratives together with the ancient legends, we can argue that it is no accident that the utopias of More and Bacon are located in the New World. It is also interesting to note that men like Columbus and Raleigh took seriously the idea of finding the Earthly Paradise in the New World, and that Juan Ponce de León searched for the fountain of youth in Florida.

The above discussion is a synopsis of the arguments offered in the following studies:

Howard Mumford Jones, O Strange New World (New York: The Viking Press, 1964), Ch. I.

Paul A. Jorgensen, "Shakespeare's Brave New World" and Arthur Slavin, "The American Principle from More to Locke," in The First Images of America, ed. Fredi Chiappelli (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), Vol. I, pp. 86-87, 142-50.

S. B. Liljegren, Studies on the Origin and Early Tradition of English Utopian Fiction, Essays and Studies on English Language and Literature, no. 23 (Uppsala: A. B. Lundequistska Bokhandeln, 1961), passim.

Franklin T. McCann, English Discovery of America to 1585, Ch. V.

Louis B. Wright, The Dream of Prosperity in Colonial America (New York: New York University Press, 1965), pp. 3-18.

The discovery of America was associated also with the advent of a new Golden Age, and according to some scholars, it

is no accident again that the sixteenth century taste for utopias and the pastoral coincided in time with interest in travel books about the New World and its inhabitants. As Harry Levin puts it;

... the myth [of the Golden Age] was reinforced by history and given an immense geographic expansion. The exploration of the western hemisphere opened up a golden world where the natives subsisted as epicurians, owning all things in common, not bothering to distinguish between mine and thine, and presumably doing whatever came naturally. You will find such comparisons spelled out by Peter Martyr writing about Columbus, by Amerigo Vespucci on South America, by Richard Hakluyt on Virginia, and by many other early chroniclers of the New World.¹

Leo Marx argues along similar lines:

The exploration of North America coincided with the publication of Spenser's Virgilian poem, The Shepherds Calendar (1579) and Sidney's Arcadia (1590) to name only two of the more famous Elizabethan pastorals. It is impossible to separate the taste for pastoral and the excitement, felt throughout Europe, about the New World. . . . The age was fascinated by the idea that the New World was or might become Arcadia, and we hardly need to itemize the similarities between "the gentle, loving, and faithfull" Indians of Virginia and the shepherds of pastoral. . . . Although fashionable, the image of America as a garden was no mere rhetorical commonplace. It expressed one of the deepest and most persistent of human motives. When Elizabethan voyagers used this device they were drawing upon utopian aspirations that Europeans always had cherished, and that had given rise long before the discovery of America, to a whole series

¹ "The Golden Age and the Renaissance," in Literary Views, ed. Carrol Camden (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1964), pp. 7-8.

of idealized, imaginary worlds.²

However America could also be viewed as a wilderness, as the experiences of the early colonists indicated:

Anticipations of a second Eden shattered against the reality of North America. Soon after he arrived the seventeenth century frontiersman realized that the New World was the antipode of paradise. Previous hopes intensified the disappointment. At Jamestown the colonists abandoned the search for gold and turned, shocked, to the necessity of survival in a hostile environment.³

And yet in Elizabethan literature the paradise motif continued to assert itself -- for every Bishop Hall or Ben Jonson, there was a Drayton and a Chapman.

The early travel narratives were ebullient not only about the New World but also its inhabitants. The natives were described as naked, sun-worshipping yet noble savages with an intriguing contempt for gold. From time to time Indians were brought to England by travellers, and they excited great curiosity among all ranks of people. Judging by the number of allusions to Indians in Elizabethan literature, this strange race

²Leo Marx, The Machine in the Garden (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), pp. 38-40.

³Roderick Nash, Wilderness and the American Mind (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), p. 25. See also Harold Jantz, "The Myths about America: Origins and Extensions," Jahrbuch für Amerikastudien (Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitaetsverlag, 1962). Vol. 7, pp. 6-18.

of primitive men must also have captured the imagination of the poets and the dramatists of the day.⁴ To take but one example, a glance at Shakespeare's plays will amply illustrate our point:

All's Well That Ends Well, I. iii. 195-96, p. 321,
Love's Labour Lost, V. ii. 201-2, p. 189,
Henry VIII, V. iv. 32-33, p. 784,
Othello, V. ii. 349-51, p. 1153,
The Tempest, II, ii, 29-30, p. 13, William Shakespeare,
The Complete Works.

However reports by colonists from the end of the sixteenth century onwards gave rise to a completely different picture of the Indians as a vile, cruel and savage race. As C.S. Lewis points out, the myth of the Natural Man as embodied in the American Indian could be interpreted in two diametrically opposed ways, often depending on one's choice of travel books and one's prejudices:

The "Natural Man" is, of course, an ambivalent image. He may be conceived as ideally innocent. From that

⁴See Sidney Lee, "The American Indian in Elizabethan England," in Elizabethan and Other Essays, ed. F.S. Boas (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1929) for an excellent historical and literary discussion of the subject. See also John Florio's translation of Montaigne's "Of Cannibals" for a famous sixteenth century view of the Indian as the Noble Savage, "Of the Cannibals," The Essays of Michael Lord of Montaigne, trans. by John Florio 1603, Introduction by A.R. Waller, (London: J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd., 1910), pp. 215-29.

conception descend Montaigne's essay on cannibals, Gonzalo's commonwealth in The Tempest, the good "salvage" in the Faerie Queene (VI. iv. v. vi). . . . On the other hand, he might be conceived as brutal, sub-human: thence Caliban, the bad "salvages" of the Faerie Queene (VI, viii.), the state of nature as pictured by Hobbes, and the "Cave Man" of popular modern imagination.⁵

With the turn of the century, the Indians came to be depicted as an evil breed. Thus Tourneur's appellation for a treacherous knave is "this Indian Devil,"⁶ and according to Massinger the Indians are devil-worshippers with a predilection for human sacrifice -- especially of Christian virgins.⁷ That the relations between the Indians and the English colonists had soured in the early seventeenth century is indicated in various works, among which we can cite two interesting examples -- a commendatory poem in praise of Captain John Smith's punitive expeditions against the

⁵C.S. Lewis, English Literature in the Sixteenth Century (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954), p. 17. The Faerie Queene does indeed represent the two current and opposing views concerning the Natural Man and shows an interest in Indian religion, medicine and costume. See A. B. Giamatti, "Primitivism and the Process of Civility in Spenser's Faerie Queene," in First Images of America, and R. H. Pearce, "Primitivistic Ideas in the Faerie Queene," Journal of English and Germanic Philology, 44, No. 2 (1945), 139-51.

⁶The Revenger's Tragedy, Act I, scene iii, John Webster and Cyril Tourneur: Four Plays, p. 317.

⁷City Madam, Act V, scene i, The Dramatic Works of Massinger and Ford, pp. 335-36.

Indians,⁸ and a ballad celebrating Sir George Sandys' part in a bloody act of vengeance extracted upon the Indians in 1622.⁹

⁸Travels and Works of Captain John Smith, ed. Edward Arber (Edinburgh: John Grant, 1910), Vol. I, pp. 185-86.

⁹Richard Beale, George Sandys, Poet-Adventurer (London: The Bodley Head, 1955), p. 129.

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