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History Of The Invincible Armada.

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## HISTORY OF THE INVINCIBLE ARMADA. \*)

**K**ing Philip II. of Spain, though he had not yet declared war, on account of the hostilities, which Elizabeth every where committed upon him, had long harboured a secret and violent desire of revenge against her. His ambition also and the hopes of extending his empire were much encouraged by the present prosperous situation of his affairs; by the conquest of Portugal, the acquisition of the East-Indian commerce and settlements, and the yearly importation of vast treasures from America. The point, on which he rested his highest glory, the perpetual object of his policy, was to support orthodoxy and exterminate heresy; and as the power and credit of Elizabeth were the chief bulwark of the protestants, he hoped, if he could subdue that princess, to acquire the eternal renown, of being able to re-unite the whole christian world in the catholic communion. Above all, his indignation against his revolted subjects in the Netherlands instigated him to attack the English who had encouraged that insurrection, and who, by their near neighbourhood, were so well enabled to support the Hollanders, that he could never hope to reduce these rebels, while the power of that kingdom remained entire and unbroken. To subdue England seemed a necessary preparative to the reestablishment of his authority in the Netherlands; and notwithstanding all appearances, the former was in itself, as a more important, so a more easy, undertaking than the latter. That kingdom lay nearer Spain than the Low Countries, and was more exposed to invasions from that quarter; after an enemy had once obtained entrance, it was neither fortified by art nor nature; a long peace had deprived it of all military discipline and experience; and the catholics, in which it still abounded, would be ready, it was hoped, to join any invader, who should free them from those grievous persecutions, at present exercised against them, and should revenge the death of the Queen of Scots, on whom they had fixed all their affections. The fate of England must be decided in one battle at sea, and another at land; and what comparison between the English and Spaniards, either in point of naval force, or in the numbers, reputation, and veteran bravery of their armies? Besides the acquisition of so great a kingdom, success against England

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\*) David Hume's History of England. Lond. 8 Vol. 1770. 4.

ensured the immediate subjection of the Hollanders, who, attacked on every Hand, and deprived of all support, must yield their stubborn necks to that yoke, which they had so long resisted. Happily this conquest, as it was of the utmost importance to the grandeur of Spain, would not at present be opposed by the jealousy of the neighbouring powers, naturally so much interested to prevent the success of that enterprize. A truce was lately concluded with the Turks; the empire was in the hands of a friend and near ally; and France, the perpetual rival of Spain, was so torn with intestine commotions, that she had no leisure to pay attention to her foreign interests. This favourable opportunity, therefore, which might never again present itself, must be seized; and one bold effort made for acquiring that ascendant in Europe, to which the present greatness and prosperity of the Spaniards seemed so fully to intitle them.

These hopes and motives engaged Philip, notwithstanding his cautious temper, to undertake this hazardous enterprize; and tho' the Prince, now created by the pope, duke of Parma, when consulted, opposed the attempt, at least represented the necessity of previously getting possession of some sea-port town in the Netherlands, which might afford a retreat to the Spanish navy, it was determined by the catholic monarch to proceed immediately to the execution of his ambitious project. During some time he had been secretly making preparations; but as soon as the resolution was fully taken, every part of his vast empire resounded with the noise of armaments, and all his ministers, generals, and admirals, were employed in forwarding the design. The marquis of Santa Cruz, a sea officer of great reputation and experience, was destined to command the fleet; and by his counsels were the naval equipments conducted. In all the ports of Sicily, Naples, Spain, and Portugal, artizans were employed in building vessels of uncommon size and force; naval stores were bought at a great expence; provisions amassed; armies levied and quartered in the maritime towns of Spain; and plans laid for fitting out such a fleet and embarkation as had never before had its equal in Europe. The military preparations in Flanders were no less formidable. Troops from all quarters were every moment assembling, to reinforce the duke of Parma. Capizuchi and Spinelli, conducted forces from Italy: The marquis of Borgaut, a prince of the house of Austria, levied troops

in Germany: The Walloon and Burgundian regiments were compleated or augmented: The Spanish infantry was supplied with recruits; and an army of thirty four thousand men was assembled in the Netherlands, and kept in readiness to be transported into England. The duke of Parma employed all the carpenters whom he could procure, either in Flanders or in Lower Germany, and the coasts of the Baltic; and he built at Dunkirk, and Newport, but especially at Antwerp, a great number of boats and flat bottomed vessels, for the transporting of his infantry and cavalry. The most renowned nobility and princes of Italy and Spain were ambitious of sharing in the honour of this great enterprize. Don Amadæus of Savoy, Don John of Medicis, Vespasian Gonzaga, duke of Sabionetta, and the duke of Pastrana, hastened to join the army under the duke of Parma. About two thousand volunteers in Spain, many of them men of family, had enlisted in the service. No doubt was entertained, but such vast preparations, conducted by officers of such consummate skill, must finally be successful. And the Spaniards, ostentatious of their power, and elevated with vain hopes, had already denominated their navy the *Invincible Armada*.

News of these extraordinary preparations soon reached the court of London; and notwithstanding the secrecy of the Spanish council, and their pretending to employ this force in the Indies, it was easily concluded, that they meant to make some effort against England. The Queen had foreseen the invasion; and finding that she must now contend for her crown with the whole force of Spain, she made preparations for resistance; nor was she terrified with that power, by which, all Europe apprehended, she must of necessity be overwhelmed. Her force indeed seemed very unequal to resist so potent an enemy. All the sailors in England amounted at that time to about fourteen thousand men. The size of the English shipping was, in general, so small, that, except a few of the Queen's ships of war, there were not four vessels belonging to the merchants which exceeded four hundred tons. The royal navy consisted only of twenty-eight sail, many of which were of small size; none of them exceeding the bulk of our largest frigates, and most of them deserving rather the name of pinnaces than of ships. The only advantage of the English fleet consisted in the dexterity and courage of the seamen, who, being accustomed to sail



in tempestuous seas, and expose themselves to all dangers, as much exceeded in this particular the Spanish mariners, as their vessels were inferior in size and force to those of that nation. All the commercial towns of England were required to furnish ships for reinforcing this small navy; and they discovered, on the present occasion, great alacrity in defending their liberty and religion against those imminent perils, with which they were menaced. The citizens of London, in order to shew their zeal in the common cause, instead of fifteen vessels, which they were commanded to equip, voluntarily fitted out double the number. The gentry and nobility hired, and armed, and manned, fortythree ships at their own charge; and all the loans of money, which the Queen demanded, were frankly granted by the persons applied to. Lord Howard of Effingham, a man of courage and capacity, was admiral, and took on him the command of the navy: Drake, Hawkins, and Frobisher, the most renowned seamen in Europe, served under him. The principal fleet was stationed at Plymouth. A smaller squadron, consisting of forty vessels, English and Flemish, was commanded by the lord Seymour, second son of protector Somerset; and lay off Dunkirk, in order to intercept the duke of Parma.

The land forces of England, compared to those of Spain, possessed contrary qualities to its naval power: They were more numerous than the enemy, but much inferior in discipline, reputation, and experience. An army of twenty thousand men was disposed in different bodies along the south coast; and orders were given them, if they could not hinder the Spaniards from landing, to retire backwards, to waste the country around, and to wait for reinforcement from the neighbouring counties, before they approached the enemy. A body of twenty-two thousand foot, and a thousand horse, under the command of the earl of Leicester, was stationed, at Tilbury, in order to defend the capital. The principal army consisted of thirty-four thousand foot, and two thousand horse, and was commanded by lord Hunsdon. These forces were reserved for guarding the Queen's person; and were appointed to march whithersoever the enemy should appear. The fate of England, if all the Spanish armies should be able to land, seemed to depend on the issue of a single battle; and men of reflection entertained the most dismal apprehensions, when they considered the force of fifty thousand  
thousand

thousand veteran Spaniards, commanded by experienced officers, under the duke of Parma, the most consummate general of the age; and compared this formidable armament with the military power, which England, not enervated by peace, but long disused to war, could muster up against it.

The chief support of the kingdom seemed to consist in the vigour and prudence of the Queen's conduct; who, undismayed by the present dangers, issued all her orders with tranquillity, animated her people to a steady resistance, and employed every resource, which either her domestic situation or her foreign alliances could afford her. She sent Sir Robert Sydney into Scotland; and exhorted the King to remain attached to her, and to consider the danger, which at present menaced his sovereignty no less than her own, from the ambition of the Spanish tyrant! The ambassador found James well disposed to cultivate an union with England, and that prince even kept himself prepared to march with the force of his whole kingdom to the assistance of Elizabeth. Her authority with the King of Denmark, and the tie of their common religion, engaged this monarch, upon her application, to seize a squadron of ships, which Philip had bought or hired in the Danish harbours: The Hanse Towns, though not at that time on good terms with Elizabeth, were induced, by the same motives, to retard so long the equipment of some vessels in their ports, that they became useless to the purpose of invading England. All the protestants throughout Europe regarded this enterprize as the critical event, which was to decide for ever the fate of their religion; and though unable, by reason of their distance, to join their force to that of Elizabeth, they kept their eyes fixed on her conduct and fortune, and beheld with anxiety, mixed with admiration, the intrepid countenance, with which she encountered that dreadful tempest, which was every moment approaching towards her.

The Queen also was sensible, that, next to the general popularity, which she enjoyed, and the confidence, which her subjects reposed in her prudent government, the firmest support of her throne consisted in the general zeal of the people for the protestant religion, and the strong prejudices which they had imbibed against popery. She took care, on the present occasion, to revive in the nation this attachment to their own sect, and this abhorrence of

the opposite. The English were reminded of their former danger from the tyranny of Spain: All the barbarities, exercised by Mary against the protestants, were ascribed to the counsels of that bigotted and imperious nation: The bloody massacres in the Indies, the unrelenting executions in the Low Countries, the horrid cruelties and iniquities of the inquisition, were set before men's eyes: A list and description was published, and pictures dispersed, of the several instruments of torture, with which, it was pretended, the Spanish Armada was loaded: And every artifice, as well as reason, was employed, to animate the people to a vigorous defence of their religion, their laws, and their liberties.

But while the Queen, in this critical emergence, roused the animosity of the nation against popery, she treated the partizans of that sect with moderation, and gave not way to an undistinguishing fury against them. Though she knew, that Sixtus Quintus, the present pope, famous for his rapacity and tyranny, had fulminated a new bull of excommunication against her, had deposed her from the throne, had absolved her subjects from their oaths of allegiance, had published a crusade against England, and had granted plenary indulgences to every one engaged in the present invasion; she would not believe, that all her catholic subjects could be so blinded, as to sacrifice to bigotry their duty to their sovereign, and the liberty and independency of their native country. She rejected all violent counsels, by which she was urged to seek pretences for dispatching the leaders of that party: She would not even confine any considerable number of them: And the catholics, sensible of this good usage, generally expressed great zeal for the public defence. Some gentlemen of that sect, conscious that they could not justly expect any trust or authority, entered themselves as volunteers in the fleet or army: Some equipped ships at their own charge, and gave the command of them to protestants: Others were active in animating their tenants, and vassals, and neighbours, to the defence of their country: And every rank of men, burying for the present all party distinctions, seemed to prepare themselves, with order as well as vigour, to resist the violence of these invaders.

The more to excite the martial spirit of the nation, the Queen appeared on horseback in the camp at Tilbury; and riding through the lines, discovered a chearful and  
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animated countenance, exhorted the soldiers to remember their duty to their country and their religion, and professed her intention, though a woman, to lead them herself into the field against the enemy, and rather to perish in battle than survive the ruin and slavery of her people. By this spirited behaviour she revived the tenderness and admiration of the soldiery: An attachment to her person became a kind of enthusiasm among them: And they asked one another, whether it were possible, that Englishmen could abandon this glorious cause, could display less courage than appeared in the female sex, or could ever, by any dangers, be induced to relinquish the defence of their heroic princess.

The Spanish Armada was ready in the beginning of May (1588) but the moment it was preparing to sail, the marquis of Santa Cruz, the admiral, was seized with a violent fever, of which he soon after died. The vice-admiral, the duke of Paliano, by a strange concurrence of accidents, at the very same time, suffered the same fate; and the King appointed for admiral the duke of Medina Sidonia, a nobleman of great family, but unexperienced in action, and entirely unacquainted with sea affairs. Alcarede was appointed vice-admiral. This misfortune, besides the loss of so great an officer as Santa Cruz, retarded the sailing of the Armada, and gave the English more time for their preparations to oppose them. At last, the fleet, full of hopes and alacrity, set sail from Lisbon; but next day met with a violent tempest, which scattered the ships, sunk some of the smallest, and forced the rest to take shelter in the Groyne, where they waited till they could be refitted. When news of this event was carried to England, the Queen concluded, that the design of an invasion was disappointed for this summer, and being always ready to lay hold of every pretence for saving money, she made Walsingham write to the admiral, directing him to lay up some of the larger ships, and to discharge the seamen: But lord Effingham, who was not so sanguine in his hopes, used the freedom to disobey these orders; and he begged leave to retain all the ships in service, tho' it should be at his own expence. He took advantage of a north wind, and sailed towards the coast of Spain, with an intention of attacking the enemy in their harbours; but the wind changing to the south, he became apprehensive, lest they might have set sail, and by passing him at sea, invade England, now exposed by  
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the absence of the fleet. He returned, therefore, with the utmost expedition to Plymouth, and lay at anchor in that harbour.

Meanwhile, all the damages of the Armada were repaired; and the Spaniards with fresh hopes set out again to sea, in prosecution of their entreprize. The fleet consisted of a hundred and thirty vessels, of which near a hundred were galleons, and were of greater size than any ever before used in Europe. It carried on board nineteen thousand two hundred and ninety-five soldiers, eight thousand four hundred and fifty-six mariners, two thousand and eighty-eight gally slaves, and two thousand six hundred and thirty great pieces of brass ordnance. It was victualled for six months; and was attended with twenty lesser ships, called caravals, and ten salves with six oars apiece.

The plan formed by the King of Spain, was, that the Armada should sail to the coast opposite to Dunkirk and Newport; and having chased away all English or Flemish vessels, which might obstruct the passage, (for it was never supposed they could make opposition) should join themselves with the duke of Parma, should thence make sail to the Thames, and having landed the whole Spanish army, thus complete at one blow the entire conquest of England. In prosecution of this scheme, Philip gave orders to the duke of Medina, that, in passing along the channel, he should sail as near the coast of France as he could with safety; that he should by this policy avoid meeting with the English fleet; and keeping in view the main enterprize, should neglect all smaller successes, which might prove an obstacle, or even interpose a delay, to the acquisition of a kingdom. After the Armada was under sail, they took a fisherman, who informed them, that the English admiral had been lately at sea, had heard of the tempest which scattered the Armada, had retired back into Plymouth, and no longer expecting an invasion this season, had laid up his ships, and discharged most of the seamen. From this false intelligence the duke of Medina conceived the great facility of attacking and destroying the English ships in harbour; and he was tempted, by the prospect of so decisive an advantage, to break his orders, and make sail directly for Plymouth: A resolution which proved the safety of England. The Lizard was the first land made by the Armada, about sun-set; and as the Spaniards took it for the Ram-head near

near Plymouth, they bore out to sea, with an intention of returning next day, and attacking the English navy. They were descried by Fleming a Scottish pyrate, who was roving in these seas, and who immediately set sail, to inform the English admiral of their approach: Another fortunate event, which contributed extremely to the safety of the fleet. Effingham had just time to get out of port, when he saw the Spanish Armada coming full sail towards him, disposed in the form of a crescent, and stretching the distance of seven miles from the extremity of one division to that of the other.

The writers of that age raise their style by a pompous description of this spectacle; the most magnificent that had ever appeared upon the ocean, infusing equal terror and admiration into the minds of all beholders. The lofty masts, the swelling sails, and the towering prows of the Spanish galleons, seem impossible to be justly painted, otherwise than by assuming the colours of poetry; and an eloquent historian of Italy, in imitation of Camden, has asserted, that the Armada, though the ships bore every sail, yet advanced with a slow motion; as if the ocean groaned with supporting, and the winds were tired with impelling, so enormous a weight. The truth, however, is, the largest of the Spanish vessels would scarcely pass for third rates in the present navy of England; yet were they so ill framed, or so ill governed, that they were quite unwieldy, and could not sail upon a wind, nor tack on an occasion, nor be managed in stormy weather by the seamen. Neither the mechanics of ship-building, nor the experience of mariners, had attained so great perfection as could serve for the security and government of such bulky vessels; and the English, who had already had experience how unserviceable they commonly were, beheld without dismay their tremendous appearance.

Effingham gave orders, not to come to close fight with the Spaniards; where the size of the ships he suspected, and the numbers of the soldiers, would be a disadvantage to the English; but to cannonade them at a distance, and to wait the opportunity, which winds, currents, or various accidents must afford him, of intercepting some scattered vessels of the enemy. Nor was it long before the event answered expectation. A great ship of Biscay, on board of which was a considerable part of the Spanish money, was set on fire by accident; and while all hands  
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were employed in extinguishing it, she fell behind the rest of the Armada: The great galleon of Andalusia was detained by the springing of her mast: And both the vessels were taken, after some resistance, by Sir Francis Drake. As the Armada advanced up the channel, the English hung upon its rear, and still invested it with skirmishes. Each trial abated the confidence of the Spaniards, and added courage to the English; and the latter soon found, that even in close fight the size of the Spanish ships was no advantage to them. Their bulk exposed them the more to the fire of the enemy; while their cannon, placed too high, shot over the heads of the English. The alarm having now reached the coast of England, the nobility and gentry hastened out with their vessels from every harbour, and reinforced the admiral. The earls of Oxford, Northumberland, and Cumberland, Sir Thomas Cecil, Sir Robert Cecil, Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir Thomas Vavasor, Sir Thomas Gerrard, Sir Charles Blount, with many others, distinguished themselves by this generous and disinterested service of their country. The English fleet, after the conjunction of these ships amounted to an hundred and forty sail.

The Armada had now reached Calais, and cast anchor before that place; in expectation, that the duke of Parma, who had got intelligence of their approach, would put to sea, and join his forces to them. The English admiral practised here a successful stratagem upon the Spaniards. He took eight of his smaller ships, and filling them with all combustible materials, sent them, one after another, into the midst of the enemy. The Spaniards fancied, that they were fireships of the same contrivance with a famous vessel, which had lately done so much execution in the Shelde near Antwerp; and they immediately cut their cables, and took to flight with the greatest disorder and precipitation. The English fell upon them next morning, while in confusion; and besides doing great damage to other ships, they took or destroyed about twelve of the enemy.

By this time, it was become apparent, that the intention, for which these preparations were made by the Spaniards, was entirely frustrated. The vessels, provided by the duke of Parma, were made for transporting soldiers not for fighting; and that general, when urged to leave the harbour, positively refused to expose his flourishing army to such apparent hazard, as it must incur;

incur; while the English, not only were able to keep the sea, but seemed even to triumph over their enemy. The Spanish admiral found, in many rencounters, that while, he lost so considerable a part of his own navy, he had destroyed only one small vessel of the English; and he foresaw, that, by continuing so unequal a combat, he must draw inevitable destruction on all the remainder. He prepared therefore to return homeward; but as the winds were contrary to his passage through the channel, he resolved to sail northwards, and making the tour of the island reach the Spanish harbours by the ocean. The English fleet followed him during some time; and had not their ammunition fallen short, by the negligence of the officers in supplying them, they had obliged the whole Armada to surrender at discretion. The duke of Medina had once taken that resolution; but was diverted from it by the advice of his confessor. This conclusion of the enterprize would have been more glorious to the English; but the event proved equally fatal to the Armada after it passed the Orkneys: The ships had already lost their anchors, and were obliged to keep to sea: The mariners, unaccustomed to such hardships, and not able to govern such unwieldy vessels, yielded to the fury of the storm, and allowed their ships to drive either on the western isles of Scotland, or on the coast of Ireland, where they were miserably wrecked. Not a half of the navy returned to Spain, and the seamen, as well as soldiers, who remained, were so overcome with hardships and fatigue, and so dispirited by their discomfiture, that they filled all Spain with accounts of the desperate valour of the English, and of the tempestuous violence of that ocean which surrounds them.

Such was the miserable and dishonourable conclusion of an enterprize, which had been preparing for three years, which had exhausted the revenue and force of Spain, and which had long filled all Europe with anxiety or expectation. Philip, who was a slave to his ambition, but had an entire command over his countenance, no sooner heard of the mortifying event, which blasted all his hopes, than he fell on his knees, and rendering thanks for that gracious dispensation of providence, expressed his joy, that the calamity was not greater. The Spanish priests, who had so often blest this holy crusade, and foretold its infallible success, were somewhat at a loss to account for the victory gained over the catholic monarch

narch by excommunicated heretics and an execrable usurper: But they at last discovered, that all the calamities of the Spaniards had proceeded from their allowing the infidel Moors to live among them.

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CAPT. LEMUEL GULLIVER'S VOYAGE  
TO LILIPUT. \*)

We set sail from *Bristol*, *May* 4th, 1699, and our voyage at first was very prosperous.

It would not be proper, for some reasons, to trouble the reader with the particulars of our adventures in those seas: let it suffice to inform him, that, in our passage from thence to the *East-Indies*, we were driven by a violent storm to the north-west of *Van Diemen's land*. By an observation we found ourselves in the latitude of 30 degrees 2 minutes south. Twelve of our crew were dead by immoderate labour; and ill food; the rest were in a very weak condition. On the fifth of *November*, which was the beginning of summer in those parts, the weather being very hazy, the seamen spied a rock within half a cable's length of the ship; but the wind was so strong, that we were driven directly upon it, and immediately split. Six of the crew, of whom I was one, having let down the boat into the sea, made a shift to get clear of the ship and the rock. We rowed by my computation about three leagues, till we were able to work no longer, being already spent with labour while we were in the ship. We therefore trusted ourselves to the mercy of the waves, and in about half an hour the boat was overset by a sudden flurry from the north. What became of my companions in the boat, as well as of those who escaped on the rock, or were left in the vessel, I cannot tell; but conclude they were all lost. For my own part, I swam as fortune directed me, and was pushed forward by wind and tide. I often let my legs drop, and could feel no bottom: but when I was almost gone, and able to struggle no longer, I found myself within my depth: and by this time the storm was much abated. The declivity was so small, that I walked near a mile before I got to the shore, which I conjectured was about eight o'clock in the evening. I then advanced forward near half a mile, but could not discover any signs of houses

\*) The Works of Dr. Jonathan Swift. Lond. 1765. 12 Vol. 12.