

the unprotected commerce of that ocean. They well knew the value of the cargoes carried in the unarmed galleons from the Philippines. At last, unable to find the Straits of Anian, they invaded the Pacific by the dreaded Straits of Magellan, and the security of Spanish shipping in the South Sea vanished forever.

The pioneer of this plundering band was Francis Drake, an English seaman of much renown, a daring spirit and expert mariner. With three vessels he thus passed into the Pacific upon a mission of plunder. One of these was wrecked soon after passing through the straits; another returned to England; while with his one remaining ship Drake sailed up the coast, scattering terror and devastation among the Spanish shipping and levying contributions in the defenceless ports. The East Indian galleon, with its precious cargo, fell into his hands off the California coast; and then, with his vessel loaded with plunder, he sailed northward to search for the Straits of Anian, intending to pass through them into the Atlantic and thus reach England by a new route. By doing this he would avoid a combat with a Spanish fleet which he had every reason to expect would be lying in wait for him at the Straits of Magellan. He failed utterly to find any such passage, though how thoroughly he searched the coast is unknown; and even the extent of his voyage to the north is a matter of much dispute. By some authorities it is given as latitude 43 degrees, and by others 48 degrees. To this latter opinion all English writers hold, while American historians favor the former, and the reason for adopting their separate opinions is not such an one as should actuate the true historian. If Drake did not proceed beyond latitude 43 degrees, then he made no further progress north than did the Spaniard Ferrelo thirty-five years before, and was not entitled to the honor of discovering any new region on the Pacific Coast. In that event England's claim to Oregon by right of discovery was without foundation, since prior to any subsequent English voyage along the coast several Spanish expeditions coasted its whole length as far as Alaska. If he reached latitude 48 degrees, on the contrary, then England's title by right of discovery was undeniable. Such being the case, and the Spanish title to Oregon having been acquired by the United States by purchase and treaty, the reason for the historians of the two countries espousing different sides, without much reference to the truth of the matter, can be readily perceived.

Two accounts of the voyage were published, thus furnishing the foundation for the controversy, and neither of these narratives bears either internal or external evidence of complete reliability. There may well be a difference of opinion; but the fact that this difference is drawn on national lines is suggestive of bias and a lack of those qualities which mark the true historian. One of them was published by Richard Hakluyt, the celebrated geographer of those times, in a volume embodying the results of all previous voyages of exploration, and is said to be the production of Francis Pretty, one of Drake's crew, though English authors claim it to have been

written by Hakluyt himself from accounts of the voyage related to him some time before, and thus subject to grievous errors. The other account is one which was published by a nephew of Drake seventy years after the voyage was completed, and long after every soul who had participated in it had passed to his final account; thus there was no living witness who could dispute the wildest and most reckless statement the compiler might be led to make in his eagerness to establish his relative's position as discoverer of New Albion, the name Drake had bestowed upon California. The notes used in preparing this volume were credited to the Rev. Mr. Fletcher, chaplain of the expedition, and it must be said that in some respects he was the most magnificent liar that ever undertook to deceive an audience absolutely ignorant of the subject with which he dealt. The regions visited were entirely unknown, and the world was prepared to believe anything of this region, of which new wonders were constantly being revealed. Rev. Mr. Fletcher seems to have realized this, and improved his opportunity; yet the fact that his notes contain what are known to be willful misstatements is not proof that in this one instance he was not correct, or that his notes were altered by the compiler to read 48 degrees instead of 43 degrees. His want of veracity is, of course, a presumption against his statement in this particular; but it will require something more authentic than the alleged narrative of Francis Pretty to establish their inaccuracy beyond dispute. When the whole matter is reviewed impartially, the mind naturally leans toward the theory of 43 degrees, without, however, feeling completely satisfied that it is the true one. In the nature of things this controversy can never be settled, and Drake and Ferrelo will ever bear the divided honor of the discovery of Oregon.

Having been forced back along the coast by adverse winds, he entered a small bay near latitude 38 degrees, where he cast anchor for thirty-six days. It was, until recent times, supposed that this harbor was San Francisco Bay, the name helping to support the idea with the unthinking. So far from giving it the name of this English scourge, the devout Spaniards, when it was discovered many years later, thus christened it in honor of Francis, the tutelar saint of the Franciscans. Sir Francis Drake was the reverse of a saint in Spanish eyes, and even had they named it in his honor, they would have been certain to associate with it some title more in harmony with their estimation of his character. Drake was in search of the fabulous Straits of Anian, and that he lay thirty-six days in San Francisco Bay without even attempting to explore the connecting bays of San Pablo and Suisun, and the great navigable rivers discharging into them, is so manifestly improbable as to be beyond credence. There is no positive testimony to support the dea, and the contrary is proven as nearly as purely negative testimony can prove anything. It is generally conceded by historians that Drake's harbor of refuge was the one lying just north of the Golden Gate, and known as "Drake's Bay." It is in speaking of this place that Chaplain Fletcher displays his abilities as a romancer.