

The time was the month of June, and yet he states that snow covered the hills, and the weather was so cold that meat froze upon being taken from the fire. One familiar with the fact that snow is a rarity there even in winter, and that at no time does it become cold enough to freeze meat that has never been near a fire, has his confidence in the veracity of the chronicler terribly shaken.

While lying in the harbor Drake landed and took possession of the country in the name of his sovereign, christening it "New Albion" in honor of his native land. Fletcher's narrative states that the natives at first mistook them for gods and offered sacrifices to them, and that they removed this impression by themselves publicly offering up their devotions to the Creator. Of the incidents of their landing the narrative says: "Our necessarie business being ended, our General, with his companie, travailed up into the countrey to their villiages, where we found heardees of deere by 1,000 in a companie, being most large and fat of bodie. We found the whole countrey to be a warren of strange kinde of conies; their bodies in bigness as be the Barbarie conies, their heads as the heads of ours, the feet of a Want [mole] and the taile of a rat, being of great length; under her chinne on either side a bagge, into which she gathered her meate, when she hath filled her bellie abroad. The people do eat their bodies, and make accompt for their skinnies, for their King's coat was made out of them. Our General called this countrey Nova Albion, and that for two causes: the one in respect to the white bankes and cliffes which lie toward the sea; and the other because it might have some affinitie with our countrey in name, which sometimes was so called. There is no part of earth here to be taken up, wherein there is not a *reasonable quantitie of gold or silver*. Before sailing away, our General set up a monument of our being there, as also of her majestie's right and title to the same, viz.: a plate nailed upon a faire great poste, whereupon was engraved her majestie's name, the day and yeare of our arrival there, with the free giving up of the province and people into her majestie's hands, together with her highness' picture and arms, in a piece of five pence of current English money under the plate, whereunder was also written the name of our General."

What the worthy Chaplain considered a "reasonable quantitie" of the precious metals it is impossible to conjecture; but the probabilities are that he manufactured this statement from whole cloth. The earliest authentic accounts of the Indians of California do not speak of them as possessing any gold or silver, and it was many years after the Spaniards took possession of the State before gold was discovered and mined. At that time the natives were completely ignorant of the character and value of the substance, and had no traditions on the subject; from which may reasonably be concluded that Chaplain Fletcher deliberately lied when he made that assertion, the more so that even to the present time no gold has been discovered in the locality of which he spoke. It will be remembered that a few years before, when America was first discovered, it was the general

belief that it was speckled with gold and silver and glistened with gems. These extravagant ideas had become modified in Drake's time, though by no means abandoned. The Spaniards had been searching a few years before in this direction for wealthy nations whose existence was reported to them by the Indians of Mexico, but without success. They still entertained the belief that pearls and the precious metals could be found in abundance in this region; and Fletcher was simply supplying a "long-felt want" when he wrote that a "reasonable quantitie of gold or silver" existed in every handful of dirt that might be taken up at random on the California coast. His other statements are probably correct, since ground squirrels exist in such abundance there, and are so destructive to crops, that the State grants a bounty for their extermination, and the early pioneers speak of immense bands of antelope and elk that roamed the valley and foothills.

Having abandoned the hope of finding a passage into the Atlantic, and fearing to attempt to return by the Straits of Magellan, Drake undertook the long voyage across the Pacific, and reached England by weathering the Cape of Good Hope. His return with his vessel loaded with the plundered riches of the Spaniards was hailed with joy by his countrymen. The interests of Spain and England were hostile. The latter looked with jealousy and fear upon the power of the Castilian throne, sustained by the enormous revenue derived from America and the Indies, and Queen Elizabeth knighted the daring robber for his services to his country in striking such a severe blow at the resources of her rival. Ten years later, when the proud Philip sent that wonderful Spanish Armada, which was fitted out by revenues derived from this same commerce, and was to crush England at a blow, one of the gallant fleets which met and defeated it was commanded by Sir Francis Drake. Other English freebooters, encouraged by the brilliant success of Drake, entered the Pacific by the same route and preyed upon the Spanish shipping. The most successful of these was Thomas Cavendish, who ravaged the coast of Chile, Peru and Mexico in 1587, sank or burned nineteen vessels, and captured the galleon *Santa Anna* off the coast of California. The next year he returned to England by the Cape of Good Hope, having accomplished the third circumnavigation of the globe, Magellan being the first and Drake the second to make that then wonderful voyage. It is said that when the ship arrived in England the crew were dressed in silks, the sails were made of damask, and the topmast was covered with cloth of gold.

HARRY L. WELLS.

FAME and fortune await the discoverer of an efficient method of consuming coal that none of its constituent and combustible particles can escape into the atmosphere of large cities, with the twofold result of preventing pecuniary loss and sanitary degradation of the air. It is estimated by competent experts that London alone loses every winter twenty-five million dollars through imperfectly burned coal.