

SECTION III.—ELIZABETH'S TRIUMPH OVER SPAIN
AND CLOSE OF HER REIGN.

1. **The War with Spain. Causes.** At last, after nearly twenty years of threatened hostility, the two countries, England and Spain, stood face to face as open and declared enemies. In the struggle, which followed, both nations put forth their utmost energies. But besides the mere wish of avenging Mary's death, there were other causes, which urged Philip on to make war upon England. (a) Mary, Queen of Scots, had by will bequeathed her claim to the English throne, not to her son, James VI. of Scotland, but to Philip, and he now began to make active preparations to assert his claim. (b) Elizabeth had sent assistance to the Dutch, who were at this time in open rebellion against the Spanish government. (c) Philip was desirous of crushing England, because she was the leading Protestant Power in Europe. (d) Lastly the English "sea-dogs," as the buccaneer captains were called, had committed terrible ravages on the Spanish treasure ships. At this time, the commerce of Spain was immense, and as her richly laden galleons passed up the English Channel on their way from the West Indies to Antwerp, they fell an easy prey to the English "sea-dogs," who darted forth from every English port and attacked them with their swift and well-armed cruisers.

Moreover, Pope Alexander VI. had granted the whole of the New World to the Spaniards and Portuguese as their exclusive right, but the English sailors would not recognize this wholesale parcelling out of the newly discovered lands, and so they organized piratical expeditions, and attacked and plundered the Spanish settlements, wherever they found them. The Spaniards retaliated by hanging the English sailors, or by flinging them into the dungeons of the Inquisition, "*laden with irons, without light of sun or moon,*" and leaving them to die of starvation. For these reasons a bitter hatred sprang up between the seamen of the two nations, and Philip saw that the only way to protect the trade and settlements of Spain was to crush England's power at sea.