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Death of La Pite.







# BOOK OF PIRATES,

CONTAINING

NARRATIVES OF THE MOST REMARKABLE

PIRACIES AND MURDERS,

COMMITTED ON THE HIGH SEAS:

TOGETHER WITH

AN ACCOUNT OF THE

CAPTURE OF THE AMISTAD;

AND A

FULL AND AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE

OF THE

BURNING OF THE CAROLINE.

CAREFULLY COMPILED FOR THE PUBLISHER

BY HENRY K. BROOKE.

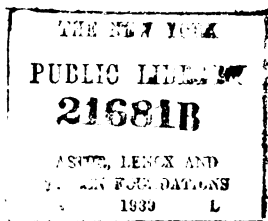
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## PREFACE.

**IT** is customary to introduce a preface in books, and it is the privilege, and mostly the custom, of readers to pass it by unnoticed. Hence the necessity of a preface, and hence the inutility of one. The title page of this book will at a glance indicate the nature of the work, but, we beg leave to say, not the substance of it. The person who takes up this and throws it down again, thinking to himself that it is merely the same that he has heretofore read,—the same accounts of daring exploits and wild enterprises that he is already familiar with,—will thereby thoughtlessly reject much that otherwise would have added to his knowledge of circumstances and men, and afforded infinite gratification to that curious appetite which is common to human nature,—and which has been implanted within us by an All-wise Providence for the furtherance of his own beneficent purposes.

Many well disposed persons assert that works of this nature have an improper tendency, inasmuch as vice is depicted in colours of so specious a hue that it is rather calculated to fascinate than disgust. This, in some degree, we admit—such has been the fact with books of the kind heretofore put before the youth of this country—but for our own work we disclaim aught of the kind. Its object is strictly moral; and to serve the unthinking as a beacon-light to warn them of danger, has the publisher compiled the narratives which will be found in the following pages. Works of this description, compiled for the purpose of preventing crime by holding to view the fearful consequences thereof, and not garnishing it up to render it palatable, may be classed among the moral and useful publications of the day.

**No** book among modern publications has been more read



than Mr. Ainsworth's "Jack Sheppard," which fact is in itself evidence of the popular taste for the curious and horrible. Consequently how careful the author should be in all cases to visit crime with its punishment; for that in which so many are interested will, necessarily, be a means by which to disseminate such admonitions as may deter many a one from the commission of some direful enormity.

Several articles in this volume have never been before the public in any shape that would admit of preservation so well as in a compilation of this kind. One or two of the narratives have been published in another work, but as they are such as wear a peculiar interest to the reading public of the United States, and desirous that only the truth should go forth to the world, we have made extensive researches, and in our own compilation have ventured upon no conjectures, and admitted nothing into our pages that we did not derive from truly authentic accounts.

Pirates, robbers, and murderers, from the days of Robin Hood (1160) to the present time, have been *heroes* in the imaginations of the old and young, rich and poor, the learned and the illiterate. We are all of us alike in one point,—we all admire that which is active and enterprising, however destructive, in preference to that which is passive and perhaps at the same time more beneficial. The greatest geniuses of modern literature, Scott and Byron, were very slaves to this feeling, if we may judge of them by their writings. The novels of the former, and the poems of the latter, teem with heroes of this desperate character. One of Scott's novels has for its title page, "The Pirate," and one of Byron's poems is entitled "The Corsair." How animating is the opening scene of "The Corsair," as descriptive of the pirate's life. Here follows an extract :

" O'er the glad waters of the dark blue sea,  
Our thought as boundless, and our souls as free,  
Far as the breeze can bear, the billows foam,  
Survey our empire, and behold our home!  
These are our realms, no limits to their sway—  
*Our flag the sceptre all who meet obey.*  
Ours the wild life in tumult still to range

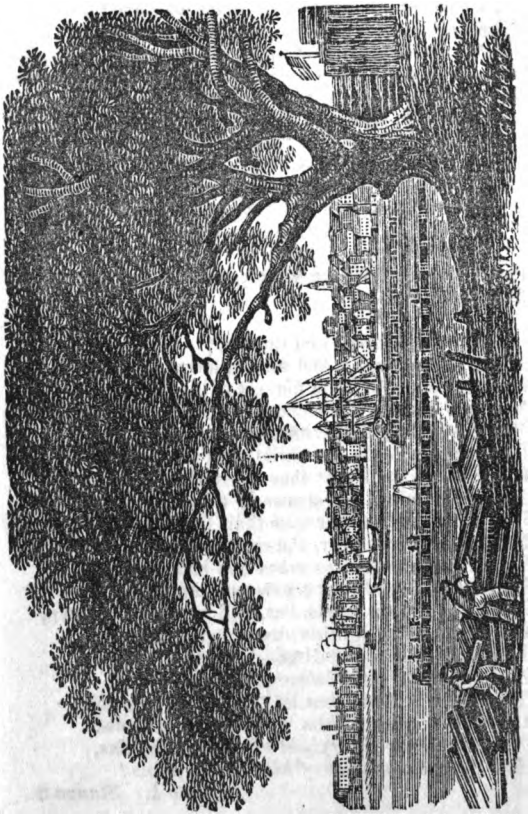
From toil to rest, and joy in every change.  
 Oh, who can tell?—not thou, luxurious slave!  
 Whose soul would sicken o'er the heaving wave;  
 Nor thou, vain lord of wantonness and ease!  
 Whom slumber soothes not,—pleasure cannot please,—  
 Oh, who can tell, save he whose heart hath tried,  
 And danced in triumph o'er the waters wide,  
 The exulting sense—the pulse's mad'ning play,  
 That thrills the wanderer of that trackless way?  
 That for itself can view the approaching fight,  
 And turn what some deem *danger to delight*.

THE CORSAIR, *Canto 1. Stanza 1.*

The following, from the same poem, is descriptive of the leader of the pirates—

“ A man of loneliness and mystery,  
 Scarce seen to smile, and seldom heard to sigh;  
 Whose name appals the fiercest of his crew,  
 And tints each swarthy cheek with sallower hue;  
 Still sways their soul with that commanding art  
 That dazzles, leads, yet chills the vulgar heart;  
 What is that spell, that thus his lawless train  
 Confess and envy, yet oppose in vain?  
 What should it be, that thus their faith can bind?  
 The power of THOUGHT, the magic of the MIND!  
 Linked with success, assumed and kept with skill,  
 That moulds another's weakness to its will;  
 Wields with their hands, but, still to these unknown,  
 Makes even his mightiest deeds appear his own.  
 Such hath it been—shall be—beneath the sun  
*The many still must labour for the ONE!*  
 'Tis Nature's doom—but let the wretch who toils  
 Accuse not, hate not *him* who wears the spoils.  
*Oh! if he knew the weight of splendid chains,*  
*How light the balance of his humble pains!*

*Canto 1. Stanza 8*



*View of the river Delaware opposite Philadelphia.*

# BOOK OF PIRATES.

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## HISTORY

OF THE

PIRACY, MURDER, CAPTURE & EXECUTION

OF THE

**THREE PIRATES,**

**BAKER, BROUS, AND PETERSON,**

WHO WERE HUNG ON SMITH'S ISLAND, OPPOSITE PHILADA

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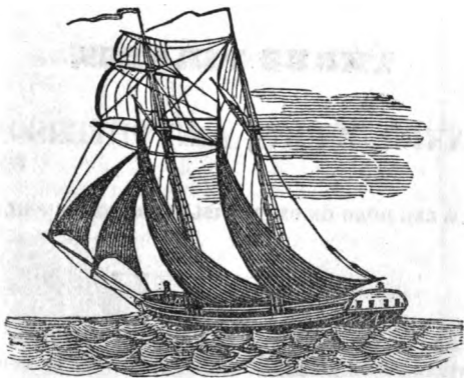
**DESPERATE**, sanguinary, and utterly hopeless, are the attempts of poor and ignorant sailors to commit piracy. Unable often to read a paper, to navigate a vessel, or to give any colour of business or of integrity to their situation, every cruiser, which may examine them, and every observer in the ports they enter, is led to suspect and arrest them. A robbery, the spoils of

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which are soon dissipated in a short course of riot and debauchery, is the first atrocious step of their career. Murder upon murder, butchering, and barbarity, so revolting to the mind of a generous sailor, are the means they must use. Ignorant of navigation, they are in danger of perishing at sea, or falling into a port in which they cannot escape detection. The persons whom they wickedly destroy, are often innocent men—often humane, generous and brave, and fathers of amiable and helpless families dependent on their enterprise and industry. Such was the case of the various sufferers, whose story is related by the firm, judicious and excellent officer, who commanded a pirated vessel of the United States.—We give it nearly in his own words :

---



*The Schooner Eliza.*

---

On the 27th day of August, 1799, Captain William Wheland set sail from the port of Philadelphia, on board

the schooner *Eliza*, bound for St. Thomas's; American seamen being at that time very hard to be obtained he was under the necessity of shipping three foreigners; so that his crew consisted of two Americans, Thomas Croft, (whom he afterwards appointed mate), and Jacob Suster, together with the three foreigners, who entered by the names of Jacob Baker, Joseph Brous, and Peter Peterson. The name of the supercargo was Charles Rey, a French gentleman, who had long resided in the island of St. Domingo, and had borne the commission of general in the armies of his Catholic Majesty, previously to the Revolution; but, like many others of his unfortunate countrymen, was under the necessity of seeking an asylum in America, when the negroes seized upon the government of that island.

He married an amiable young lady, of Baltimore, of French extraction, with whom he lived in the most perfect state of conjugal felicity, and by whom he had one child. He occasionally resided at Philadelphia and Baltimore; in each of which places, he had endeared himself to a numerous circle of acquaintance, by the cheerfulness of his conversation, and the suavity of his manners. His fortune, however, was broken by disappointments in his remittances from St. Domingo, and losses to a great amount. He resolved, therefore, to go out supercargo, with a view of regaining, if possible, some part of his immense property in the island, and to provide for a beloved wife and increasing family.

Neither Mr. Rey nor the captain had a good opinion of the three foreigners. They seemed to be men of revengeful spirits. Soon after the *Eliza* sailed, in going down the river, one of them, Peterson, (alias Louis Lacroix,) having refused to obey the orders of the mate, the captain struck him. On seeing this, Baker came to his assistance, and Mr. Rey stepped forward to pro-

tect the captain. When he had given Baker a beating they both promised to do their duty like good men, if he would forgive them, which he immediately promised to do. After this they behaved for fourteen days very well, until the 12th of September. At about 10 o'clock, P. M. it being the mate's watch on deck, Mr. Rey and the captain had gone to sleep. It appears that Baker, Brous, and Peterson, availed themselves of an opportunity, while the mate was asleep on deck, to give him a blow on the head with an axe; but, as no person was on deck at that time, except the mate and the three ruffians, a clear account of the murder of the mate cannot be obtained. Certain it is, however, that he was murdered and thrown overboard. By their account to the captain, Brous gave him the first blow and Baker, alias Boulanger, the second, which finished his existence; but, by their confession in Philadelphia, before Judge Peters, the mate and Brous, having some quarrel, and Brous declaring himself the master of the vessel, and the mate his prisoner of war, the mate struck him, which caused Brous, (alias Berouse,) in his own defence, to lift up an axe, and give him a blow on the head. This was a bad plea of self defence, as the mate was justified in striking a man who asserted that he had taken the vessel.

As soon as Thomas Croft was despatched, and while his body lay on the deck, they entered the cabin, and, approaching the berth of the sleeping captain, one of them struck him a blow over the head, and another over the arm, with an axe, and immediately he received a stab in the arm with a sword; upon which, he sprung up, and seized his pistols which were under his head. At the same time, Charles Rey, awakening from his sleep by the noise which this circumstance occasioned, jumped out of his berth in the cabin and cried out in

French, what is the matter? And seeing that the captain was assailed by the three villains, by the blood on his face and arm, he snatched a pistol suddenly from his hand, and turning upon them, they retreated from the cabin; but, in his attempt to follow them, he received a severe blow over the head with the pump brake or handle, which laid him on the cabin floor. However, in the course of half an hour, he attempted a second time to go on deck, and was knocked down as they supposed dead, though he had remains of life. As it was dark, neither the captain nor supercargo durst make a second attempt to go up from the cabin, through fear of meeting with a similar reception. No words can describe the horror of their situation for nearly half an hour. The captain's wounds were extremely painful, and he was almost covered with blood; while Mr. Rey seemed delirious from the blow he received on his head. It was expected that they would be overpowered by the ruffians, and murdered. Mr. Rey seeing a light upon deck, sprung up in a fit of desperation, to make a second effort, when he received a mortal blow on the head.

Thinking his generous friend, Mr. Rey, was murdered, and seeing himself covered with blood, Captain Wheland wrenched the pistol, with some difficulty, from Rey's dying grasp, and putting himself in a posture of defence, he begged they would spare his life. Not knowing, at that moment that the mate was murdered, he imagined the whole crew had risen against him, until the murderers informed him that all, except himself, were killed—bidding him come on deck, which he refused; as he was apprehensive that if he did, he should be then immediately murdered. They then ordered the captain to hand them up liquor, which he was incapable of doing, on account of his wounds;



nevertheless, as they saw him armed, they were afraid of entering the cabin. A kind of parley then took place in which it was agreed that the captain should navigate the vessel to the Spanish Main, on condition that they would spare his life. Under an assurance of his sparing their lives, they entered the cabin, supplied themselves with liquor, and then removed Mr. Rey upon deck. He was yet in life; but it was impossible, even with medical aid that he could have recovered. He appeared insensible to every thing that was going forward, after his last fatal wound. These monsters eager to finish the diabolical work they had begun, hastened to throw him overboard, although there were evident signs of life. They were not yet satiated with blood. Jacob Suster, the remaining seaman, who had not joined in the conspiracy, and who had been asleep in the fore-castle, during this scene of horror, was called aft, under the pretence that the captain wanted him; but, no sooner had he advanced within reach of these wretches, than he was knocked down with an axe, and immediately thrown into the sea. At that time light winds prevailed, and the vessel was making very little way, so that the captain could distinctly hear his groans for eight or ten minutes.

Jacob Suster was not known to the captain previous to his entering on board the schooner; but from his shipment to the hour of his death, his behaviour was that of a good and faithful seaman. He was born in Germantown, in the state of Pennsylvania, where his parents, it is said, now reside.

When these villains had finished their work of murder, being conscious of their own incapacity to navigate the vessel, they came into the cabin, and dressed Captain Wheland's wounds: They then proceeded to wash off the blood from the floor of the cabin, and from the deck;

and they began, as soon as morning appeared to pillage the property of the deceased.

When day-light appeared, Captain Wheland perceiving that they considered their own safety to depend upon his knowledge of navigation, he began to have some hopes that his life would be spared, and even that the vessel might be regained; but, though he found his pistols serviceable to him in keeping them off, he was apprehensive, that, in case of another conflict, they might be used against himself: He, therefore, threw his pistols overboard secretly—a circumstance which they never found out; for they always understood that Captain Wheland had them in his possession.

In this situation, in mutual fear of each other, the vessel proceeded, as the pirates supposed, towards the Spanish Main; but in this Captain W. deceived them by telling them that a strong current set in to the westward, and that they must keep a more easterly course, which they did, but without discovering a sail. During this time, though the weather was generally moderate, the sails and rigging not being well trimmed, received considerable damage; for the captain was not capable of handling a rope himself, and they were not under his subjection or orders; besides, when his arm, which he had constantly kept in a sling, began to grow better, he endeavoured to conceal it as much as possible from them, thinking that his security consisted, in a great measure, in their ideas of his weakness. In the meanwhile, their principal occupation was in rifling the vessel, breaking open packages, in search of any thing valuable, or for barrels of hams or other provisions; whilst Captain W. was on the watch for an opportunity to overcome them, and get possession of the schooner.

This opportunity presented on the 21st of September, on the ninth day after the murderers had seized the

vessel. Two of them, Peterson, (alias Lacroix), and Baker, (alias Boulanger), went down the fore scuttle to bring up some hams, while Brous was stooping down to make a fire in the cabouse. Captain W. immediately seized a club that lay near him, with his left hand, his right being still in a sling, and gave Brous a severe blow on the back of the head, which laid him flat on the deck. He attempted a second blow, but missed him. Mr. Rey's bull dog seeing him engaged, flew barking, to his assistance, which so much deterred Brous from turning upon the captain, that he ran aft and got upon the shrouds. Captain W. immediately snatched up an axe, and ran to the fore-scuttle, slipping his arm out of the sling, and forgetting his wounds lifted up the axe, as in the act to strike the two that were there, and whose heads were then above the deck, attempting to come out; but the moment they saw the axe over their heads, they sunk down into the hold and he instantly shut the scuttle over them; and, to make it more secure he dragged a large anchor from the bow, by means of a rope round the windlass, and laid it over the scuttle.

Having now Peterson and Baker secured, Captain Wheland proceeded to Brous, who was on the shrouds. At first he had no intention of yielding, but cried out to his companions that they might come aft into the cabin, and proceed that way to his assistance, while those below were vociferating loudly to him; but it being in French, Captain W. did not perfectly understand them.

When Brous saw himself entirely at the captain's mercy, he supplicated with great earnestness, that he would spare his life, which he promised to do, on condition that he would come down and submit himself to be confined, and behave in every respect as directed.

*Captain Whelan regaining possession of the Schooner Eliza.*





It was some time before he could be persuaded to believe that he would be spared; However, on further assurances, he was prevailed on to come down. As soon as he was on deck he fell on his knees, took the captain by the hand, and kissed it several times, making at the same time, the most solemn protestations of submission. Captain W. then ordered him to put his hands behind him, that he might tie them, which he instantly complied with. Captain W. then got a chain, and chained him upon deck to the ring-bolts. Brous being thus secured, Captain W. set about taking the necessary precautions for preserving what he had gained. He therefore went into the cabin, and brought up biscuit and other provisions, together with his quadrant books, &c. and secured the cabin, lest they might force a passage that way.

He now saw that he had an arduous task to accomplish; to navigate a schooner alone, and to watch his prisoners; from whom (if they had accomplished their intents) he could expect no mercy; but when he compared it with what he had already suffered, it appeared the height of happiness. The most difficult part he thought was over, and that he had only to suffer some privations, to trust to the protection of the Almighty, and his own vigilance. When he regained possession of the schooner he found himself in latitude 25 degrees North, and in longitude 60 deg. West. His prisoners below had plenty of provisions; but they were in darkness, and had no water. To prevent them making any attempts to regain their liberty he did not think it proper to drive them to desperation—but to show them that he was willing to let them live, and enjoy as many comforts as were consistent with his own safety, he burnt a hole with a spike, in the fore-scuttle, through which he could pour water and other refreshments; so that after

several attempts to break through, and believing that he had killed Brous; and thrown him overboard, they desisted, and seemed to submit to their fate. As for Brous, who was on deck, he was suffered at meal times, to have the partial use of his limbs, to change his position, &c., but he was not suffered to speak aloud, or be for a moment totally unfettered; for Capt. Wheland's greatest fears were from his getting loose, and suddenly surprising him while he slumbered. The captain never lay down nor had any profound sleep, while they were under his charge.

On the 4th of October, being thirteen days after the recapture of the vessel, Providence during all that time having blessed the Eliza with favourable weather except one gale, which lasted twenty-four hours, Capt. W. discovered the island of St. Bartholomew's, and at 7, P. M. was off the port; and by the assistance of a Swedish schooner, anchored to the leeward of the harbour; and at 10 P. M. John Peterson, Esq. commander of his Swedish majesty's brig Housare, sent his barge, with two officers and ten men, to his assistance, in which he was joined by A. Campbell, Esq. commander of the United States' brig Eagle, and on the 5th instant, anchored safe in port. After being moored Capt. Wheland landed and entered a protest against the prisoners for murder and piracy, with Job Wall, Esq. consul for the United States of America, who had the murderers put in irons, on board of the United States' brig Eagle, with orders to be delivered up to Thomas Tingey, Esq. commander of the United States' ship Ganges, and commodore of the leeward station.

After delivering up the prisoners to Capt. Campbell, Capt. Wheland was politely treated by the merchants and other inhabitants of the island; but the govern-

ment made a claim of salvage for the assistance the Swedish brig had given him, in bringing the vessel to her anchorage. However Capt. Wheland resisted the claim thus set up, and showed that it was contrary to the treaty with Sweden; but was obliged to pay two hundred dollars to the sailors of the Swedish brig for their assistance. Soon after Capt. Wheland sold the cargo, and purchased another of sugars, and having hired fresh hands, sailed from St. Bartholomew's on the 4th of November, and arrived at Gloucester Point the 25th of the same month.

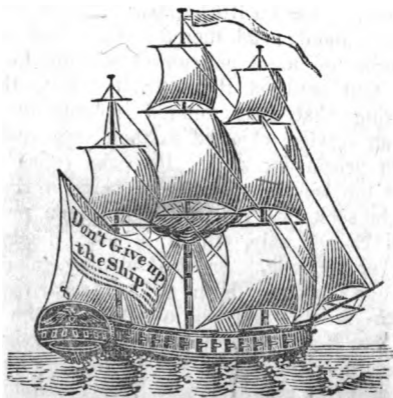
When the prisoners were brought to Philadelphia, they underwent an examination before Judge Peters, in which they confessed the piracy and murder, differing very little in the detail of the circumstances from this narrative. The pretence which they set up in their defence, was, that they were French prisoners, and in the service of the French Republic; that one of them Brous, (alias La Roche), bore a commission under that government; and therefore they had a right to make prize of an American vessel and to kill any person that resisted the attempt. But, the judge considering that they entered voluntarily into the American service, objected to their plea, and ordered them to prison for trial. Peterson, (alias Lacroix), had not the least appearance of being a Frenchman, though he spoke bad French, having been probably on board a French ship, and it is more likely he was a Dane or a Swede. As for Boulanger, (alias Baker), he was a Canadian, born at Les-trois-rivieres, of a creditable family, and was a soldier in the regiment called the Royal Canadians, in the service of his Britannic majesty, from which he deserted in the spring of 1799, and came into New York state by the way of Lake Champlain; so that it is not probable

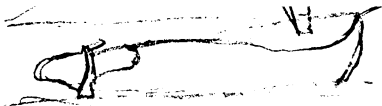


that he was ever in the service of France, or at sea before this fatal voyage. And it is highly probable that Brous, (alias La Roche,) was also a Canadian.

Their trial came on in the circuit court of the United States, before judges Chase and Peters, on Monday the 21st of April, 1800, they having for counsel Messrs. Dallas, Moylan, and Duponceau. The only evidence against them was the captain and their hardened conduct; together with Judge Peters, who was called upon to give the substance of their examination before him, previous to their commitment for trial. The jury, after retiring a short time, brought in a verdict of Guilty.

Sentence of death was passed upon them on Friday the 25th of April, and they were executed on the 9th of May, 1800, on the island opposite the city of Philadelphia.





**AN ACCOUNT**

**OF THE**

**BLOODY, AND ATROCIOUS PIRATE**

**JOHN GOW,**

**ALIAS CAPTAIN SMITH.**

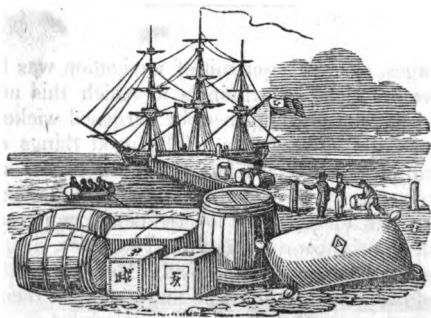
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In all ages, since the pursuit of navigation was begun, the dreadful class of criminals to which this account refers, has been distinguished for hardened wickedness, and unparalleled barbarity. The good things of the peaceful part of their fellow-men are seized with a bloody ferocity by these *wolves* of the human race, who, not-daring to enter, prowl for the nefarious purpose in the watery neighbourhoods of civil societies, disgracing the bosom of the *venerable ocean*. Hence it is, that the hand of every man is lifted in anger against them, and the forces of nations, engaged in the most inveterate warfare, suspend their own hostilities, for the short period which is necessary for the capture of the murderous robber on the high seas. The history of one

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PIRATE, is nearly the history of all. They run a course desperately hopeless in the eye of every observer, and sure victims of folly, finish their career at the common goal of infamy, death, and universal execration. They are denied by the general consent of nations, the decent refuge of the grave; for their vile bodies are suspended in the middle air, disclaimed, as it were, by *Earth* and *HEAVEN*. Their ashes are mixed, not with those of their relatives, of their friends, of their compatriots, or of their fellow-men, but are scattered by the breath of human execration, towards the four quarters of the world.

An example of this description will be found in the story of JOHN GOW. The assumed name of this man was CAPTAIN SMITH. He was a native of one of the Orkney islands in the north of Scotland, and having been instructed in maritime affairs, became so expert that he was appointed second mate of a ship, in which



he sailed on a voyage to Santa Cruz. When the vessel was ready to weigh anchor from that place, the merchants, who had shipped goods on board her, came to

pay a parting visit to the captain, and to give him their final instructions. On this occasion, the captain, agreeable to custom, entertained his company under an awning on the quarter-deck: and while they were regaling, some of the sailors preferred a complaint of ill-treatment they pretended to have received, particularly with regard to short allowance. The captain was irritated at so undeserved a charge, which seemed calculated to prejudice him in the opinion of his employers; but conscious of the uprightness of his intentions, he did not reply in anger, but only said that there was a steward on board who had the care of the provisions, and that all reasonable complaints should be redressed; on which the seamen retired with apparent satisfaction. The wind being fair, the captain directed his men to weigh anchor as soon as the merchants had quitted the vessel. It was observed that Patterson, one of the complainants, was very dilatory in executing his orders: on which the captain demanded why he did not exert himself to unfurl the sails: to which he made no direct answer, but was heard to mutter, "As we eat, so shall we work." The captain heard this, but took no notice of it, as he was unwilling to proceed to extremities. The ship had no sooner sailed, than the captain considered his situation as dangerous, on reflecting that his conduct had been complained of, and his orders disobeyed. Hereupon he consulted the mate, and they agreed to deposit a number of small arms in the cabin, in order to defend themselves in case of attack. This precaution might have been extremely salutary, but that they spoke so loud as to be overheard by two of the conspirators, who were on the quarter-deck. The captain likewise directed the mate to order Gow, who was second mate and gunner, to clean the arms, a circumstance that must insinuate to the latter, that the conspiracy was at least

suspected. Those who had overheard the conversation between the captain and mate, communicated the substance of it to Gow and the other conspirators, who thereupon resolved to carry the plan into immediate execution. Gow, who had previously intended to turn pirate, thought the present an admirable opportunity, as there were several chests of money on board the ship: therefore he proposed to his companions, that they should immediately embark in the enterprise: and they accordingly determined to murder the captain, and seize the ship. Half the vessel's company were regularly called to prayers in the great cabin, at eight o'clock in the evening, while the other half were doing duty on deck; and after service, those who had been in the cabin went to rest in their hammocks. The contrivance was to execute the plot at this juncture. Two of the conspirators only remained on duty: the rest being among those who retired to their hammocks. Between nine and ten at night a kind of watch word was given, which was, "Who fires first?" On this some of the conspirators left their hammocks, and going to the cabins of the surgeon, chief mate, and supercargo, they cut their throats while they were sleeping. The surgeon finding himself violently wounded, quitted his bed, and soon afterwards dropped on the floor and expired. The mate and supercargo held their hands to their throats, and going on the quarter deck, solicited a momentary respite to recommend their souls to Heaven: but even this favour was denied, for the villains, who found their knives had failed to destroy them, despatched them with pistols. The captain hearing a noise, demanded the occasion of it. The boatswain replied, that he did not know, but he was apprehensive that some of the men had either fallen, or been thrown overboard. The captain went to look over the ship's side, on which

two of the murderers followed, and tried to throw him into the sea; but he disengaged himself, and turned about to take a view of them, when one of them cut his throat, but not so as to kill him. The wounded captain solicited mercy, but instead of granting it, the villain stabbed him in the back with a dagger, and would have repeated his blow, had he not struck with such force, that he could not draw back the weapon. At this instant Gow, who had been assisting in the murders between the decks, came on the quarter-deck, and fired a brace of balls into the captain's body, which put a period to his life. As soon as the dead bodies were thrown overboard, Gow was unanimously appointed to the command of the ship. Those of the sailors who had not been engaged in the conspiracy, secreted themselves, some in the shrouds, others under the stores, in dreadful apprehension of sharing the fate of the captain and their murdered companions. Gow having assembled his associates on the quarter deck, appointed them their different stations on board, and it was agreed to commence pirates. The new captain now directed that the men who had concealed themselves should be informed that no danger should happen to them, if they did not interfere to oppose the new government of the ship, but keep such stations as were assigned them. The men, whose terrors had taught them to expect immediate death, were glad to comply with these terms; but the pirates, to enforce obedience to their orders, appointed two men to attend with drawn cutlasses, to terrify the others into submission, Gow and his companions now divided the most valuable effects in the cabin; and then ordering liquor to be brought on the quarter-deck, they consumed the night in drinking, while those unconnected in the conspiracy, had the care of working the ship. The crew originally consisted of twenty-four men, of whom four

had been murdered, and eight were conspirators; and before morning, four of the other men had approved of the proceedings of the pirates; so that there were only eight remaining in opposition to the newly usurped authority. On the following day the new captain summoned these eight men to attend him, and telling them he was determined to go on a cruising voyage, said, that they should be well treated if they were disposed to act in concert with the rest of the crew. He said, that every man should fare in the same manner, and that good order and discipline were all that would be required. He said farther, that the captain's inhumanity had produced the consequences which had happened; that those who had not been concerned in the conspiracy, had no reason to fear any ill consequences from it; that they had only to discharge their duty as seamen, and every man should be rewarded according to his merit. To this address, these unfortunate honest men made no kind of reply, and Gow interpreted their silence into an assent to measures which it was not in their power to oppose. After this declaration of the will of the new captain, they were permitted to range the ship at their pleasure; but as some of them appeared to act very reluctantly, a strict eye was kept on their conduct; for, as guilt is ever suspicious, these pirates were greatly apprehensive of being brought to justice by means of some of these men. Williams, who acted as lieutenant of the vessel, and was distinguished by the ferocity of his nature, had an opportunity of exerting his cruelty, by beating these unhappy sailors, a privilege that he did not fail to exert with a degree of severity that rendered his very name detestable. The ship thus seized, had been called the *George Galley*, but the pirates gave her the name of the *Revenge*, and having mounted several guns, they steered towards Spain and

Portugal, in expectation of making a capture of wine, of which they were greatly in want. They soon made prize of an English vessel laden with fish, bound from Newfoundland to Cadiz; but having no use for the cargo, they took out the captain and four men who navigated the ship, which they sunk. One of the seamen whom they took out of the captured vessel, was named James Belvin, a man admirably calculated for their purpose, as he was by nature cruel, and by practice hardened in that cruelty. He said to Gow that he was willing to enter into all his schemes, for he had been accustomed to the practice of acts of barbarity. This man was thought a valuable acquisition to the crew, as several of the others appeared to act from motives of fear, rather than of inclination. The next vessel taken by the pirates was a Scotch ship bound to Italy with pickled herrings; but this cargo, like the former, being of no use to them, they sunk the vessel, having first taken out the men, arms, ammunition, and stores.

After cruizing eight or ten days, they saw a vessel about the size of their own, to which they gave chase. She hoisted French colours, and crowded all sail in order to get clear of them, and after a chase of three days and nights, they lost the French vessel in a fog. Being distressed for water, they now steered towards the Madeira islands, of which they came in sight in two days; but not thinking it prudent to enter the harbour, they steered off and on for several days, in expectation of making prize of some Portuguese or Spanish vessels; but their hopes were frustrated. Their distress increasing, they stood in for the harbour, and brought the ship to anchor, but at a considerable distance from the shore. This being done they sent seven men well armed, in a boat, with instructions to board a ship, cut her cables, and bring her off but if they failed in this, they were to attempt to make



prize of wine and water to bring in the boats to the ships. Both these schemes, however, were frustrated, it being easily known from the distance they lay at, that they were pirates. When they had cruized off for some days they found themselves in such distress, that it became absolutely necessary to seek immediate relief: on which they sailed to Porta Santa, a Portuguese settlement at the distance of about ten leagues.

On their arrival off this place, they sent their boat on shore with a present of salmon and herrings for the governor, and the name of the port to which they pretended to be bound. The persons sent on shore were civilly treated by the governor, who accompanied some of his friends on board the ship. Gow and his associates received the governor very politely, and entertained him and his company in the most hospitable manner; but the boats belonging to the pirates not coming on board with some provisions they had expected, and the governor and his attendants preparing to depart, Gow and his people threatened to take away their lives unless they instantly furnished them with what they required. The surprise of the Portuguese governor and his friends on this occasion, is not to be expressed. They dreaded instant death, and with every sign of extreme fear, solicited that their lives might be spared. Gow being peremptory in his demands, the governor sent a boat repeatedly on shore, till the pirates were furnished with such articles as they wanted. This business being ended, the Portuguese were permitted to depart, and the pirates determined to steer towards the coast of Spain, where they soon arrived. After cruising a few days off Cape St. Vincent, they fell in with an English vessel bound from the coast of Guinea, to America, with slaves, but had been obliged to put into the port of Lisbon: though it was of no use to them to capture such a vessel,

they took it and putting on board the captain and men they had heretofore taken, and taking out all the provisions and some of the sails, they left the ship to proceed on her voyage. Falling in with a French ship laden with wine, oil, and fruit, they took out the lading and gave the vessel to the Scotch captain, in return for his ship which they had sunk. The Scotchman was likewise presented with some valuable articles and permitted to take his men to sail with him, all of whom did so except one, who continued with the pirates through choice.

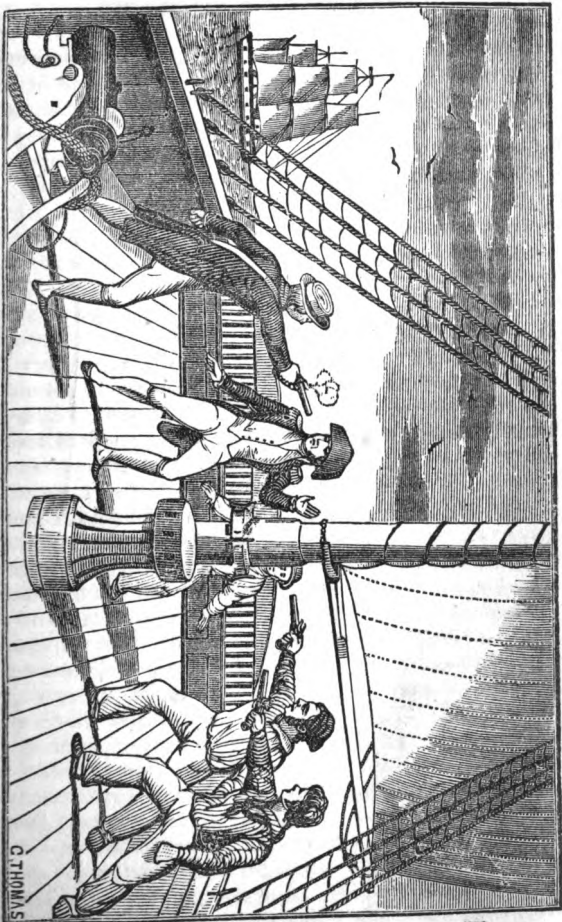
The day previous to this affair, they observed a French ship bearing down towards them, on which Gow ordered his people to lay to, but observing that the vessel mounted two and thirty guns, and seemed proportionably full of men, he assembled his people and observed to them that it would be madness in them to think of engaging so superior a force. The crew in general were of Gow's opinion; but Williams the lieutenant said Gow was a coward, and unworthy to command the vessel. The fact was, that Gow possessed somewhat of calm courage, while Williams' impetuosity was of the most brutal. The latter, after behaving in the most abusive manner, demanded that the former should give orders for fighting the vessel; but Gow refusing to comply, the other presented his pistol to shoot him, which only flashed in the pan. This being observed by two of the other pirates named Winter and Patterson, they both fired at Williams, when one of them wounded him in the arm and the other in the belly.

He dropped as soon as the pieces were discharged, and the other seamen, thinking he was dead, were about to throw him overboard, when he suddenly sprang on his feet, jumped into the hold, and swore he would set fire to the powder-room; and as his pistol was yet loaded

there was every reason to think he would actually have done so, if he had not been instantly seized, and his hands chained behind him, in which condition he was put among the French prisoners, who were terrified at the sight of him, it having been a common practice with him to flog the poor prisoners by way of entertainment.

No engagement happened with the French ship, which held on her way, and two days afterwards the pirates took a ship belonging to Bristol, which was laden with salt fish, and bound from Newfoundland to Oporto. Having taken out the provisions, and many of the stores, they compelled two of the crew to sail with them, and then put the French prisoners on board the newly captured vessel, which was just on the point of sailing, when they began to reflect in what manner Williams should be disposed of. At length they determined to put him on board the Bristol ship, the commander of which was desired to turn him over to the first English man of war he should meet with, that he might experience the justice due to his crimes; and in the meantime to keep him in the strictest confinement. On the departure of the Bristol ship, Gow and his crew began to reflect on their situation. They were apprehensive, that as soon as intelligence of their proceedings reached Portugal, some ships would be sent in pursuit of them. Hereupon they called a kind of council, in which every one gave his opinion, as dictated by his hope of profit, or by his fears. Some of them advised going to the coast of Guinea, others to North America, and others again to the West Indies; but Gow proposed to sail to the isles of Orkney, on the north of Scotland, where, he said, they might dispose of their effects, and retire and live on the produce. To induce his people to comply with his proposal, Gow

*Lieutenant Williams attempting Gov's life.*



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represented that they were much in want of water and provisions of every kind; that their danger would be great if they continued longer on the high seas, and above all, that it was highly necessary for them to repair their ship, which they could not do with any degree of safety in a southern port. He likewise said that if any ships should be despatched in quest of them, they would not think of searching for them in a northern latitude, so that their voyage that way would be safe; and if they would follow his directions, much booty might be obtained by plundering the houses of the gentlemen residing near the sea coast. The danger of alarming the country was started as an objection to these proposals: but Gow said that they should be able to despatch all their business, and sail again, before such an event could happen. Apparently convinced by this reasoning, they steered northward, and entering a bay of one of the Orkney Islands, Gow assembled his crew, in order to instruct them to say that they were bound from Cadiz to Stockholm, but contrary winds driving them past the Sound, till it was filled with ice, they were under the necessity of putting in to clean their ship, and that they would pay ready money for such articles as they stood in need of. It happened that a smuggling vessel lay at this time in the bay. It belonged to the Isle of Man, and being laden with brandy and wine from France, had come north-about, to steer clear of the custom-house cutters. In their present situation, Gow thought it prudent to exchange goods with the commander of the vessel, though, in any other, he would hardly have been so ceremonious. A Swedish vessel entering the bay two days afterwards, Gow likewise exchanged some goods with the captain. When the boat went ashore one evening, a young fellow who had been com-

pe..ed to take part with the pirates, got away from the rest of the boat's crew, and after laying concealed sometime at a farm-house, hired a person to show him the road to Kirkward, the principal place on the islands, and twelve miles distant from the bay where the ship lay at anchor. Here he applied to a magistrate, said he had been forced into the service, and begged that he might be entitled to the protection of the law, as the fear of death alone had induced him to be connected with the pirates.

Having given a full account of all their irregular proceedings, the sheriff issued his precepts to the constables and other peace-officers to call in the aid of the people, to assist in bringing the villains to justice. About this juncture, ten of Gow's sailors, who had likewise taken an involuntary part with the pirates, seized the long-boat, and having made the main land of Scotland, coasted the country till they arrived at Edinburgh, where they were imprisoned on suspicion of being pirates. Notwithstanding these alarming circumstances, Gow was so careless of his own safety, that he did not put immediately to sea, but resolved to plunder the houses of the gentlemen on the coast, to furnish himself with fresh provisions. In pursuance of this resolution, he sent his boatswain and ten armed men to the house of Mr. Honeyman, high-sheriff of the county: and the master being absent, the servants opened the door without suspicion. Nine of the gang went into the house to search for treasure, while the tenth was left to guard the door. The sight of men thus armed, occasioned much terror to Mrs. Honeyman and her daughter, who shrieked with dreadful apprehension for their personal safety; but the pirates, employed in the search of plunder, had no idea of molesting the ladies. Mrs. Honeyman, running to the door, saw the man who stood

guard there, of whom she asked the meaning of the outrage : to which he calmly replied, that they were pirates, and had come thither only to ransack the house. Recollecting that she had a considerable quantity of gold in a bag, she returned and put it in her lap, and ran by the man at the door, who had no idea but that the wish to preserve her life occasioned her haste. The boatswain finding no money, declared that he would destroy the family writings if cash was not produced ; but this being overheard by Miss Honeyman, she threw the writings out of the window, jumped out after them, and (it being a low house) escaped unhurt, and carried them off. In the interim the pirates seized the linen, plate, and other valuable articles, and then walked in triumph to their boat, compelling one of the servants to play before them on the bagpipes. On the following day they weighed anchor, but on the evening of the same day came again to anchor, near another island. Here the boatswain and some men were sent on shore in search of plunder, but did not obtain any. They then sailed to an island called Calf Sound, with the intention of robbing the house of Mr. Fea, who had been an old school-fellow with Gow. The house was rather pitched upon, as Gow supposed that Mr. Fea could not have yet heard of the transactions at Mr. Honeyman's ; but in this he was mistaken : however, Mr. Fea, on account of the then indisposition of his wife, was ill qualified for opposing them. His house was situate near the sea shore ; he had only six servants at home when the pirates appeared off the coast, and these were by no means equal to a contest with the plunderers. It may not be improper to remark, that the tide runs so high among these islands, and beats with such force against the rocks, that the navigation is frequently attended with great danger. Gow, who had not boats to assist



him in an emergency, and was unskilled in the navigation of those seas, made a blunder in turning into the bay of Calf Sound ; for standing too near the point of a small island called the Calf, the vessel was in the utmost danger of being run on shore. This little island was merely a pasture for sheep belonging to Mr. Fea, who had at that time six hundred feeding on it. Gow having cast his anchor too near the shore, so that the wind could not bring him off, sent a boat with a letter to Mr. Fea, requesting that he would lend him another boat, to assist him in heaving off the ship, by carrying out an anchor, and assuring him that he would not do the least injury to any individual. As Gow's messenger did not see Mr. Fea's boat, the latter gave him an evasive answer, and, on the approach of night, ordered his servants to sink his own boat, and hide the sails and rigging. While they were obeying this order, five of Gow's men came on shore in the boat, and proceeded, doubly armed, towards Fea's house. The latter advanced towards them with an assurance of friendship, and begged that they would not enter the house, for that his wife was exceeding ill ; that the idea of their approach had greatly alarmed her ; and that the sight of them might probably deprive her of life. The boatswain replied, that they had no design to terrify Mrs. Fea, or any other person, but that the most rigorous treatment must be expected, if the use of the boat was denied them. Mr. Fea represented how dangerous it would be for him to assist them, on account of the reports circulated to their discredit ; but he offered to entertain them at an adjacent alehouse, and they accepted the invitation, as they observed that he had no company. While they were drinking, Mr. Fea ordered his servants to destroy their boat, and when they had done so, to call him hastily out of their company, and inform him of it. These

orders were exactly complied with ; and when he had left the pirates, he directed six men, well armed, to station themselves behind a hedge, and if they observed him to come alone with the boatswain, instantly to seize him ; but if he came with all the five desperadoes, he would walk forward, so as to give them an opportunity of firing without wounding himself. After giving these orders, Fea returned to the company, whom he invited to his house, on the promise of their behaving peaceably, and said he would make them heartily welcome. They all expressed a readiness to attend him, in the hope of getting the boat : but he told them he would rather have the boatswain's company only, and would afterwards send for his companions. This being agreed to, the boatswain set forward with two brace of pistols, and walking with Mr. Fea till they came to the hedge where his men were concealed, he then seized



*Mr. Fea securing the boatswain of the pirate vessel.*

him by the collar, while the others took him into custody before he had time to make any defence. The boat-

swain called aloud for his men ; but Mr. Fea, forcing a handkerchief into his mouth, bound him hand and foot, and then left one of his own people to guard him, while himself and the rest went back to the public house. There being two doors to the house, they went some to the one, and some to the other, and rushing at once, they made prisoners of the other four men, before they had time to have recourse to their arms for defence. The five pirates being thus in custody, were sent to an adjacent village, and separately confined : in the interim Mr. Fea sent messengers round the islands, to acquaint the inhabitants with what he had done ; desiring them to haul their boats on the beach, that the pirates should not swim to, and steal them ; and requesting that no person would venture to row within the reach of the pirates' guns. On the following day the wind shifted to the north-west, and blew hard, on which the pirates conceived hopes of getting out to sea ; but the person employed to cut the cable missing some of his strokes, the ship's way was checked ; she turned round, and the cable parting, the vessel was driven on Calf Island. Reduced to this dilemma, without even a boat to assist in getting off the ship, Gow hung out a white flag, as an intimation that he was willing to treat on friendly terms : but Mr. Fea, having now little doubt of securing the pirates, wrote to Gow, and told him he had been compelled to make prisoners of his men on account of their insolent behaviour. He likewise told him that the whole country was alarmed, and the most probable chance of securing his own life, would be by surrendering, and becoming an evidence against his accomplices. Four armed men in an open boat carried this letter to Gow, who sent for an answer that he would give goods to the value of a thousand pounds to be assisted in his escape : but if this should be refused, he would set fire

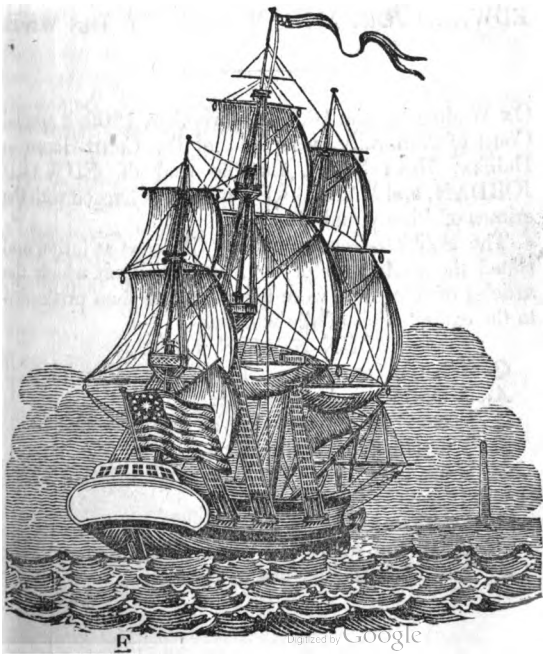
to the ship, rather than become a prisoner. He even said, that he would trust to the mercy of the waves, if Mr. Fea would indulge him with a boat. On reading this letter, Mr. Fea determined to persuade him to submit, and therefore took four men, well armed, in a boat, and rowed towards the ship: but he previously placed a man with a flag in his hand at the top of his house to make such signals as might be proper to prevent his falling a sacrifice to any artifice of the pirates. The instructions given to the servant were, that he should wave the flag once if he saw one of the pirates swim towards the shore; but if he beheld four or more of them, he should wave it constantly till his master got out of danger. Mr. Fea rowing forwards, spoke through a trumpet, asking Gow to come on shore, and talk with him, which the latter said he would. Hereupon Fea lay to, in waiting for him; but at this juncture he saw a man swimming from the ship, with a white flag in his hand, on which the man on the house waved his flag; but soon afterwards he was observed to wave it continually, on which Mr. Fea's boat retired, and those in her presently saw five more of the pirates swimming towards them; but they returned to the ship as soon as they saw the others were aware of the artifice. The first pirate, who carried the white flag, now retired to a corner of the island, and calling to Mr. Fea, told him that "the captain had sent him a bottle of brandy." Fea replied, that he hoped to see Gow hanged, and that he was inclined to shoot the messenger for his insolence; on which the fellow decamped with great precipitation. Soon after this Gow wrote a most humble letter to Mrs. Fea, imploring her interference in his behalf; and though she determined not to interest herself in his favour, yet he resolved to go on shore; and taking a white flag in his hand, he made signals for a parley;

on which Mr. Fea sent some armed men to seize him living or dead. On their meeting, Gow insisted that one of the men should be left as a hostage; and this circumstance being seen by Mr. Fea, from the windows of his house, he sailed over to the island, where he reprimanded his people for delivering the hostage, and likewise told Gow that he was his prisoner. Gow replied, that could not be, since a hostage had been delivered for him. To this Mr. Fea replied, that he had issued no orders for delivering the hostage, and that the man who had foolishly engaged himself as such, must submit to the consequence; but he advised Gow, for his own sake, to make signals, that the man might obtain his liberty. This Gow refused to do: but Fea made signals which deceived the pirates, two of whom came on shore with the man, and were instantly taken into custody. Gow was now disarmed of his sword, and made prisoner, after begging to be shot with the sword in his possession. The leader of the gang being thus secured, Mr. Fea had recourse to stratagem to get all the rest into his power. He now compelled Gow to make signals for some of the men to come on shore, which they readily did and were apprehended by men concealed to take them as they arrived. Fea now insinuated to Gow that he would let him have a boat to escape, if he would send for his carpenter to repair it, and to bring with him two or three hands to assist him: Gow complied; the men came off, and were severally seized; but as there were other people still on board, Mr. Fea had recourse to the following contrivance to get them into his possession. He directed his own servants to provide hammers, nails, &c., and make a pretence of repairing the boat: and, while this was doing, told Gow to send for his men, since he must have possession of the ship before he would deliver up the boat. The pirates on

receiving their late captain's orders to come on shore, were very doubtful how to act, but after a short debate, and having no officers to command them, they shared what money they possessed, and coming on shore were all taken into custody. Thus, by an equal exertion of power and artifice, Mr. Fea secured these dangerous men, twenty-eight in number, without a single man being killed or wounded, and only with the aid of a few countrymen, a force apparently very insufficient to the accomplishment of such a business. When all the prisoners were properly secured, Mr. Fea sent an express to Edinburgh, requesting that proper persons might be sent to conduct them to that city. As soon as his express arrived, another was forwarded to London, to learn the royal pleasure respecting the disposal of the pirates: and the answer brought was, that the Lord Justice Clerk should immediately send them to London, in order to their being tried by a Court of Admiralty, to be held for that purpose. When these orders reached Edinburgh, a guard of soldiers marched to fetch them to that city; and on their arrival, they were put on board the Greyhound frigate, which immediately sailed for the Thames. On their arrival in the river, a detachment of the guards from the Tower attended their landing, and conducted them to the Marshalsea Prison, where they once more saw Lieutenant Williams, who had been conveyed to England by the man of war which received him from the Bristol captain at Lisbon. This Williams, though certain of coming to an ignominious end, took a malignant pleasure in seeing his companions in like circumstances of calamity. A commission was now made out for their trial: and soon after their commitment they underwent separate examinations before the Judges of the Admiralty Court in Doctor's Commons, when five of them, who appeared to be less

guilty than the rest, were admitted evidences against their accomplices. The behaviour of Gow, from his first commitment, was reserved and morose. He considered himself as an assured victim to the justice of the laws, nor entertained any hope of being admitted an evidence, as Mr. Fea had hinted. Being removed from the Marshalsea to Newgate, their trials came on at the Old Baily. Gow at first refused to plead, in consequence of which he was sentenced to be pressed to death in the usual manner. His reason for this refusal was, that he had an estate which he wished might descend to a relation, and which would have been the case, had he died under the pressure. But when the proper officers were about to inflict this punishment, he begged to be taken again to the bar to plead, of which the judge being informed, humanely granted his request: and the consequence was, that he, Williams, and six others were convicted, and received sentence of death: the rest were acquitted, as it appeared that they had acted by compulsion. While under sentence of death, Gow was visited by some Presbyterian ministers, who laboured to convince him of the atrociousness of his crime, but he seemed deaf to all their admonitions and exhortations. Williams was equally, if not more, hardened. He seemed insensible to the hope of happiness, or the fear of torment in a future state. He boasted, to those who visited him, of his constantly advising Gow, "to tie the prisoners back to back, and throw them into the sea," to prevent their giving evidence against them. Gow, Williams, and the six accomplices, suffered at Execution-Dock, August 11th, 1729. Gow's friends, anxious to put him out of pain, pulled his legs so forcibly that the rope broke, and he dropped down, on which he was again taken up to the gibbet, and when he was dead, was hanged in chains on the banks of the Thames.

How awful was the end of the life of this miserable criminal! He looked not with harmony, regard, or a single comfortable feeling towards one human being, in the last agonies of an ignominious death. But we must shudder to reflect upon the countenance he was immediately to present before the throne of **THE ALMIGHTY**.





# AN ACCOUNT

OF THE

## HORRID MURDER AND PIRACY

PERPETRATED ON BOARD THE THREE SISTERS

BY

EDWARD JORDAN & MARGARET HIS WIFE

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ON Wednesday the 16th of November, 1809, a special Court of Admiralty, was held at the Court-House in Halifax, Nova Scotia, for the trial of EDWARD JORDAN, and MARGARET his wife, charged with the crimes of Piracy and Murder.

The Soliciter-General opened the case at large, and stated the particulars of the evidence, upon which the articles of allegation were founded. He then proceeded to the examination of the witnesses.

JOHN STAIRS, sworn.

Q. What is your profession and occupation in life?

A. A mariner and ship master.

Q. What ship or vessel did you last command?

A. The schooner Three Sisters.

Q. Who gave you the command of the Three Sisters?

A. Jonathan and John Tremain.

Q. When and where did you take the command?

A. The 15th of July last at Halifax.

(8)

**Q.** On what voyage did you sail with her?

**A.** To Perce, for the purpose of procuring a cargo of fish Jordan had promised to deliver.—We sailed on or about the 17th of July.

**Q.** Who sailed with you in the schooner?

**A.** John Kelly, mate; Thomas Heath seaman, and pilot; Benjamin Matthews, seaman; and Edward Jordan and Patrick Cinnet, passengers—the latter was sickly.

**Q.** When did you arrive at Perce?

**A.** The latter end of July or first of August.

**Q.** Did you take in a cargo at Perce?

**A.** Part of a cargo—on freight 200 Quintals from Theophilus Fox; 300 from Wm. Driscoll; and about 90 or 100 from the prisoner Jordan on account of my owners Jonathan and John Tremain.

**Q.** When did you sail from Perce?

**A.** On the 10th of September, for Halifax.

**Q.** Name the crew and passengers then on board?

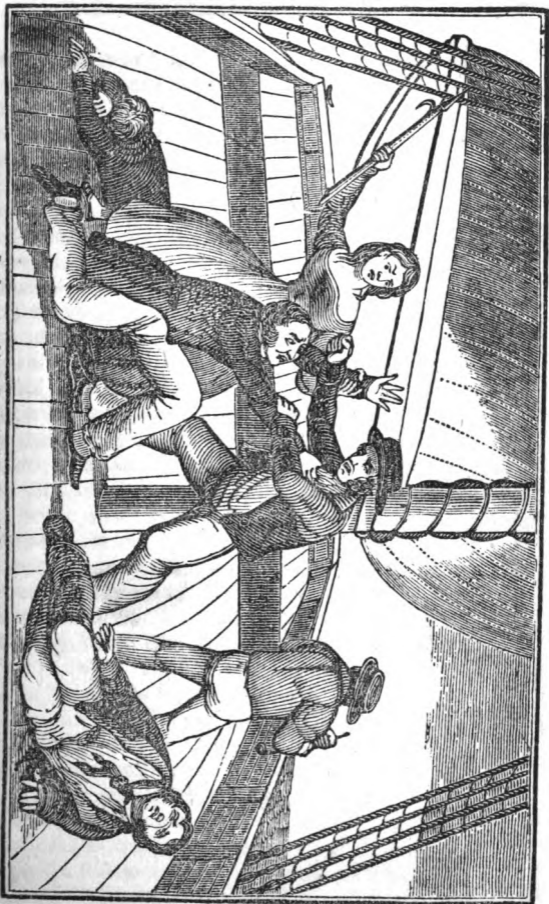
**A.** Myself, John Kelly, Thomas Heath, Benjamin Matthews, Edward and Margaret Jordan, the prisoners, and their four children—three girls and one boy.

**Q.** Relate, fully and distinctly, all the circumstances that occurred on your voyage from Perce to Halifax?

**A.** Nothing material happened until the 13th of September, when between Cape Canso and White Head, myself and crew, except Kelly, who was at the helm, went forward to trim the sails, the wind coming off the land. Between 11 and 12 o'clock, I went below, for the purpose of getting my quadrant to take the sun, and was soon followed by Heath. I was standing near the table, directly below the sky-light, turning over the leaves of a book—Heath near, but rather behind me; when looking up, I saw Jordan presenting a pistol down the sky-light, I thought at me; I was startled, and the

pistol was discharged—the ball from which grazed my nose and side of my face, and entered the breast of Heath, who fell on his knees and cried: “*Oh my God, I am killed*”—Heath soon after crawled on deck. When I recovered from my fright, and the first effects of the powder which lodged in my face, I went to my trunk for my pistols—but I found the trunk had been forced open, and the pistols taken.—I then searched for my cutlass, but could not find it. I then determined to go on deck—on going up the ladder, I met the prisoner, Edward Jordan, in the act of descending—one of his feet was on the ladder—he held an axe in his right hand and a pistol in his left. I seized his arms, and begged him for God’s sake to spare my life, shoved him backwards, when he snapt the pistol—I instantly grasped it by the muzzle, wrested it from him, and threw it overboard—and called Kelly the mate, to my assistance, but he made no answer. Benjamin Matthews came hastily aft, he appeared to be wounded, and fell down. By this time I had taken the axe from Jordan, and endeavoured to strike him, but he held me so forcibly as to prevent me—I however threw the axe overboard. I again called Kelly; but his back was towards me, and he in the attitude of loading a pistol, when Margaret Jordan struck me several times with a boat-hook handle—observing, “*is it Kelly you want—I’ll give you Kelly.*” Before I went on deck I distinctly heard four or five pistol reports. On coming on deck, I saw Heath lying dead on the starboard side of the vessel, bleeding very much. After disentangling myself from Jordan, I went forward—Jordan aft, for another axe, with which, returning, he struck Matthews three or four times on the back of the head. Finding no chance of my life if I remained on board and that I might as well be drowned as shot, I threw

*Jordan attacking Captain Stairs, and death of Heath.*





the hatch overboard, jumped after it, and got on; where I remained about three hours and a half, when I was picked up by an American fishing schooner, in a weak and almost senseless state—on recovering a little, I told the captain what had happened—then went on deck, and borrowed a spy glass, with which I saw one or two sail of vessels at a great distance to leeward—I asked the captain to bear away and see what they were, thinking one might be the Three Sisters, but they refused—saying that if he went out of his voyage, and any accident happened to him, the underwriters would not pay the insurance.—I then asked him to keep the shore a-board and land me at Halifax—he said he would, was he not afraid of having his men impressed, as on his outward bound passage he had his pilot taken by the Bream or Mullet schooner. I then told him he might perhaps be enabled to put me ashore, before he passed Cape Sable—but as the wind was not favourable, we went directly to Hingham, (Massachusetts,) from thence I travelled to Boston, where I published the circumstances in the newspapers, and had circular letters, describing the vessel, and persons of Kelly, Jordan, his wife and family, sent to the collectors in the American ports by W. S. Skinner, Esq., acting British Consul.

JOHN PIGOT, sworn:

**Q.** What is your occupation?

**A.** A fisherman, and labourer, at Fortunè Bay, New foundland.

**Q.** How long have you been there?

**A.** Five years next spring.

**Q.** How long is it since you left it?

**A.** Eight weeks to-morrow.

**Q.** In whose company did you leave it?

**A.** In the prisoners.

**Q.** By what name did the prisoner (Edward Jordan) go when first you saw him?

**A.** Either John or Edward Tremain—I do not recollect which.

**Q.** When and where did you first see the prisoner, Edward Jordan?

**A.** On the 24th September last, at Little Bay, in Fortune Bay.

**Q.** Relate to the court, how you became acquainted with the prisoner—What dealings you have had with him—and any particulars you know, which, in any way, relate to the circumstances that have occasioned the present prosecution?

**A.** I went on board the schooner Three Sisters, on Sunday the 24th September last, for the purpose of procuring a passage to Halifax; as they were short of hands, I shipped with the prisoner (Edward Jordan) to come to Halifax. The next day (Monday) he told me to go into the hold to do some work: I went and saw that the fish was not stowed, but tossed carelessly about; this circumstance, with that part of the hatch being gone, alarmed me; I called Wm. Crew, and told him I did not like to go in the schooner to Halifax; he asked why; I answered I was sure she was on the runaway account; then said he if you do not go I will not. I was a going ashore in the evening with W. Crew a man, who said his name was John Stairs, but whose proper name I soon found out was John Kelly; he called himself the captain of the schooner—I asked him for the protection he had promised me, which would save me from the impress at Halifax—he replied that he would give it to me when we got to sea—I then said I would not go to sea without it. Soon after we landed, I went to one Hifford, master of a brig lying there, and asked him if Kelly could give me a protec-

tion—he said no—then as I was not inclined to go in the vessel, I thought it a good excuse to say that if I did not get the protection promised me, I would not go, and demanded it of Kelly, who said he could not give me one—I then told him to provide a man in my place. He immediately went into the counting house of a Mr. Thorn, and soon returned with the prisoner Edward Jordan, and told him, I refused to go in the schooner—he asked me what my reason was—I said it was not my wish to go—Jordan then went into the counting house and mentioned to Mr. Thorn my refusal, who came out accompanied by a justice of the peace; they asked us why we would not go in the vessel—Crew then said something, which I did not distinctly hear, to Mr. Thorn, who immediately after turned towards me, and said; “Pigot, this is some of your doings;” I told that it was because the prisoner and Kelly had not fulfilled the agreement as respected their furnishing me with a protection, which would prevent my being pressed on board a man of war at Halifax.

The prisoner then told Mr. Thorn to give me a bill of lading for 100 quintals of fish, which Mr. Thorn did. Notwithstanding I had got the bill of lading, I was still afraid to go, and hesitated before them; which Mr. Thorn, and the justice of the peace observed, who said, if I did not immediately go on board, that I should be tied to a flag-staff, punished, and have man of war for my money. I could not help myself, but carried my clothes on board; and afterwards, returned to the counting house of Mr. Thorn, for the bill of lading, and some accounts, I had left there; I again saw Mr. Thorn, and told him I thought he had got me into a hobble; he asked me, in what way; I said that I did not think the schooner was bound to Halifax, because that the prisoner was purchasing articles from him



which he could get much cheaper at Halifax; after which I told him I had a great mind to take the woods for my money, leaving all my goods on board. He then said that if I did not go on board instantly, he would put me in irons; or if I attempted to run away, he would publish me in the papers in such a manner that I would not be able to show my nose in any part of Newfoundland. Finding myself thus circumstanced, I went on board, where I was again questioned by Jordan as to my reasons for not wishing to go into the schooner, when I told him I thought she was on the runaway account—he said she was not. We put to sea a short time after, and went to St. Mary's, where we remained six or seven days, and from which place neither crew nor myself would start without a pilot or navigator.—We, however got a pilot to St. John, and again sailed, but before we could make another harbour the wind failed us, and we were becalmed. A boat was passing us, bound to St. John, where Jordan wished to go in order to obtain a navigator; he hailed her, and requested a passage; the boat came along side, and took Jordan and myself on board; we arrived at St. John, got a navigator, and procured a boat to carry us to the schooner; we sailed for some time along the shore, and at last found the schooner at Trepassay: it was night when we got on board. Soon after Jordan (whom I supposed to be drunk) and Kelly, had some words and struck each other, when the former went to a trunk where two pistols used to be kept, but he could not find them: Kelly by this time, had drawn them from under his bed, but Pat Power soon took them from him. Jordan called several times for a pistol or musket, to shoot his wife with, which I believe he would have done had I not prevented him. Next morning about an hour before day, the prisoner, Margaret Jor

dan, called me up, and asked me to take her with some clothes, on shore, assigning as a reason that her husband wanted to kill her—I told her there was no danger of that, while Crew and myself, remained on board; she then said she would leave her life on my hands; after which, I told her I would go off and bring a neighbour of her's, who might take her ashore if he pleased. She told me if I would take her ashore she would tell me something that would serve me. Power, Crew, and myself, soon after hauled up our chests on deck, when Jordan said that he would shoot the first person that attempted to remove them from there—I heard Jordan several times say, that he would shoot his wife for that she was the only person that could hang him, and I asked her as often, why her husband so threatened her: she said he always did when he was in liquor. Jordan told me that he owed some money in Halifax, and that he wanted to go to some market where he could sell his fish so advantageously as to enable him to return to Halifax, and pay his debts.

PATRICK POWER was sworn—

He said—I first became acquainted with the prisoner, Edward Jordan, at St. John, Newfoundland; I had just arrived from the French shore, where the boatman who had carried the prisoner (whom he called John Tremain) to St. John, met me; he said he was glad to see me, for as I had been in the habit of going to Ireland every fall for supplies for the spring fishery, he could serve me; as the prisoner Edward Jordan, wanted a navigator for a schooner bound to Ireland, then lying at the Bay of Bulls; he went and told the prisoner had found a navigator. Soon after I saw the prisoner, and accompanied him and Pigot to a private room; he then told me he had a schooner lying at the Bay of Bulls, laden with fish, that there were four seamen on board,

and that he wanted me to just navigate her to Limerick or Galway in Ireland.

[Here a paper was produced ; it was an agreement entered into at St. John, Newfoundland, the 19th of October, between the prisoner and Power, the latter was to navigate the schooner to Ireland, and the former to pay him eleven pounds a month till discharged. Jordan had signed it, by the name of John Tremain.]

After settling the agreement at St. Johns, the prisoner told me to be ready to start the next day, as he was anxious to go to sea. I said I would be ready ; but it was three days before we could procure a boat to take us around to the Bay of Bulls, where the prisoner said the schooner lay. In the intermediate time I often asked Jordan to take a walk, and look for a boat, and requested to know the reason why he kept himself so closely confined to his lodgings ; he replied that as he owed some money in St. John, he was afraid of being detected if he walked much out. The third day after I had agreed to go with Jordan, we got a boat, and went to the Bay of Bulls, where however, we did not find the schooner : but there was one there, bound to St. John, and I asked the captain for a passage ; but the prisoner earnestly entreated me not to leave him, but to go to Agua Fort, where he said he was sure the schooner was lying ; and added, if he did not find her there he would give me an order on a merchant at St. John, for the full amount of my wages ; we went to Agua Fort ; the schooner was not there ; I was again disappointed ; but he urged me as I had gone so far with him, to go to Trespassey ; we went, and found the schooner ; on board of which we got about an hour after dark, where I saw John Kelly, William Crew, and a man from the shore. Jordan's wife was not on board ; the prisoner demanded of Kelly, where she was ; he answered she

was ashore; the prisoner then told two men to go ashore for her, when Kelly said there was none knew where she was but himself. Jordan then seemed much disturbed, and told Kelly he would go with him for her; they went and returned in a short time with the prisoner Margaret Jordan. Jordan went to bed almost immediately after, leaving the boatmen, Pigot, Kelly, and myself in the cabin drinking grog; Jordan's wife was also sitting in the cabin. The prisoner did not lie long in his berth, but got up, and said to his wife: "*You whore I heard you talk.*" He then seized a musket which rested on some nails in one of the cabin beams; his wife screeched, and told me to take it from him, which I did, and gave it to the boatmen to take care of until morning. The prisoners and Kelly soon after began to fight; Edward Jordan demanded his pistols and musket several times, to shoot his wife or Kelly, and reprimanded the former for being often on shore with the latter. Kelly then said that the prisoner should not take his life for nothing; and turned round to his berth, from which he drew two pistols, and held one in each hand. I then seized Kelly, and took the pistols from him. Kelly said his intention was merely to hide them from Jordan, for that I did not know what kind of a man he was. Margaret Jordan then went on deck where I soon followed her, carrying the pistols I had taken from Kelly, with the view of giving them to the boatmen to secure 'till next morning. She requested me several times to throw them overboard, saying: "*You know not the mischief they have done!*" I said I would not throw them over.

Kelly soon after came on deck. He said all that he wanted of the pistols was to prevent Jordan getting them, advising me at the same time not to let him have them until I got to Ireland; and then said that he did

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not intend to go with us. I told him Jordan should not get them; and asked him if there were any more arms on board. He said there were a half musket and a cutlass; and advised me to get them also. The half musket I found—the cutlass I could not. I soon after pacified Jordan: and his wife told me if I gave him some rum he would go to sleep. I did so, and it had the desired effect, though not before he said: "*Do not let my wife come to bed to me: if you do I shall kill her.*" She lay on the locker until an hour before day, when she rose, called Pigot, and requested him several times to put her ashore, as she was certain her husband would kill her if she remained on board. Pigot then went on deck, and she to her trunk for clothes. I then left my berth and went on deck; she soon followed me, and begged I would let her go on shore, or put her ashore myself; I said I would do neither, and that I had overheard her conversation with Pigot, and that she would be sorry for it if she went ashore. She replied you know not the life I lead with that man (alluding to her husband); he will kill me before we get to Ireland—you had better let me go ashore; you are a stranger to my sufferings; Pigot can describe to you the cruel life I lead with that man. I prevailed on her to remain on board—about an hour after sunrise Jordan came hastily on deck, ran towards his wife; I went between them, when Jordan seized me by the breast, and demanded his pistols. His wife at the instant slapping me on the back, and begging me not to let Jordan kill her, saying she would lay her death to me, for not letting her go ashore when she wished. Jordan then said I believe Power you have been with her all night, as well as the rest: upon which I told him to use her as he pleased. But she screeched, and entreated me not o let Jordan take her life; when I again laid hold of

the prisoner, and told him he should not strike her. I soon after quieted them, when Jordan said, if she would go into the cabin with him, where he wished to speak with her, he would not hurt her. They went, and continued there on good terms the whole of that day. Jordan having promised to give the boatmen who brought us round from St. John, ten pounds, they requested me to go below, and ask Jordan to pay them, which I did, but he told me he was short of money, and to give them some leather, which I would find forward, in lieu of the ten pounds. The leather was brought up but the boatmen refused to take it. I stated their refusal immediately to Jordan, who told me to give them his watch with the leather, and directed his wife to hand it to me, it was a silver hunting watch. I gave it to the boatmen with some leather. I afterwards searched the schooner, to see what provisions and water were on board, and then saw the situation of the hold, and began to suspect some mischief. I asked Jordan if he had any means of getting provisions ashore. He said he had not, but thought there was on board a sufficiency of every thing for a voyage to Ireland, and added, if he was only in the Bay of Bulls he could obtain plenty as he had friends there. We got underweigh, a short time after, for the Bay of Bulls, but had not proceeded far before he told me to go into some private harbour near the Bay of Bulls, from whence he could send a boat there for provisions, giving fish or oil in payment. We accordingly attempted to get into Fernalse, but the wind prevented us, and we steered for Capelin Bay, at the entrance of which we had nearly got, when we discovered a schooner going in; the prisoner inquired of me where I thought she came from. I answered from Nova Scotia, as she appeared to have a deck load of plank. He told me not to go on.

We then hauled our wind and went to the Bay of Bulls, where we anchored between 10 and 11 at night. The next morning Jordan went on shore, after telling me he intended to get men to cut some wood, and bring us some water; he took two of the crew with him. In the evening he returned on board, and asked me what I and the rest of the crew had been employed about all day. I answered, overhauling the rigging, which wanted much repair. He then said he believed I was too much of a gentleman for a poor man's servant, and that he was sorry he did not make me steer for Ireland, after leaving Trespassey, with what provisions we had on board. The next morning again he went ashore and sent some long wood, three casks of water and a few trifling articles of provision. Shortly after Jordan went ashore, his wife requested me to let her go for the purpose of washing some clothes for the children. I at first refused, but afterwards consented, and Pigot and myself accompanied her ashore. I left her washing at a house, and went in pursuit of her husband, whom I found—he inquired why I left the vessel; I told him his wife had some washing to do, and that I had come on shore with her—he then seemed much disturbed, and bade me take her back to the vessel immediately, which I did. Jordan came on board in the evening, and ordered me to get under weigh. I told him the wind did not answer, that it blew into the Bay. He then got into the boat, saying he would go ashore for men and boats enough to tow her out. He had hardly reached the shore before I weighed anchor, and went further up the Bay. By this time he returned to the schooner with many men, I do not recollect the number, and ordered me to get the vessel under weigh, which I refused to do—when one of the men he had brought on board demanded the reason—I told him

I did not wish to go—he then applied some opprobrious name to me. Jordan soon after took me aside, and said that a cutter had sailed that evening from St. John, which would be round by the morning, to seize the vessel on account of some money he owed at Halifax—upon which I said that if he owed a million of money to a merchant, a king's vessel would not be sent after him.—He afterwards said he was sorry he had not met with some other navigator than me, for, if he had, he would have been half way to Ireland. I told him he need not be sorry for it, for I would not go with him, and he had better provide another. He begged the men he had brought on board to remain—they said it was to no purpose, as I would not get the vessel under weigh that night—but if they could serve him they would stay twelve months, and tow the vessel, if possible, half way to Ireland. They soon after went ashore. For some time Jordan walked the quarter-deck, apparently much disturbed, during which Kelly told me if I went on shore with him, he would inform me of something that might serve me. I promised to go as soon as Jordan had gone to rest. Not long afterwards I asked Jordan why he did not go to bed—he replied that he would see me in bed first. I then told him, Kelly and I were going on shore, but that we would not stay long. He said I might as well take his life as attempt to go that night; and that he would keep watch to prevent me.—I then went to bed, leaving Jordan on deck. About day light next morning he came to my berth—and told me to rise, and get the vessel under weigh; for that there was a fine fair wind. I rose, went on deck, and told him the wind blew too hard. He then acted like a madman. I went, and sat down in the cabin, where I had not been long before I heard some person call out that Kelly had taken the boat away.



I ran on deck, saw Kelly alone in the boat, about 20 yards distant, and asked him for a passage on shore. He answered that he could not stop, but would send the boat for me. He did not take his clothes with him. I then went below, to gather my things, against the boat came off for me—but soon after heard some person on deck say *the cable was cut*. I went up and found it was true. I demanded who had done it, and was answered Jordan. He was then on deck, as well as all the crew. The jib was hoisted, and the vessel going to sea—Jordan was standing near the companion door, with an axe in his hand, and I said to him that I saw he had got her under weigh, he replied that he had, and that she should go to sea, or have blood. I went forward and told Pigot to take the axe from Jordan which he did. I then sat down to leeward, and soon after saw a vessel at a great distance, then took the helm and ordered all sail to be set; when Jordan told me to steer for Halifax, with the view of deceiving the people at the Bay of Bulls. I consented to do so, until I was clear of the head, when I jibed the boom, but he thought rather too soon; as we had hardly shut in the Bay of Bulls. In about an hour after, one of the men called out there was a sail a-head; Jordan seemed much agitated, and inquired of me what I thought she was. I told him a fishing boat, as she did not appear to have any yards across. The man said it was a brig or schooner, when Jordan became very uneasy again, and directed me to steer for Halifax, let her be what she might. I refused to alter the course; when he ordered the man I had a few minutes before placed at the helm, to steer for Halifax, but I told the helmsman if he did, I would knock him down with a handspike. The prisoner asked me a second time what I thought the vessel was. I answered he might depend she was a King's

schooner; at which his uneasiness became excessive, and he said: "*the Lord have mercy on me, what will my poor children do?*" He afterwards went down in the cabin, but soon returned, and desired me to say we were bound to Halifax. I told him it was of no consequence, for they saw by the course we were steering we were not bound there. He, however, again requested me to say so, and I said I would if that would satisfy him. The vessel came up—she proved to be His Majesty's schooner Cuttle, commanded by Lt. Bury, who sent a party on board under the orders of Mr. Simpson, by whom she was brought to Halifax.

**Q.** Who were on board the Three Sisters at the time she was taken possession of by the Cuttle?

**A.** The prisoners and their four children, (three girls and a boy;) myself, John Pigot, Matthew Phelan, William Crew, Nathaniel Ryder, and Davy, an Indian.

**Q.** Did you hear the prisoner, Edward Jordan, make any acknowledgments or use any expressions, from which you believed he had been guilty of the murders and piracy with which he stands charged? If so, repeat as nearly as you can recollect, the words he made use of, and when and where they were spoken.

[An objection to this question was entered by Mr. ROBIE, upon the ground that the statute of the 11th and 12th of William, having directed the hearing and determination of causes before the Court to be according to the civil law, the question could not be put to the witness; as, by civil law, the confession of a person accused must be made by him in the presence of the court, and could not be proved by the testimony of a witness.

This objection was answered by the Solicitor General, who contended, that the court was not to be guided by the civil law, unless as respected its form, and that the

question was admissible by the common law of the land if not by the civil law.

The court ordered the Registrar to note the objection; and the question to be put, promising to consider its effect.]

A. It was in the **Guttle**—he was in irons; and his berth near mine. He used to discourse with me concerning the crimes he was accused of. He said he was not afraid of all the world, if I would only say we were bound to Halifax, to which, being rather under apprehension of my own life, as I lay so near him, I consented. He then told me that if he had shot **Stairs** while on the hatch, that all would have been well, but that **Kelly** prevented him, saying he would be drowned before he reached the shore.

Q. By prisoner—you said you knew the prisoner, **Edward Jordan**, at **St. John, N. F.**—do you recollect dining in company with him at the house of a merchant there? what was the name of the merchant, and by what name did he call the prisoner?

A. I did dine in company with him at a merchant's, whose name was **Goff**; and whom I heard call the prisoner **Ned**.

Q. Did you hear **Mr. Goff** call the prisoner by any other name than **Ned**? what character did he give **Jordan**? and did he say that **Jordan** had served his uncle honestly for five years, and that every person in his employ had made money but **Ned**?

A. I heard **Mr. Goff** say, that every one who was employed in the same station that **Ned** was by his uncle for several years had made money but **Ned**.

The register of the **Three Sisters** was then produced and read; it was proved by the collector of the customs, who exhibited the record; she was registered

the 16th January, 1809—owners Jonathan and John Tremain.

**Q.** You said that Jonathan and John Tremain were the registered owners of the Three Sisters—do you know who are the true owners of said schooner ?

**A.** Jonathan and John Tremain, I believe, for the bill of sale and shipbuilder's certificate were lodged in my office previous to the granting of the register.

Here the examinations closed—when Edward Jordan was asked by his excellency the president, if he had any thing to say in his defence.

*Edward Jordan* then stated his transactions with Messrs. Tremain ; from which he endeavoured to prove that the schooner Three Sisters had been surreptitiously obtained by them ; and that in point of fact, she belonged to him ; after which he said, that on the morning of the 13th September, being on the deck of the schooner, and rather in liquor, his little boy came and told him, that Captain Stairs was taking liberties with his mother ; that he instantly went below, and found it to be the case, he seized Stairs and threw him on the floor ; who, upon recovering, ran to his trunk, got a pair of pistols, one of which he fired at him, but that the ball passed him and entered Heath's breast, who had just come down to the assistance of his wife, having heard her cry out murder ; that he went on deck for a handspike to defend himself against Stairs ; who soon followed him up, went forward, threw a hatch overboard and jumped after it ; that he begged Kelly, who was at the helm, to put the vessel about, and pick up the captain, saying unless he did they would all be lost, for that they were without a navigator, but that Kelly seemed stupid and not to know what to do. That they afterwards put into a port in Newfoundland. He then told the court that no reliance ought to be placed on the

evidence of the witnesses that had been examined, for that they made up their story, had perjured themselves, and would say any thing that came into their mouths—and then presented his accounts with Tremain and some other papers to the court, requesting they might be examined.

*Margaret Jordan* was then asked if she had any thing to say; upon which she handed to her counsel, MR. WILKINS, a written defence, which he read to the court. It stated that she had married Jordan in Ireland, about ten years since, that she lived happy with him there for five, when they removed to the United States, where he soon became jealous of her; that she had experienced severe treatment from him ever since, though it had not in the least diminished her regard for him.—That previous to the arrival of the *Three Sisters* at Perce, her children had become much in want of some clothes, which she expected to receive by the schooner, but that on her arrival she was disappointed; Jordan had bought nothing for them;—upon which she got Captain Stairs to let her have a piece of calico—this roused her husband's jealousy, who suspected she had obtained it by improper means, and he treated her very ill. His resentment continued—and on the morning of the 13th of September, as she lay on her wretched bed, Stairs came to her berth—when she, alarmed for the consequences that might result from her husband's seeing Stairs in that situation, begged him to be gone; but he did not, before that her husband appeared, who instantly knocked Stairs down, and then ran on deck, where he was soon followed by Stairs—that she soon after heard the report of pistols, went on deck, saw Heath lying dead and Stairs fighting with her husband—that as soon as they separated the former jumped overboard. She did not deny but that she might have

struck Stairs when engaged with her husband—as she was in such a state of mind as not to know what she was doing, but she could appeal to the Almighty and say that she was innocent of the crimes with which she then stood charged.

After which the court was cleared; in about half an hour the doors were again opened, and the prisoner, *EDWARD JORDAN*, put to the bar; when the president addressed him as follows:

*EDWARD JORDAN*—The Gentlemen Commissioners, before whom you have been accused of Piracy, Felony and Robbery, have deliberately examined the articles of charge exhibited against you; and having maturely weighed and considered the several evidences produced against you on behalf of his Majesty, as well as what has been alledged in your 'favour, upon the whole have unanimously found you guilty of the several articles of Piracy, Felony, and Robbery, wherewith you are charged, and have agreed that sentence should be pronounced against you for the same accordingly.—

[Here the prisoner was asked by the Registrar if he had any thing to say, why sentence of death should not be pronounced against him—he asked if his papers had been examined.]

The Court, by which you have been tried, has examined your case with every just and merciful disposition towards you, and I have already informed you that the Commissioners have unanimously pronounced you guilty. Nothing therefore, now remains but for me, as president of this court, to perform the painful duty of pronouncing the dreadful sentence which the law directs to be executed upon you; not only as a just punishment for the horrid crimes of which you have been this day convicted, but as an example to all others, of the vengeance which always pursues the steps of the mur

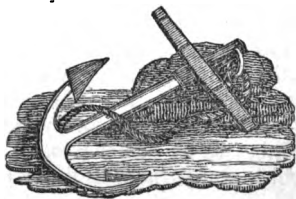
derer, whom no art can save from the sword of justice in this life; and whose only hope in the world to come must depend on the mercies of the Almighty. You, who have shown neither mercy or compassion to your fellow creatures, can have none to expect from the hand of man.—Let me, therefore, exhort you, during the short time you have to live, that you do, with a contrite and penitent heart, humble yourself before God, and seek forgiveness of your sins through the merits and intercession of our blessed Saviour JESUS CHRIST.

You, **EDWARD JORDAN**, shall be taken from hence to the place from whence you came, and from thence to the place of execution, there to be hanged by the neck until you are dead—and may God Almighty have mercy upon your soul.

**MARGARET JORDAN** was then put to the Bar, when his excellency, the president, said—that the Court had considered the charges brought against her, and from some circumstances that had appeared in her favour on the trial, had adjudged her not guilty.

**EDWARD JORDAN** was executed on the 20th of November, 1809.

We take occasion to repeat the solemn admonition to *the hopeless pirate*, that no plan of concealment or escape can enable him to elude the detection of his bloody crimes, or the ignominious and fatal punishment, which the laws of all countries award against them.



**MEMOIR OF LA FITTE,**  
**THE**  
**PIRATE CHIEF OF BARATARIA.**

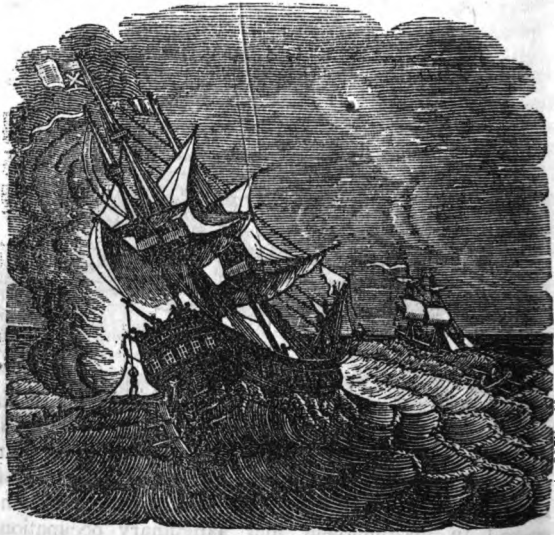


**JOHN LA FITTE**, the "Terror of the Gulf of Mexico," was a most uncommon man; not only on account of his reckless daring and his decision of character, but principally because he was a being possessed of more than the ordinary range of intellect, as also of a suavity of manners, and a benignity of disposition, when not engaged in his unlawful and sanguinary occupation, which endeared him strongly to the rough and rash men of whom he was the associate and chief.

He was a Frenchman, having been born at Saint Malo's. He always dated his birth from the year 1781, and also stated that he first went to sea in 1794, when he was, of course, but thirteen years of age. He made



several short voyages before and after he arrived at manhood, principally to the sea-port towns of Europe and Africa. Not long after reaching his majority he was offered the berth of mate on board an Indiaman, under orders for Madras. This he accepted, and sailed in the vessel; but on her way out, off the Cape of Good Hope, in a heavy gale, the ship suffered much by springing



her mainmast, fire, and other mishaps. In consequence of the crippled state of the ship, the captain made for the Mauritius, and in due time arrived thither. During this period a quarrel had arisen between La Fitte and the captain, of so bitter a nature, that, on their arrival at Mauritius, he concluded to leave the ship, positively

refusing to proceed in her on the voyage he had shipped for. From this period can be accurately traced his illegal connexion with the ocean, as there were then several privateers being fitted out, the captaincy of one of which was offered him and accepted. In the course of the cruise which he made, he attacked indiscriminately the weaker vessels of all nations which fell in his way; and having by such acts been guilty of undoubted piracy, he of course could have no "compunctious visitings" about the slave trade, in which he entered at the Seychelles, by taking in a cargo of slaves for the

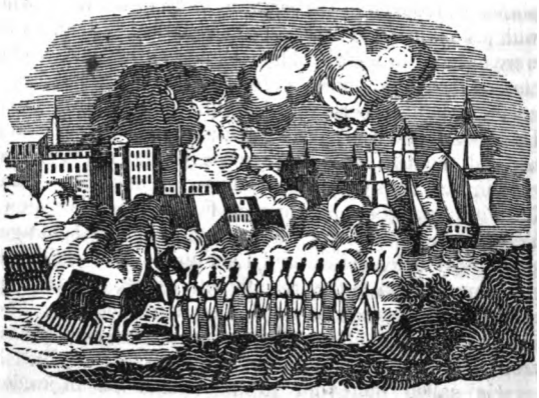


**Mauritius.** Near the equator he was chased by an English frigate, and not having on board provisions sufficiently ample to enable him to reach the French port for which he was bound, he, with a boldness and decision for which he was remarkable, made for the Bay of Bengal, with the design of obtaining the necessary stores from some of the English vessels, a design he

was not slow to execute, for soon after he fell in with and attacked and took an English schooner, fully armed and manned, while La Fitte's craft was of but two hundred tons, with two guns and twenty-six men, of which he placed nineteen on the schooner, took himself the command, and went on a cruise to the coast of Bengal. While there he met the English East India Company's ship "Pagoda," with a battery of twenty-six twelve pounders, and a crew of an hundred and fifty men. He so manœvered his vessel as to lead the Pagoda to think him a Ganges pilot, and at a moment when he had the weather-gauge of that ship, he suddenly boarded her, gave his opponents to the sword, and took her. He transferred himself and his command to her, and after cruising in her a short period made for the Mauritius, where he sold both his prizes, and purchased a ship called "La Confiance," on which he put twenty-six guns and two hundred and fifty men. In her he sailed to the coast of British India. This was early in 1807. In October of the same year he fell in with, off the Sand Heads, the "Queen" East Indiaman, of forty guns, and a crew numbering about three hundred and ninety men. He determined, if possible, to take her, and addressed his men in a most ardent speech to that purpose, which had the effect of rousing them to the conflict, which was in all respects a most unequal one. While he was wearing his ship for a position to board, the Queen gave him a tremendous broadside, when he was close in with her, but he had expected this, and had previously ordered all hands to lay down on deck; but so soon as it was over, and while yet the smoke prevailed, he ordered his hands into the tops and upon the yards, from whence they kept up a constant fire of shells and hand grenades into the Queen's fore-castle, and this was productive of such slaughter that her crew

in the positions about the mizen mast were forced to abandon them. At this wished-for juncture La Fitte placed a favourite at the head of forty of his men, who with pistols in hand and daggers clenched in their teeth were ordered to board. They rushed on her decks, and cleared them, the Queen's crew retreating to the steerage, attempting there to maintain a position. Then La Fitte, at the head of a strong party, himself boarded her, led the two boarding parties on the crew, whose captain was in a desperate position of defence. Him La Fitte engaged, and after a fierce encounter slew. Yet still the crew kept their position in the steerage, and stoutly defended it, until La Fitte pointed at them a gun almost filled to the muzzle with grape, when seeing actual extermination at hand, they surrendered. The fame of this exploit reached far and near, and raised such a dread of the name of La Fitte that all British vessels sailed thereafter in the Indian Ocean under strong convoys, which destroyed all La Fitte's hopes of success in that quarter. Having made up his mind to revisit his native France, he on his way thither doubled the Cape of Good Hope and coasted his course in the Gulf of Guinea and the Bight of Benin. Taking on his way two prizes, laden with palm oil, ivory, and gold dust, he arrived with them at his birth place, Saint Malo's, where he sold to great advantage his vessel, La Confiance, his two prizes, and their valuable cargoes. He stayed there but a short time after, before he bought a brigantine, in which he placed twenty guns, and a crew of about one hundred and fifty men. From Saint Malo's he made sail for Gaudaloupe. On his passage, he continued his successful career by taking several prizes of value, which on his arrival he there disposed of, and started on another cruise. While absent, the island of Gaudaloupe was attacked by the British forces, an

accurate representation of whose advance is portrayed in the annexed engraving.



La Fitte, fortunately for himself, heard of the possession of the island by the British, and sailed immediately for Carthagena, and it was at this place that he conceived the singular project of founding a colony at Baratavia, near the mouth of the Mississippi river. Here for a while La Fitte remained quiet, as it was necessary, being resident upon our own shores, to disguise as much as possible his real character, for this, among other and more obvious reasons, that he might go free to collect the debts due him for booty disposed of in the United States and the West Indies. The residence of La Fitte, however, was well known to most of his class, among whom were numbers of captains of privateers fitted out at Gaudaloupe, who dared no more return thither, after the British had taken possession, than himself. To all these and others, then, Baratavia became a regular place of resort, for the purposes of taking

in provisions and water, recruiting their crews, and selling their prizes, which could not be done in our ports without a violation of international law, as the United States was at this period at peace with Great Britain. They went to Barataria, also, for another reason, which was that, after Carthage had declared independence of the Spanish crown, the republic had granted many such vessels commissions to cruise against Spanish bottoms; they made successful cruises, and of course "brought many captives" into Barataria, where they knew they were sure of welcome and reward. It was at the island of Grand Terre in Barataria Bay where public sales of prizes were held for a time with impunity, and resorted to, without the least attempt at concealment, by the inhabitants of the adjacent districts, for the purpose of obtaining great bargains in matters of trade.

It was impossible for this state of things to last without being interfered with by our government, which was the result in the early part of 1811, when Commodore Patterson, of the United States Navy, received orders from Washington to disperse and destroy the unlawful settlement at Barataria, and accordingly left New Orleans for that purpose on the 11th of June in that year. He had taken on board, in addition to his crew and the marines, seventy-one picked men from the forty-fourth regiment of United States Infantry, Colonel Ross, who himself went as their commander. On the 12th, he reached the schooner *Caroline*, which had been stationed below for the purpose of accompanying the expedition. On the 13th, he united with the gun boats at the Balize. On the 15th, just before night, the commodore sailed from the Southwest Pass; and on the morning of the 16th, between eight and nine o'clock, he made the island of Barataria. There were several vessels in

the harbour, most of which displayed the colours of the Carthagenian Republic. He remained in the offing until about ten o'clock, when he observed the enemy forming into lines of battle. They had ten vessels, and these they formed across the entrance of the harbour. The commodore formed his little fleet in battle order and at half past ten exchanged signals with some persons on shore. At eleven, finding that the Baratarians had given to the flames two of their best schooners, Commodore Patterson made the signal for battle; and having heard that there were numerous persons there who had been in our army and navy, he hoisted a flag with the motto—"Pardon for deserters." At the approach of our forces, which were diminished by several of the craft grounding on the bar across the position, though their boats were immediately officered and manned by the crews, the Baratarians left their vessels in most disorderly flight. They were pursued by our men in boats, but succeeded in making their escape. About noon that day, however, Commodore Patterson took possession of the whole of their vessels, and about the same time Colonel Ross, at the head of his brave fellows, landed and destroyed the whole of the houses in the colony, forty in number. The commodore returned to New Orleans on the 24th, with a squadron of sixteen vessels, one having escaped the previous night; but previously, that is on the 20th, he had taken the armed schooner Bolivar, on her way to the station at Barataria.

From this period until that of which we are about to write, the operations of La Fitte and his men are shrouded in the deepest mystery, time not having developed those deeds which the fear of the American government's power induced them to proceed upon with the utmost wariness and caution.

After the war had broken out between this government and that of Great Britain, the English made many efforts to induce La Fitte and his men to join their cause, but without success; and this we suppose induced them to endeavour to destroy the station, for on the 23d of June, 1813, and on other occasions, they attacked it; and on the date mentioned above, with a sloop of war, but they were every time repulsed with great loss on the part of the assailant.

It was on the 2d of September, 1814, that a British man-of-war made the harbour of Baratavia, and after firing upon a brig belonging to the inhabitants, hoisted a flag of truce. This course of conduct was so perfectly incomprehensible, that La Fitte put out to her in a boat, when another boat was let down from the man-of-war, which made towards him and the shore. His first impulse was to fly, but finding them close upon him, he braved it out and met them. The boat had at her bow a flag of truce and at her stern a British ensign. She had in her, besides her oarsmen, an officer in command, who was steering, and at the bows stood the commander of the man-of-war, Captain Lockyer. When they came up, the latter said to him, "Where is La Fitte?" to which he promptly replied, "on shore." The captain then said, as he handed him a package, "This is for him." La Fitte said, "Do you wish me to give it to him?" To which the captain replied, "I do, and you must take the greatest care of it, and give it into his own hands." Meantime the strong inward current had drifted both boats nearly into shore unperceived, while upon the beach there were at least two hundred men in waiting. Seeing that he thus had his opponent in his own hands, as it were, he told them, in brief sentences, "I am him who you seek! come with me to my house; conceal the business, whatever it is, that you come



upon." His people, as soon as they landed, and the boat's crew had returned to the ship, cried out, as with one voice, "Make these damned English prisoners, and take them to Jackson, at New Orleans, they are spies—they are spies." La Fitte, however, led them in safety to his residence, and persuaded his people against any attempt of the kind, for though their dislike and indignation were great, his decision and influence were greater. On opening the package he said not a word, but carefully read over their contents, which consisted of three papers; one was a letter to him from the Honourable Captain Percy, of His Majesty's sloop of war *Hermes*; the second was also a letter to him from Colonel Nichols, commander of the British land-forces in Florida; the third was a proclamation addressed to the Louisianians by the same man. When Captain Lockyer saw that he had finished reading these papers he addressed him formally and at length upon the subject of them, in the course of his remarks making him these handsome offers, as follows:—The sum of thirty thousand pounds to be paid as soon as he set foot at Pensacola; the rank of Post Captain in the British Navy; the command, at his pleasure, of at least a frigate; and the pardon of all offences done by himself or others under him. La Fitte, however, demanded a few days for consideration, and notwithstanding his visitors reasoned with him against it, he persisted, and abruptly left them, purposely going off to some distance to avoid a repetition of arguments when he had already decided. Had he considered one moment, he would probably have adopted a different course, as so soon as he was known to be absent, his men rushed upon Captain Lockyer and the other officer, secured them as prisoners, and confined them under guards in a strong house hard by. On their way to this prison, the officers loudly

proclaimed that La Fitte would reward and promote the man who informed him of this outrage. This had the desired effect—(an ambitious man does not often hesitate at the use of any means that is likely to promote his wishes)—for La Fitte was speedily sought out by a sailor, and brought back with a knowledge of what had transpired. He assembled his people by torch lights that night, and addressed their reason so strongly and eloquently on the grounds that they were, first, defeating their own ends by absolutely relinquishing the chance of discovering what were the projects of the enemy against the southernmost detachment of the American army, and, secondly, upon the disgrace to any set of men of making prisoners of those who fell in their power under a flag of truce, that they were persuaded to let La Fitte do as he pleased with their prisoners, and accordingly he sent them assurances of safety, an apology for their incarceration, and a promise of enlargement the next morning, which he scrupulously fulfilled.

On the 4th of September, 1814, La Fitte wrote Captain Lockyer, who was still cruising off the place, a letter in which he requests two weeks time for consideration before giving him a decisive answer, and hinting that he believed he would then be “entirely at his disposal.” On the same day, he wrote to Mr. Blauque, of the Louisiana House of Representatives, enclosing him all the papers which the British officers had given him, and a letter to the governor of the state, Mr. Claiborne. In the latter he states that he is “the stray sheep wishing to return to the fold;” that the point in his occupation is of the utmost importance in case of an invasion, which he confidently predicts; that he and his men are anxious to render their services to the American cause, provided an act of oblivion for all past offences be granted them.

He also promises to leave the country if his request is not complied with, as he would not suffer under the imputation of co-operating with the enemy.

Mr. Blauque, immediately after the receipt of these papers, laid them before Governor Claiborne, who, in turn, laid them before the committee of safety and defence, over which he presided. The result of this was that Mr. Raucher, La Fitte's messenger, was sent back with a reply to the effect that he had best take no final step until they had decided, which should be shortly, and that in the mean time nothing would be done by the government to his injury.

Two weeks having passed, Captain Lockyer appeared in the offing; but La Fitte about the same time had received a passport to carry him to New Orleans, and a guarantee of his personal safety, from General Jackson, so that he took no notice of the British man-of-war, or of her signals, but as soon as she had disappeared, went up to New Orleans. He was taken to the governor's reception room, and when ushered in, found him and General Jackson there alone. La Fitte addressed them in these words: "Gentlemen, you know that I wish to be allowed to defend that part of Louisiana which I am in possession of; but I will not, nay must not, do this while I remain an outlaw. The portion of your territory which I occupy is of the greatest importance at this crisis. For its defence I offer not alone my personal services, but of all my people, among whom are many Americans, whom you thus restore to a citizenship which they hold sacred. The sole reward they and I ask is the cessation of all proscription directed against me and mine by an act of oblivion for all that is past." Claiborne and Jackson both expressed to him, in reply, their personal wishes that his request should be acceded to, and the Governor also said that the General and

himself would confer together, and in the council of state use all their influence to that effect. La Fitte said, "I particularly ask for an early answer," to which Governor Claiborne replied, "It shall be sent you to-morrow." La Fitte then took his leave, and, as he reached the door, Jackson said, "Farewell; I trust the next time we meet will be in the ranks of the American army."

His two friends were successful with the council, and the next day Governor Claiborne issued his proclamation, and General Jackson his orders, inviting the Baratarians to join the American forces, and promising their efforts with the general government to obtain their pardon if they acted well in the ranks. They responded to this by almost to a man enrolling themselves. They were a remarkably fine looking set of fellows, and some of them most valuable men in a camp or on the field, particularly some French artillerists. The French are among the first artillerists in the world, and these were some of the best of them. The behaviour of the Baratarians in camp was excellent, and received the warm praise of the gallant Jackson; but in the action of the 8th of January they enacted wonders of valour. The details of that conflict are known to all Americans, but it is little known how much honour is due to these brave men, and it is due to them, therefore, to give the particulars here as far as La Fitte and his men are concerned. The greater portion of them were stationed under La Fitte and his countryman and second in command, Dominique, at one of the important embrasures under the edge of the Mississippi. They also manned two other batteries, and throughout the action they brought their ordinance and smaller metal to bear with such deadly skill and precision as to be as great a hope to the Americans as of dread to the enemy. Nor was this all, for a portion of the British, by a bold movement,

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rushed within the outposts, forcing the small party there to a retreat. Before our batteries could be brought to bear efficiently, and while the enemy was on the advance, La Fitte, without the delay of an instant, made a most precipitate charge upon them with a band of his men, outside of the breastwork, which they had not yet gained. This was done with the rapidity of lightning. La Fitte cut down the two officers in command. His men were not less active. The party was absolutely appalled by the suddenness and efficacy of their conduct, and as they were there reinforced by a daring party of Kentuckians, the enemy in confusion and dismay retired, and these together, Baratavia and "Old Kentucky," maintained the position until the close of the action.

General Jackson did not fail, in his official account of the action to the Secretary of War, to commend most highly the conduct of the Baratavian recruits: and the consequence was, that after the peace, President Madison issued a proclamation granting full pardon to all of them who had been engaged in the defence of New Orleans.

La Fitte, restored to respectability, for a while traded in and about New Orleans, and might have arrived, had he pursued this peaceful and honourable course, at great opulence and a good old age, and that which Shakspeare says should ever accompany it, "as love, obedience, honour, troops of friends;" but he became tired, dissatisfied, and impatient of the restraints of social civilization, and accordingly, in the year 1819, he manned several vessels which he owned with men whom he had ever retained in his employ, and set sail from New Orleans for Galveston, Texas. The governor of that place, a Mexican general, by the name of Longe, gave him a commission for each of his vessels. General

Humbert, the subsequent governor, also gave him commissions for several boats which he had constructed with a view to go far up rivers. It is believed that he kept up from this time a regular life of robbing, smuggling, and piracy. Two of these boats, having robbed a plantation on the Marmento river, of slaves, produce, and money, were chased and captured by the boats of the United States schooner Lynx. La Fitte, to propitiate our government, hung at his yardarm one or more of the men engaged in the affair. The Lynx shortly after captured two of his vessels, discovered in smuggling on our coast. Not long after, an American ship was boarded near our coast and rifled of a large amount of specie, and it being well known that one of La Fitte's cruisers, the Jupiter, had just after arrived at Galveston with quantities of specie on board, the conclusion was arrived at that La Fitte knew more of the matter than any body else, and accordingly one of our men-of-war received orders to cruise continually off the coast of Texas, and close watch was maintained upon him until that province became a republic. La Fitte was active in their revolution, and it is a well known fact that the Jupiter belonging to him was the first vessel ever the new government commissioned. He was rewarded for his services by being appointed governor of Galveston. It is certain still that something wrong was going on, and reached the knowledge of our government, for one of our vessels again received orders to cruise off the shores of Texas, and Galveston particularly. La Fitte did not relish this in the least, and at the first opportunity addressed a letter of protest and remonstrance to her commander. He began by stating that he was convinced that the ship was a cruiser under orders from the American government, and inquiring the cause of the vessel lying before that port without

communicating to him the reason, as he was the governor, and any request or demand he was ready to receive, and treat with all consideration. He says further that any attempt at hostilities would be met by him at every hazard in like manner. What was the result of the conference between the commander and La Fitte's messenger it is not easy to state; but matters between him and our government were brought to a crisis by the following circumstance.

La Fitte had sent one of his captains, by the name of Lefage, to New Orleans to have him built a new schooner, which, when finished and manned, mounted two guns as her heavy ordinance. Of this vessel Lefage took command and made a cruise, in which he shortly took a vessel, and was carrying all sail for La Fitte's station, with his prize in company, when he was met by the United States cutter Alabama, on her way to the Mississippi station. The cutter, suspecting the character of the schooner, hailed her, when Lefage ordered his men, who had snatched up their arms, to pour a volley into the cutter, which they did. This was not to be borne by Americans in the service of their country, and they gallantly retaliated. A desperate action ensued; but the cutter was victorious, though in the action she had six of her men seriously disabled by gun-shot wounds. The schooner, however, it was found, after our men had taken possession of her, had the same number killed. The vessel and her prize were brought into our port at the Bayou Saint John, and the captured men taken in irons to New Orleans. At the next session of the Circuit Court of the United States, Judge Hall presiding, they were tried on an indictment for piracy, and found guilty. When standing up to receive their sentence, and when his honour had concluded de-

livering it, they cried out, loudly and simultaneously, "murder by God."

La Fitte was horribly excited by the result of this trial. He seemed to think that the whole world was against him, and therefore he determined thereafter to be against the whole world. With curses, "not loud but deep," he avowed his intention immediately to put to sea without any commission, and make indiscriminate war upon all of God's creatures, and their property, without regard to country, sex, age, or condition. With this end he sold all his vessels, but his favorite, which was a fine, large, fast-sailing brigantine, in which he placed an armament of sixteen guns, and a crew of one hundred and sixty men, and sailed on his last cruise, as it shortly after appeared to be; for the captain of a British sloop of war had heard of his intention, and kept his vessel constantly cruising in the gulf with the hope of meeting him. This hope was soon realized, for early one morning, as an officer was looking out from the mast-head he saw a suspicious sail, and orders were given to make for her, while the decks were cleared for action. The man-of-war had the weather gauge of the brigantine, and could beat her before the wind, which La Fitte was not slow in observing, and seeing the character of the chase, he made all sail to escape her, but she was crowded with all her canvass, and after a time came up with him. Seeing that escape was hopeless, he opened his fire upon the sloop of war; at the first broadside, killing nine men, and carrying away her foretopmast. The man-of-war reserved her fire until close in with the brigantine, when she poured in her broadside and a volley of musketry. From the elevation of the former, it did not damage the pirate's hull, but did great execution among her rigging and crew, ten of whom were killed. At this time a great part of the



rigging was down on the decks, and the English came up and boarded her over the starboard bow. A terrible conflict ensued, La Fitte by example and words cheering his men, until he fell to the deck, wounded desperately in two places. A ball had broken the bone of his right leg—a cutlass wound had penetrated into his stomach. The commander of the boarders was stretched senseless on the deck close to La Fitte, by a blow from the but end of a musket. The desperate pirate, seeing this, raised himself with difficulty and pain, dagger in hand, to slay the unconscious man. But as he was dying fast, his sight was failing, his brain dizzy, and his aim unsure, and the dagger which he had struck at the heart of his powerless foe pierced his thigh, as his assailant fell again exhausted to the deck. Again, reviving, “with the convulsive grasp of death” he essayed to plunge his dagger in the heart of his foe, but as he held it over his breast, the effort to strike burst assunder the slender ligament of life, and La Fitte was no more.

Meantime the action had raged with unabated fury, but of course, so superior was the force of the assailants, they were the victors, though so desperately were the English met, that of the crew of one hundred and sixty, but sixteen survived the conflict. These were taken to Jamaica, and at a subsequent sitting of the Court of Admiralty they were all condemned to death, ten, however, only, were executed, the remaining six having been pardoned by the British government.

So ends the tale. Americans are apt to be lenient to the memory of La Fitte, for he did us good service in a perilous field; but let us not forget that, after that time, the path of honour was open before him and he refused and despised its peaceful and pleasant enjoyment.

Death of La Pinta.



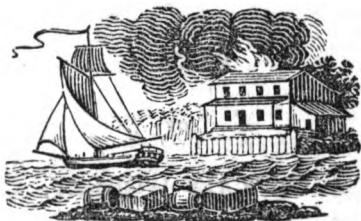


SKETCH  
OF  
CAPTAIN WORLEY,

THE BOLD AND DESPERATE PIRATE.

In a small open boat, with only eight companions, Worley entered upon service. Provided with six old muskets, and corresponding ammunition, with a few biscuits, one or two dried tongues, and a keg of water, they left New York in September, 1718, and sailed towards the Delaware river. Though the distance is about fifty miles, they met with no prey, so they went up the river as far as Newcastle. Near this place they captured a shallop with household goods, and plate, and having emptied her of every thing valuable, they permitted her to depart. As this was not done upon the high seas, it could not be construed piracy. The shallop conveyed the intelligence to New York, which, alarming government, several vessels were fitted out to go in quest of this formidable rover. But he was not yet destined to be taken; for, after several days cruising, the government vessel returned without their prize.

In sailing down the river, Worley met with a sloop bound for Philadelphia, and quitting his own shallop, he and his men went on board the sloop, and increased their strength by the hands which were in her. Being in want of provisions, he landed his men a few miles below Newcastle, and attacked a farm house, which he



plundered, and then set it on fire. In a few days they took a sloop homeward bound for Hull, with all manner of provisions, which enabled them to undertake some bolder scheme.

Upon the success of these pirates, the government issued a proclamation for apprehending all pirates who refused to surrender upon a specified day. To follow out the intention of this proclamation, a vessel of twenty guns was fitted out to cruise upon the coast, and to protect the trade. Informed of this, Worley and his men stood out to sea. In their cruise they captured a sloop and a brigantine; the former they sunk, as she belonged to New York, and might inform upon them; and they permitted the other to prosecute her voyage.

Worley was now in reality become formidable. He had twenty-five men, six guns, plenty of small arms, and a good vessel. Accordingly, he assumed a more systematic plan, hoisted black colours, formed certain regulations, and swore every man to stand to his colours, and receive no quarter.

They now went into an inlet in North Carolina to clean their vessel; and the government receiving intelligence of their being in that place, two sloops, one of eight and another of six guns, manned with seventy men, were sent in search of them. Worley was gone before they arrived, but, tracing his course, they dis-

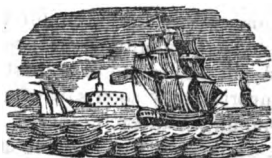
covered him off the Capes of Virginia. Upon the supposition that they were two vessels intending to enter St. James's river, Worley hastened to get between them and that entrance of the river, in order to secure his prize. The inhabitants of St. James's Town, supposing that all three were pirates, and that they would land to plunder and destroy the country, the governor ordered all the vessels to haul in to the shore, unless they thought that they were in a situation to fight the pirates. He beat to arms, collected all the force that could be mustered, erected a temporary battery with the guns of the ships, and put the island in a posture of defence. But, to their surprise, they soon saw what they imagined to be pirates fighting with each other.

Meanwhile, as Worley was waiting at the entrance of the river, with the black colours flying, to seize the two vessels as they approached, to his sad mortification they hoisted king's colours, and fired a gun. Thus he found, that, instead of entrapping others, he himself was entrapped and hemmed in by a superior force. Agreeably to their engagements to each other, the pirates determined to conquer or die.

The two sloops gave him a broadside, and immediately boarded, the one upon the quarter, the other upon the bow. Worley and his men drew up on deck, and fought it hand to hand, in a most desperate manner. They were true to their oath; not a man called for quarter, and many were slain before they could be overcome; not one survived, except the captain and another man, who were both severely wounded. They were brought on shore in irons, and, lest they should have died of their wounds, were hanged the following day, in the month of February, 1719. Thus Worley's beginning was bold and desperate, his course short and prosperous, and his end bloody and disgraceful.

## THE CRUEL AND FORMIDABLE PIRATE

### CAPTAIN LOWTHER



**GEORGE LOWTHER** sailed from the Thames, in the character of second mate, in the *Gambia Castle* of sixteen guns and thirty men, belonging to the African Company. There were a number of soldiers under the command of John Massey, intended to garrison a fort which was destroyed by Captain Dawson.

The *Gambia Castle* arrived safe, and landed Massey and his men; but the military power was overruled by the merchants and traders. To them it belonged to victual the garrison, and, being scanty in their allowance, Massey was highly offended, and remonstrated in terms more suitable to his feelings than their interests. He boldly declared, that he had brought these brave men here under the assurance that they were to have plenty of provisions, and to be treated in the most humane manner; therefore, if they were not so treated, he should be under the necessity of consulting for himself.

The governor was then sick, and, for his better accommodation, was taken on board the *Gambia Castle*.

During this period, the captain, being offended with George Lowther, his second mate, ordered him to be punished. The men interfered in behalf of Lowther, and the captain was disobeyed. Lowther and Massey having become intimate during the voyage, they now aggravated their grievances to each other, and the result of their consultations was to seize the ship, and sail for England.

When matters were ripe for execution, Lowther sent a letter to Massey, informing him, "that he must repair on board, as it was now time to put their design in execution." Massey then harangued the soldiers in the barracks, saying, "You that have a mind to go to England, now is the time." They in general agreed, and when all things were ready he sent the boat off with this message to the chief mate, "That he should get the guns ready, for that the King of Barro would come on board to dinner." Lowther knew the meaning; confined the chief mate, and prepared to sail. In the afternoon, Massey came on board with the governor's son, having almost emptied the storehouses, and dismounted the guns of the fort.

The captain of the Gambia Castle, having gone on shore to hold a council with the governor and others, was not permitted to come on board. He called to Lowther and his associates, and offered them what terms they chose, to restore the ship;—but all in vain. They put the governor's son on shore, with three others who did not choose to go along with them, and immediately sailed.

Scarcely were they out at sea, when Lowther addressed them to the following effect: "That it was the greatest folly imaginable to think of returning to England; for that what they had already done could not be justified upon any pretence whatever, but would be



looked upon by the government as a capital offence, and none of them were in a condition to withstand the attacks of such powerful adversaries as they would meet with at home. For his part, he told them, he was determined not to run such a hazard; and therefore, if his proposal was not agreed to, he desired to be set on shore in some place of safety; that they had a good ship under them, a parcel of brave fellows in her; that it was not their business to starve or be made slaves; and therefore, if they were all of his mind, they would seek their fortunes upon the seas, as other adventurers had done before them." The crew was unanimous, knocked down the cabins, prepared black colours, and named the ship "The Delivery." She was mounted with sixteen guns, and had fifty hands on board.

To enforce order, and to provide for the stability of this government, several articles were drawn up, signed, and sworn to; and they soon began their operations, by capturing a vessel belonging to Boston, which, having emptied her stores, they allowed to depart.

Proceeding to Hispaniola, the Delivery met with a French vessel laden with wine and brandy. In the character of a merchant, Captain Massey went on board, viewed the liquors, and offered a price for the greater part of them, which was not accepted. But after a while he whispered in the Frenchman's ear, "that they must have them all without money." The captain understood his meaning, and with no small reluctance agreed to the bargain. They took out of her about seventy pounds, besides thirty casks of brandy, five hogsheads of wine, several pieces of chintzes, and other valuable goods. Lowther returned five pounds to the Frenchman for his civility.

But this commonwealth was soon to experience the effects of discord. Massey had been trained a soldier,

and was solicitous to move in his own sphere ; he therefore proposed to land with fifty or sixty men, and plunder the French settlements. Lowther represented the rashness, imprudence, and impracticability of such an adventure. Massey remained resolute in his determination. It became necessary to decide the matter by a reference to the community. A great majority were of the opinion of Lowther. But though overruled, Massey was not convinced, so he became fractious and quarrelled with Captain Lowther. The men also were divided; some were land pirates, and some were sea pirates, and ere long, they were prepared to decide the matter with the sword.

But employment terminated dissension. The man at the mast-head cried, "A sail! a sail!" In a few hours, they came up with her, and found that she was bound for England. They supplied themselves with necessaries, and took a few hands out of her. Lowther proposed to sink her and all the passengers on board, but Massey interfered, and prevented this cruel action. Accordingly, she was permitted to depart, and arrived safe in England.

The next day they captured a small sloop, and detained her. Massey still remaining uneasy, and declaring his resolution to leave the Delivery, Lowther proposed that he and all those who were of his sentiments would go on board the sloop which they had just taken and seek their own fortunes. This was instantly agreed to, and Massey with ten more went on board, and sailed directly for Jamaica. With a bold countenance he went to the governor, informed him that he had assisted in running off with the vessel ; but his object was to save the lives of his majesty's subjects from perishing, and that his express design was to land them in England ; that, in opposition to this determination, Lowther and

the majority were for becoming pirates ; and that he had embraced the first opportunity to leave them, and surrender himself, his men, and his vessel, to his excellency.

Massey was kindly received, and sent along with Captain Laws to cruise in quest of Lowther, but not finding him, returned to Jamaica, received certificates of his surrender, and came home a passenger to England. When he came to town, he wrote a narrative of the whole matter to the African Company, who returned him for answer, "that he should be fairly hanged." He was accordingly seized, and, upon his own letter, the evidence of the late captain of the ship, who had been left at the fort, the governor's son, and some others, he was condemned to end his course at Tyburn.

Lowther, cruising off Hispaniola; captured a small ship from Bristol and a Spanish pirate. He rifled and burned both ships, sending the Spaniards away in their launch, and constraining the Englishmen to turn pirates. In a few days they took another sloop, which they manned and carried along with them, and then harboured at a small island to clean. Here they spent their time more like demons than men, in all manner of debauchery, drunkenness, and rioting.

Having again set to sea, they met with Edward Low, a pirate, in a small vessel with thirteen hands ; and upon the request of Lowther, he united his strength with theirs, Lowther retaining the command, and Low becoming lieutenant.

Proceeding on their voyage, they met with a vessel of two hundred tons, called the Greyhound, commanded by Benjamin Edwards. Piratical colours were hoisted, and she was commanded to strike. The captain declined,—an engagement ensued, but finding the pirates too strong for him, he surrendered. Instead of treating

the captain and his men with generous lenity, they beat them in a merciless manner, drove them on board their own ship, and then set fire to it.

In their course they took several other ships, rifled and dismissed them; but two they fitted up for their own service. With this small fleet: viz. Admiral Lowther in the Happy Delivery; Captain Low in the Rhode Island sloop; and Captain Harris (who was second mate in the Greyhound) a sloop formerly belonging to Jamaica,—they sailed to Port Mayo in the gulf of Matique, and made preparations to clean their vessels: with this view they made tents of their sails, stored their provisions in tent also, and then commenced their operations. But scarcely were they at work, when a body of the natives came down upon them, drove them to their ships, seized their tents and stores, and set fire to the Delivery, which was stranded on shore.

Lowther and his men now went on board the largest sloop, called the Ranger, and left the other at sea. They were soon reduced to great want, and commotion ensued; but when they had got to the West Indies, they took a prize, which supplied their wants, and having sunk her, sailed for America.

They, in a short time, captured a brigantine, and the company being divided in their sentiments, Low and those who were of his views, got on board the prize, and went off, while those who agreed with Lowther remained in the Ranger. On his way to the main land of America, Lowther took several ships with very little resistance, but upon the coast of South Carolina he met with a ship bound for England. An engagement took place, and Lowther was so hard pressed, that he was under the necessity of running aground, and landing his men; but when the captain of the English vessel had taken the boat in order to burn the pirate ship, a bullet

from the pirates on shore put an end to his life, which so discouraged his men, that they returned to their vessel.

After their departure, Lowther got off his sloop, though in a very shattered condition, having suffered much in the engagement, and many of his men having been killed or wounded. With no small difficulty he went into an inlet in North Carolina, where he remained during the winter.

In the spring he again put to sea, steered for Newfoundland, took several vessels of similar importance, and in his way to the West Indies captured a brigantine, plundered her, took two men into their own ship, and sent her off. Having cruised a considerable time, it was necessary to clean, and for that purpose he went into the isle of Blanco. While they were keenly employed in this work, the Eagle sloop, belonging to the South Sea Company, with thirty-five men, attacked Lowther, and constrained him to cry for quarter.

While they were surrendering, Lowther and twelve of the crew escaped out of the cabin-window, and fled to the woods. Five of them were taken, but the rest remained upon the island.

Informed of this meritorious action on the part of the sloop, the Spanish government condemned the ship to the crew of the Eagle, and sent a small sloop to the island with twenty-five men to search the woods for the other pirates. Three others were found, but Captain Lowther with three men and a boy escaped. As the captain was afterwards found dead, with a pistol beside him, it is supposed that in desperation he had shot himself.

The Eagle sloop brought the prisoners to St. Christopher's, where they were all tried in March, 1722; three were acquitted, eleven found guilty, and two recommended to mercy.



## ADVENTURES OF THE BARBAROUS PIRATE, CAPTAIN SPRIGGS.

SPRIGGS sailed with Lowther for some time, and left him in company with Low. He was quarter-master, and, by consequence, had a large share in all the barbarities of that execrable crew. He quarrelled with Low concerning one of the men who had killed another—Spriggs insisting that he should be hanged, and the other that he should not. After this dispute, Spriggs took an opportunity to leave him in the night, along with eighteen men, having seized the *Delight*, a prize of twelve guns.

Scarcely were they beyond reach of Lowther and his crew, when Spriggs was elected captain, black colours hoisted, and the guns fired as a salute to themselves and their captain. In their way to the West Indies, they took a Portuguese barque, loaded with rich plunder, and, after using the men in a cruel and barbarous manner, they put them into the boat, with a small quantity of provisions, and set the ship on fire.



They took another vessel belonging to Barbadoes, which they plundered, used the men also in a most barbarous manner, then put them into the boat—left them to the mercy of the waves, and set fire to the ship.—Some of the men signed their articles, and joined their association. The next capture was a ship from Marti-  
nico; and, though they did not burn the vessel, the men were used in the same cruel manner. Some days after, they took one coming from Jamaica, robbed her of stores, arms, ammunition, and every thing that they pleased, and what they did not think useful, they threw overboard. They forced the two mates and several other hands into their service, and then sent her off. They were not more fortunate in gaining prizes, than they were wantonly cruel to the men. A sloop from Rhode Island fell into their hands; they constrained all the men to join them; and the mate, being a grave, sober man, he resolutely declined. He was then in

formed that he should be allowed to go with his discharge written upon his back—this was, a lash from every man in the ship; which was rigorously put in execution.

The next day one of the mates taken out of the prize signed their articles, which was deemed a great acquisition, because he was a good artist. They gave three huzzas, fired all the guns, and appointed him master. The day was devoted to feasting and carousing, and, among other healths, that of George II. was drunk.—It had been related to them that the old king was dead, and they expected a general pardon upon the accession of the new sovereign. Thus they proclaimed his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, saying, “that they doubted not but there would be a general pardon in twelve months, which they would embrace, and come in upon; but, if they should be excepted from it, they would murder every Englishman that should fall into their hands.”

Not long after, they espied a sail and gave her chase. They supposed that she was a Spaniard, and so gave her a broadside. But a lamentable cry for quarter being heard from every part of the ship, they ceased firing. But how mortified were the rogues, when they found that it was the same vessel that they had sent away, not worth a penny. Enraged at this disappointment, about fifteen of these cruel wretches attacked the captain with sharp cutlasses, and would certainly have put an end to his life, had not Burrige, his former mate, rushed in among the thickest of them, and begged for his life. In the madness of their rage, they made a bonfire of the ship, and, even when they were sat down to supper they called down the unfortunate captain, to have some more cruel sport at his expense. In two days they anchored at an uninhabited island, and, with a musket and



some ammunition, they sent on shore the captain and several of his men. They subsisted for some time, and then were taken off by one Jones.

Spriggs now anchored at a small island and cleaned, and then sailed in search of the *Eagle* sloop, which had taken Lowther at Blanco, with the determined resolution to put him to death as soon as found, for attacking his friend and brother. But, to his surprise, this vessel proved to be a French man-of-war, on which he crowded all the sail he could. He would, however, have been taken, had not the main-top-mast of the Frenchman been broken.

Spriggs then sailed northward, took a schooner belonging to Boston, took out the men, sunk the vessel, and, having taken another sloop, they used the men in the most cruel and barbarous manner, hoisting them as high as the main and fore-tops, and letting them fall upon the deck. After using them in that manner, they whipped them about the deck until they themselves were fatigued, then allowed them all to go except two men.

They next captured a vessel from Rhode Island, with provisions and some horses. The brutal pirates mounted the horses, and rode at full gallop upon the deck, until the animals became infuriated, and threw their riders. They then wreaked their vengeance upon the men, cutting and beating them in a barbarous manner, and telling them it was for bringing horses without boots and spurs, for want of which they were not able to ride hem. In this manner these unnatural wretches continued their cruelties as long as they could maintain their community, to the disgrace of human nature, and to the sad sorrow of all who were so unfortunate as to fall into their hands.

## CAPTAIN ROCHE.

**THIS** man was a native of Ireland, and was trained up to the sea. When arrived at manhood, he was concerned, with some others, in insuring ships to a great value, and then destroying them. From a common sailor he was raised to be a mate in a vessel that traded between Ireland and France. In this situation he acquired a comfortable subsistence, and might have passed his days in respectability and usefulness. But the love of money, which has often proved the origin of ruin, excited him to abandon the path of honesty.

Having formed the design of becoming pirate, he communicated the same to one Neal, a fisherman at Cork, an ignorant, desperate villain. Neal enticed one Peter Cullen and his brother into the confederacy, and also one Francis Wise. They directed their attention to a French vessel lying in the harbour, Peter Tartoue captain, because there were few hands in her; and, though she was not suitable for the pirate service, yet they hoped soon to be able to exchange her for one more suitable for their purpose.

Accordingly, all things being concerted, they entered passengers on board her, bound for Nantz: Roche, being an experienced sailor, the master often trusted him with the care of the vessel, while he and the mate went to rest. Upon one of these occasions, Roche and his confederates embraced the opportunity to effectuate their cruel purpose. The mind of Francis Wise began to relent, and he endeavoured to dissuade them from their nefarious design. Roche, however, was determined,

and said that he and Cullen had suffered great losses at sea, and he was resolved to have them repaired; and, if there was any fisherman there who would not join in killing the French rogues, and running away with the vessel, he should certainly share their fate; but, on the contrary, if they all stood true, they should share of the booty.

Upon this they all agreed. Meanwhile Roche commanded three of the Frenchmen and a boy to hand the top-sails. The two who came first down were knocked on the head, and thrown overboard; upon seeing this, the other two ran up to the topmast head. Cullen followed, threw the boy into the water, and driving down the other man, he was immediately dispatched. Those who were sleeping below, being aroused by the tumult, and the shrieks of expiring men, rushed up; but before they could scarcely apprehend their danger, they were bound together, and, imploring mercy, they were also thrown overboard.

This horrible massacre being finished, Roche was made captain, Cullen was to assume the character of a merchant, and the name of Peter Roche was inserted in the papers of the ship. In vain they endeavoured to obtain a few hands from a ship, under the pretence that some of their men had been swept overboard. By a storm they were constrained to put into Dartmouth, in England, and set men to work to alter the form of the vessel, so that she should not be known; and, in order to obtain money to pay the workmen, they disposed of several barrels of beef which were in the ship.

They next steered their course for Rotterdam, and disposed of the remaining part of the cargo. From this port they were freighted for England, by one Annesly, a merchant, who went passenger along with them. But these execrable villains, in a stormy night, threw

him overboard. He swam long round the ship, and entreated them to spare his life, and all his goods should be at their disposal. But they remained unmoved by all his entreaties and cries.

They were, afterwards, under the necessity of coming to the coast of France, and received the intelligence that inquiry was made after them. Roche abandoned the vessel to Cullen, and went on shore. Cullen having obtained some more hands, sailed for Scotland, and then left the vessel, which was afterwards carried into the Thames.

Roche came to London, and, when endeavouring to recover some money under a feigned name, he was arrested, examined, and proved to be the person who had run off with the French vessel. Attempting to turn King's evidence, Neal and Cullen were discovered, but from the cruelty of his conduct, Roche was brought to his trial, condemned, and executed at Tyburn, in the thirtieth year of his age. He was an active genteel man, and, under a comely person, concealed a black and savage disposition. His whole life was a scene of villany and murder, and he was alike prepared for the commission of every cruelty.

**K**

## CAPTAIN EDWARD LOW.

**THIS** ferocious villain was born at Westminster, and received an education similar to that of the common people in England. He was by nature a pirate; for even when very young he raised contributions among the boys of Westminster, and if they declined compliance, a battle was the result. When he advanced a step farther in life, he began to exert his ingenuity at low games, and cheating all in his power; and those who pretended to maintain their own right, he was ready to call to the field of combat.

He went to sea in company with his brother, and continued with him for three or four years. Going over to America, he wrought in a rigging-house at Boston for some time. He then came home to see his mother in England, returned to Boston, and continued for some years longer at the same business. But being of a quarrelsome temper, he differed with his master, and went on board a sloop bound for the Bay of Honduras.

While there, he had the command of a boat employed in bringing logwood to the ship. In that boat there were twelve men well armed, to be prepared for the Spaniards, from whom the wood was taken by force. It happened one day that the boat came to the ship just a little before dinner was ready, and Low desired that they might dine before they returned. The captain, however, ordered them a bottle of rum, and requested them to take another trip, as no time was to be lost. The crew were enraged, particularly Low, who took up a loaded musket and fired at the captain, but missing him, another man was

shot, and they ran off with the boat. The next day they took a small vessel, went on board her, hoisted a black flag, and declared war with the whole world.

In their roving, Low met with Lowther, who proposed that he should join him, and thus promote their mutual advantage. We have already related their adventures so long as they remained in company. Having captured a brigantine, Low, with forty more, went on board her; and leaving Lowther, they went to seek their own fortune.

Their first adventure was the capture of a vessel belonging to Amboy, out of which they took the provisions, and allowed her to proceed. On the same day they took a sloop, plundered her, and permitted her to depart. The sloop went into Black Island, and sent intelligence to the governor that Low was on the coast. Two small vessels were immediately fitted out, but before their arrival, Low was beyond their reach. After this narrow escape, Low went into port to procure water and fresh provisions; and then renewed his search of plunder. He next sailed into the harbour of Port Rosemary, where were thirteen ships, but none of them of any great strength. Low hoisted the black flag, assuring them that if they made any resistance they should have no quarter; and manning their boat, the pirates took possession of every one of them, which they plundered and converted to their own use. They then put on board a schooner ten guns and fifty men, named her the Fancy, and Low himself went on board of her, while Charles Harris was constituted captain of the brigantine. They also constrained a few of the men to join them, and sign their articles.

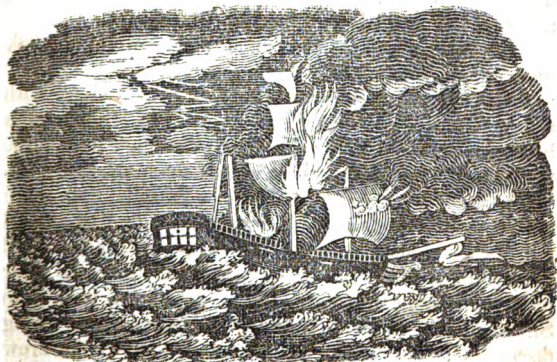
After an unsuccessful pursuit of two sloops from Boston, they steered for the Leeward Islands, but in their way were overtaken by a terrible hurricane. The

search for plunder gave place to the most vigorous exertion to save themselves. On board the brigantine, all hands were at work both day and night; they were under the necessity, of throwing overboard six of her guns, and all the weighty provisions. In the storm, the two vessels were separated, and it was some time before they again saw each other.

After the storm, Low went into a small island west of the Carribees, refitted his vessels, and got provision for them in exchange of goods. As soon as the brigantine was ready for sea, they went on a cruise until the *Fancy* should be prepared, and during that cruise, met with a vessel which had lost all her masts in the storm, which they plundered of goods to the value of 1000*l.* and returned to the island. When the *Fancy* was ready to sail, a council was held what course they should next steer. They followed the advice of the captain, who thought it not safe to cruise any longer to the leeward, lest they should fall in with any of the men-of-war that cruised upon that coast, so they sailed for the *Nores*.

The good fortune of Low was now singular; in his way thither he captured a French ship of 34 guns, and carried her along with him. Then entering *St. Michael's* roads, he captured seven sail, threatening with instant death all who dared to oppose him. Thus, by inspiring terror, without firing a single gun, he became master of all that property. Being in want of water and fresh provisions, Low sent to the governor demanding a supply, upon condition of releasing the ships he had taken, otherwise he would commit them to the flames. The request was instantly complied with, and six of the vessels were restored. But a French vessel which was among them, they emptied of her guns and all her men, except the cook, who, they said, being a greasy fellow,

would fry well ; they accordingly bound the unfortunate man to the mast, and set the ship on fire.



The next who fell in their way was Captain Carter, in the Wright galley ; who, because he showed some inclination to defend himself, was cut and mangled in a barbarous manner. There were also two Portuguese friars, whom they tied to the foremast, and several times let them down before they were dead, merely to gratify their own ferocious dispositions. Meanwhile, another Portuguese, beholding this cruel scene, expressed some sorrow in his countenance, upon which one of the wretches said he did not like his looks, and so giving him a stroke across the body with his cutlass, he fell upon the spot. Another of the miscreants, aiming a blow at a prisoner, missed his aim, and struck Low upon the under jaw. The surgeon was called, and stitched up the wound ; but Low finding fault with the operation, the surgeon gave him a blow which broke all the



stitches, and left him to sew them himself. After he had plundered this vessel, some of them were for burning her, as they had done the Frenchman ; but instead of that, they cut her cables, rigging, and sails to pieces, and sent her adrift to the mercy of the waves.

They next sailed for the island of Maderia, and took up a fishing-boat with two old men and a boy. They detained one of them, and sent the other on shore with a flag of truce, requesting the governor to send them a boat of water, else they would hang the other man at the yard-arm. The water was sent, and the man dismissed.

They next sailed for the Canary Islands, and there took several vessels ; and being informed that two small galleys were daily expected, the sloop was manned and sent in quest of them. They, however, missing their prey, and being in great want of provision, went into St. Michael's in the character of traders, and being discovered, were apprehended, and the whole crew conducted to the castle, and treated according to their merits.

Meanwhile, Low's ship was upset upon the careen and lost, so that, having only the Fancy schooner remaining, they all, to the number of a hundred, went on board her, and set sail in search of new spoils. They soon met a rich Portuguese vessel, and after some resistance captured her. Low tortured the men to constrain them to inform him where they had hid their treasures. He accordingly discovered that, during the chase, the captian had hung a bag with eleven thousand moidores out of the cabin window, and that, when they were taken, he had cut the rope, and allowed it to fall into the sea. Upon this intelligence, Low raved and stormed like a fury, ordered the captain's lips to be cut off and broiled before his eyes, then murdered him and all his crew.

After this bloody action, the miscreants steered northward, and in their course seized several vessels, one of which they burned, and plundering the rest, allowed them to proceed. Having cleaned in one of the islands, they then sailed for the Bay of Honduras. They met a Spaniard coming out of the bay, which had captured five Englishmen and a pink, plundered them, and brought away the masters prisoners. Low hoisted Spanish colours, but, when he came near, hung out the black flag, and the Spaniard was seized without resistance. Upon finding the masters of the English vessels in the hold, and seeing English goods on board, a consultation was held, when it was determined to put all the Spaniards to the sword. This was scarcely resolved upon, when they commenced with every species of weapons to massacre every man, and some flying from their merciless hands into the waves, a canoe was sent in pursuit of those who endeavoured to swim on shore. They next plundered the Spanish vessel, restored the English masters to their respective vessels, and set the Spaniard on fire.

Low's next cruise was between the Leeward Islands and the main land, where, in a continued course of prosperity, he successively captured no less than nineteen ships of different sizes, and in general treated their crews with a barbarity unequalled even among pirates. But it happened that the Greyhound, of twenty guns and one hundred and twenty men, was cruising upon that coast. Informed of the mischief these miscreants had done, the Greyhound went in search of them. Supposing they had discovered a prize, Low and his crew pursued them, and the Greyhound, allowing them to run after her until all things were ready to engage, turned upon the two sloops.

One of these sloops was called the Fancy, and com-

manded by Low himself, and the other the Ranger, commanded by Harris ; and both hoisted their piratical colours and fired each a gun. When the Greyhound came within musket shot, she hauled up her mainsail, and clapped close upon a wind, to keep the pirates from running to leeward, and then engaged. But when the ogues found whom they had to deal with, they edged away under the man-of-war's stern, and the Greyhound standing after them, they made a running fight for about two hours ; but little wind happening, the sloops gained from her, by the help of their oars ; upon which the Greyhound left off firing, turned all hands to their own oars, and at three in the afternoon came up with them. The pirates hauled upon a wind to receive the man-of-war, and the fight was immediately renewed, with a brisk fire on both sides, till the Ranger's mainyard was shot down. Under these circumstances, Low abandoned her to the enemy, and fled.

The conduct of Low was surprising in this adventure, because his reputed courage and boldness had hitherto so possessed the minds of all people, that he became a terror even to his own men ; but his behaviour throughout this whole action showed him to be a base cowardly villain ; for had Low's sloop fought half so briskly as Harris's had done (as they were under a solemn oath to do), the man-of-war, in the opinion of some present, could never have hurt them.

Nothing, however, could lessen the fury, or reform the manners, of that obdurate crew. Their narrow escape had no good effect upon them, and with redoubled violence they renewed their depredations and cruelties. The next vessel they captured, was eighty miles from land. They used the master with the most wanton cruelty, then shot him dead, and forced the crew into the boat with a compass, a little water, and a few bis-

cuits, and left them to the mercy of the waves; they, however, beyond all expectation, got safe to shore.

Low proceeded in his villainous career with too fatal success. Unsatisfied with satiating their avarice and walking the common path of wickedness, those inhuman wretches, like to Satan himself, made mischief their sport, cruelty their delight, and the ruin and murder of their fellow men their constant employment. Of all the piratical crews belonging to the English nation, none ever equalled Low in barbarity. Their mirth and their anger had the same effect. They murdered a man from good-humour, as well as from anger and passion. Their ferocious disposition seemed only to delight in cries, groans and lamentations. One day Low having captured Captain Graves, a Virginia man, took a bowl of punch in his hand, and said, "Captain, here's half this to you." The poor gentleman was too much touched with his misfortunes to be in a humour for drinking, he therefore modestly excused himself. Upon this Low cocked and presented a pistol in the one hand, and his bowl in the other, saying, "Either take the one or the other."

Low next captured a vessel called the Christmas, mounted her with thirty-four guns, went on board her himself, assumed the title of admiral, and hoisted the black flag. His next prize was a brigantine half manned with Portuguese, and half with English. The former he hanged, and the latter he thrust into their boat and dismissed, while he set fire to the vessel. The success of Low was unequalled, as well as his cruelty; and during a long period he continued to pursue his wicked course with impunity.

## CAPTAIN TEACH, ALIAS BLACK BEARD.

EDWARD TEACH, alias Black Beard, was a native of Bristol, and having gone to Jamaica, frequently sailed from that port as one of the crew of a privateer during the French war. In that station he gave frequent proofs of his boldness and personal courage; but he was not entrusted with any command until Captain Benjamin Hornigold gave him the command of a prize which he had taken.

In the spring of 1717, Hornigold and Teach sailed from Providence for the continent of America, and in their way captured a small vessel with 120 barrels of flour, which they put on board their own vessels. They also seized two other vessels; from one they took some gallons of wine, and from the other, plunder to a considerable value. After cleaning upon the coast of Virginia, they made a prize of a large French Guineaman bound to Martinique, and Teach obtaining the command of her, went upon a cruise. Hornigold, with the two vessels, returned to the island of Providence, and surrendered to the king's clemency.

Teach now began to act an independent part. He mounted his vessel with forty guns, and named her "The Queen Anne's Revenge." Cruising near the island of St. Vincent, he took a large ship called the Great Allan, and after plundering her of what he deemed proper, set her on fire. A few days after, Teach encountered the Scarborough man-of-war, and engaged her for some hours; but perceiving his strength and resolution, she retired, and left Teach to pursue his depredations. His

next adventure was with a sloop of ten guns, commanded by Major Bonnet, and these two having united their fortunes, co-operated for some time : but Teach finding him unacquainted with naval affairs, gave the command of Bonnet's ship to Richards, one of his own crew, and entertained Bonnet on board his own vessel. Watering at Turniff, they discovered a sail, and Richards with the *Revenge* slipped her cable, and ran out to meet her. Upon seeing the black flag hoisted, the vessel struck, and came to under the stern of Teach the commodore. This was the *Adventure*, from Jamaica. They took the captain and his men on board the great ship, and manned his sloop for their own service.

Weighing from Turniff, where they remained during a week, and sailing to the bay, they found there a ship and four sloops. Teach hoisted his flag, and began to fire at them, upon which the captain and his men left their ship and fled to the shore. Teach burned two of these sloops, and let the other three depart.

They afterwards sailed to different places, and having taken two small vessels, anchored off the bar of Charlestown for a few days. Here they captured a ship bound for England, as she was coming out of the harbour. They next seized a vessel coming out of Charlestown, and two pinks coming into the same harbour, together with a brigantine with fourteen negroes. The audacity of these transactions, performed in sight of the town, struck the inhabitants with terror, as they had been lately visited by some other notorious pirates. Meanwhile, there were eight sail in the harbour, none of which durst set to sea for fear of falling into the hands of Teach. The trade of this place was totally interrupted, and the inhabitants were abandoned to despair. Their calamity was greatly augmented from this circumstance, that a long

and desperate war had just terminated, when they began to be infested by these robbers.

Teach having detained all the persons taken in these ships as prisoners, they were soon in great want of medicines, and he had the audacity to demand a chest from the governor. This demand was made in a manner not less daring than insolent. Teach sent Richards, the captain of the *Revenge*, with Mr. Marks, one of the prisoners, and several others, to present their request. Richards informed the governor, that unless their demand was granted, and he and his companions returned in safety, every prisoner on board the captured ships should instantly be slain, and the vessels consumed to ashes.

During the time that Mr. Marks was negotiating with the governor, Richards and his associates walked the streets at pleasure, while indignation flamed from every eye against them, as the robbers of their property, and the terror of their country. Though the affront thus offered to the government was great and most audacious, yet, to preserve the lives of so many men, they granted their request, and sent on board a chest valued at three or four hundred pounds.

Teach, as soon as he received the medicines and his fellow pirates, pillaged the ships of gold and provisions, and then dismissed the prisoners with their vessels. From the bar of Charlestown, they sailed to North Carolina. Teach now began to reflect how he could best secure the spoil, along with some of his crew who were his favourites. Accordingly, under pretence of being ill, he ran his vessel on shore, and grounded; he then ordered the men in Hand's sloop to come to his assistance, which they endeavouring to do, also ran ashore, and so they were both lost. Then Teach went to the tender with forty hands, and upon a sandy island, at the

a league from shore, where there was neither bird nor beast, nor herb for their subsistence, he left seventeen of his crew who must have inevitably perished, had not Major Bonnet received intelligence of their miserable situation, and sent a long-boat for them. After this barbarous deed, Teach, with the remainder of his crew, went and surrendered to the governor of North Carolina, retaining all the property which had been acquired by his fleet.

This temporary suspension of the depredations of Black Beard, for so he was now called, did not proceed from a conviction of his former errors, or a determination to reform, but to prepare for future and more extensive exploits. As governors are but men, and not unfrequently by no means possessed of the most virtuous principles, the gold of Black Beard rendered him comely in the governor's eyes, and, by his influence, he obtained a legal right to the great ship called "The Queen Anne's Revenge." By order of the governor, a court of vice-admiralty was held at Bathtown, and that vessel was condemned as a lawful prize which he had taken from the Spaniards, though it was a well-known fact that she belonged to English merchants. Before he entered upon his new adventures, he married a young woman of about sixteen years of age, the governor himself attending the ceremony. It was reported that this was only his fourteenth wife, about twelve of whom were yet alive; and though this woman was young and amiable, he behaved towards her in a manner so brutal, that it was shocking to all decency and propriety, even among his abandoned crew of pirates.

In his first voyage, Black Beard directed his course to the Bermudas, and meeting with two or three English vessels, emptied them of their stores and other necessaries, and allowed them to proceed. He also met with two

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French vessels bound for Martinique, the one light and the other laden with sugar and cocoa: he put the men on board the latter into the former, and allowed her to depart. He brought the freighted vessel into North Carolina, where the governor and Black Beard shared he prizes. Nor did their audacity and villainy stop nere. Teach and some of his abandoned crew waited upon his excellency, and swore that they had seized the French ship at sea, without a soul on board; therefore a court was called, and she was condemned, the honourable governor received sixty hogsheads of sugar for his share, his secretary twenty, and the pirates the remainder. But as guilt always inspires suspicion, Teach was afraid that some one might arrive in the harbour who might detect the roguery: therefore, upon pretence that she was leaky and might sink, and so stop up the entrance to the harbour where she lay, they obtained the governor's liberty to drag her into the river, where she was set on fire, and when burnt to the water, her bottom was sunk, that so she might never rise in judgment against the governor and his confederates.

Black Beard now being in the province of Friendship, passed several months in the river, giving and receiving visits from the planters; while he traded with the vessels which came to that river, sometimes in the way of lawful commerce, and sometimes in his own way. When he chose to appear the honest man, he made fair purchases on equal barter; but when this did not suit his necessities, or his humour, he would rob at pleasure, and leave them to seek their redress from the governor; and the better to cover his intrigues with his excellency, he would sometimes outbrave him to his face, and administer to him a share of that contempt and insolence which he so liberally bestowed upon the rest of the inhabitants of the province.

But there are limits to human insolence and depravity. The captains of the vessels who frequented that river, and had been so often harassed and plundered by Black Beard, secretly consulted with some of the planters what measures to pursue, in order to banish such an infamous miscreant from their coasts, and to bring him to deserved punishment. Convinced from long experience, that the governor himself, to whom it belonged, would give no redress, they presented the matter to the governor of Virginia, and entreated that an armed force might be sent from the men-of-war lying there, either to take or to destroy those pirates who infested their coast.

Upon this representation, the governor of Virginia consulted with the captains of the two men-of-war as to the best measures to be adopted. He was resolved that the governor should hire two small vessels, which could pursue Black Beard into all his inlets and creeks; that they should be manned from the men-of-war, and the command given to Lieutenant Maynard, an experienced and resolute officer. When all was ready for his departure, the governor called an assembly, in which it was resolved to issue a proclamation, offering a great reward to any one, who, within a year, should take or destroy any pirate.

Upon the 17th of November, 1717, Maynard left James's river in quest of Black Beard, and on the evening of the 21st came in sight of the pirate. This expedition was fitted out with all possible despatch and secrecy, no boat being permitted to pass that might convey any intelligence, while care was taken to discover where the pirates were lurking. His excellency the governor of Bermuda, and his secretary, however, having obtained information of the intended expedition, the latter wrote a letter to Black Beard, intimating that he had sent him four of his men, who were all he could

meet with in or about town, and so bade him be upon his guard. These men were sent from Bathtown to the place where Black Beard lay, about the distance of twenty leagues.

The hardened and infatuated pirate, having been often deceived by false intelligence, was the less attentive to his information, nor was he convinced of its accuracy until he saw the sloops sent to apprehend him. Though he had then only twenty men on board, he prepared to give battle. Lieutenant Maynard arrived with his sloops in the evening, and anchored, as he could not venture, under cloud of night, to go into the place where Black Beard lay. The latter spent the night in drinking with the master of a trading-vessel, with the same indifference as if no danger had been near. Nay, such was the desperate wickedness of this villain, that it is reported, during the carousals of that night, one of his men asked him, "In case any thing should happen to him during the engagement with the two sloops which were waiting to attack him in the morning, whether his wife knew where he had buried his money?" when he impiously replied, "That nobody but himself and the devil knew where it was, and the longest liver should take all."

In the morning Maynard weighed, and sent his boat to sound, which, coming near the pirate, received her fire. Maynard then hoisted royal colours, and made towards Black Beard with every sail and oar. In a little time the pirate ran aground, and so also did the king's essels. Maynard lightened his vessel of the ballast and water, and made towards Black Beard. Upon this he hailed him in his own rude style, "D—n you for villains, who are you, and from whence come you?" The lieutenant answered, "You may see from our colours we are no pirates." Black Beard bade him send his boat on board that he might see who he was. But Maynard

replied, "I cannot spare my boat, but I will come on board of you as soon as I can with my sloop." Upon this Black Beard took a glass of liquor and drank to him, saying, "I'll give no quarter nor take any from you." Maynard replied, "He expected no quarter from him, nor should he give him any."

During this dialogue the pirate's ship floated, and the sloops were rowing with all expedition towards him. As she came near, the pirate fired a broadside, charged with all manner of small shot, which killed or wounded twenty men. Black Beard's ship, in a little after, fell broadside to the shore; one of the sloops, called the Ranger, also fell astern. But Maynard finding that his own sloop had way, and would soon be on board of Teach, ordered all his men down, while himself and the man at the helm, whom he commanded to lie concealed, were the only persons who remained on deck. He at the same time desired them to take their pistols, cutlasses, and swords, and be ready for action upon his call, and, for greater expedition, two ladders were placed in the hatchway. When the king's sloop boarded, the pirate's case-boxes, filled with powder, small shot, slugs and pieces of lead and iron, with a quickmatch in the mouth of them, were thrown into Maynard's sloop. Fortunately, however, the men being in the hold, they did small injury on the present occasion, though they are usually very destructive. Black Beard seeing few or no hands upon deck, cried to his men that they were all knocked on the head except three or four; "and therefore," said he, "let us jump on board, and cut to pieces those that are alive."

Upon this, during the smoke occasioned by one of these case-boxes, Black Beard, with fourteen of his men, entered and were not perceived until the smoke was dispelled. The signal was given to Maynard's men, who

rushed up in an instant. Black Beard and the lieutenant exchanged shots, and the pirate was wounded; they then engaged, sword in hand, until the sword of the lieutenant broke, but fortunately one of his men at that instant gave Black Beard a terrible wound in the neck and throat. The most desperate and bloody conflict ensued:—Maynard with twelve men, and Black Beard with fourteen. The sea was dyed with blood all around the vessel, and uncommon bravery was displayed upon both sides. Though the pirate was wounded by the first shot from Maynard, though he had received twenty cuts, and as many shots, he fought with desperate valour; but at length, when in the act of cocking his pistol, fell down dead. By this time eight of his men had fallen, and the rest being wounded, cried out for quarter, which was granted as the ringleader was slain. The other sloop also attacked the men who remained in the pirate vessels, until they also cried out for quarter. And such was the desperation of Black Beard, that, having small hope of escaping, he had placed a negro with a match at the gunpowder-door, to blow up the ship the moment that he should have been boarded by the king's men, in order to involve the whole in general ruin. That destructive broadside at the commencement of the action, which at first appeared so unlucky, was, however, the means of their preservation from the intended destruction.

Maynard severed the pirate's head from his body, suspended it upon his bowsprit-end, and sailed to Bath-town, to obtain medical aid for his wounded men. In the pirate sloop several letters and papers were found, which Black Beard would certainly have destroyed previous to the engagement, had he not determined to blow her up upon his being taken, which disclosed the whole villainy between the honourable governor of Bermuda and his

honest secretary on the one hand, and the notorious pirate on the other, who had now suffered the just punishment of his crimes.

Scarcely was Maynard returned to Bathtown, when he boldly went and made free with the sixty hogsheads of sugar in the possession of the governor, and the twenty in that of his secretary.

After his men had been healed at Bathtown, the lieutenant proceeded to Virginia with the head of Black Beard still suspended on his bowsprit-end, as a trophy of his victory, to the great joy of all the inhabitants. The prisoners were tried, condemned, and executed; and thus all the crew of that infernal miscreant Black Beard were destroyed, except two. One of these was taken out of a trading-vessel, only the day before the engagement, in which he received no less than seventy wounds, of all which he was cured. The other was Israel Hands, who was master of the Queen Anne's Revenge; he was taken at Bathtown, being wounded in one of Black Beard's savage humours. One night Black Beard, drinking in his cabin with Hands, the pilot, and another man, without any pretence, took a small pair of pistols, and cocked them under the table; which being perceived by the man, he went on deck, leaving the captain, Hands, and the pilot together. When his pistols were prepared, he extinguished the candle, crossed his arms, and fired at his company. The one pistol did no execution, but the other wounded Hands in the knee. Interrogated concerning the meaning of this, he answered with an imprecation, "That if he did not now and then kill one of them, they would forget who he was." Hands was eventually tried and condemned, but as he was about to be executed, a vessel arrived with a proclamation prolonging the time of his majesty's pardon,

which Hands pleading, he was saved from a violent and shameful death.

In the commonwealth of pirates, he who goes the greatest length of wickedness, is looked upon with a kind of envy amongst them, as a person of a more extraordinary gallantry; he is therefore entitled to be distinguished by some post, and, if such a one has but courage, he must certainly be a great man. The hero of whom we are writing was thoroughly accomplished in this way, and some of his frolics of wickedness were as extravagant as if he aimed at making his men believe he was a devil incarnate. Being one day at sea, and a little flushed with drink; "Come," said he, "let us make a hell of our own, and try how long we can bear it." Accordingly, he, with two or three others, went down into the hold, and, closing up all the hatches, filled several pots full of brimstone, and other combustible matter; they then set it on fire, and so continued till they were almost suffocated, when some of the men cried out for air; at length he opened the hatches, not a little pleased that he had held out the longest.

Those of his crew who were taken alive, told a story which may appear a little incredible. That once, upon a cruise, they found out that they had a man on board more than their crew; such a one was seen several days amongst them, sometimes below, and sometimes upon deck, yet no man in the ship could give any account who he was, or from whence he came; but that he disappeared a little before they were cast away in their great ship, and, it seems, they verily believed it was the devil.

One would think these things should have induced them to reform their lives; but being so many reprobates together, they encouraged and spirited one another up in their wickedness, to which a continual course of

drinking did not a little contribute. In Black Beard's journal, which was taken, there were several memoranda of the following nature, all written with his own hand. "Such a day, rum all out;—our company somewhat sober;—a d—d confusion amongst us!—rogues a plotting; great talk of separation.—So I looked sharp for a prize;—such a day took one, with a great deal of liquor on board; so kept the company hot, d—d hot, then all things went well again."

We shall close the narrative of this extraordinary man's life by an account of the cause why he was denominated Black Beard. He derived this name from his long black beard, which, like a frightful meteor, covered his whole face, and terrified all America more than any comet that had ever appeared. He was accustomed to twist it with ribbon in small quantities, and turn them about his ears. In time of action he wore a sling over his shoulders with three brace of pistols. He stuck lighted matches under his hat, which appearing on both sides of his face and eyes, naturally fierce and wild, made him such a figure that the human imagination cannot form a conception of a fury more terrible and alarming; and if he had the appearance and look of a fury, his actions corresponded with that character.





## CAPTAIN CHARLES VANE.

**CHARLES VANE** was one of those who stole away the silver which the Spaniards had fished up from the wrecks of the galleons in the Gulf of Florida, and was at Providence when governor Rodgers arrived there with two men-of-war, as the reader has been informed.

All the pirates who were then found at this colony of rogues, submitted and received certificates of their pardon, except Captain Vane and his crew; who, as soon as they saw the men-of-war enter, slipped their cable, set fire to a prize they had in the harbour, sailed out with their piratical colours flying, and fired at one of the men-of-war, as they went off from the coast.

Two days after, they met with a sloop belonging to Barbadoes, which they took, and kept the vessel for their own use, putting aboard five and twenty hands, with one Yeats the commander. In a day or two they fell in with a small interloping trader, with a quantity of Spanish pieces of eight aboard, bound for Providence, which they also took along with them. With these two sloops, Vane went to a small island and cleaned; where he shared the booty, and spent some time in a riotous manner.

About the latter end of May, 1718, Vane and his crew sailed, and being in want of provisions, they beat up for the Windward Islands. In their way they met with a Spanish sloop, bound from Porto Rico to the Havanna, which they burnt, stowed the Spaniards into a boat, and left them to get to the island by the blaze of their ves-

sel. Steering between St. Christopher's and Anguilla, they fell in with a brigantine and a sloop, freighted with such cargo as they wanted; from whom they got provisions for sea-store.

Sometime after this, standing to the northward, in the track the Old England ships take in their voyage to the American colonies, they took several ships and vessels, which they plundered of what they thought fit, and then let them pass.

About the latter end of August, Vane, with his consort Yeats, came off South Carolina, and took a ship belonging to Ipswich, laden with logwood. This was thought convenient enough for their own business, and therefore they ordered their prisoners to work, and threw all the lading overboard; but when they had more than half cleared the ship, the whim changed, and they would not have her: so Coggershall, the captain of the captured vessel, had his ship again, and he was suffered to pursue his voyage home. In this voyage the pirates took several ships and vessels, particularly a sloop from Barbadoes, a small ship from Antigua, a sloop belonging to Curacoa, and a large brigantine from Guinea, with upwards of ninety negroes aboard. The pirates plundered them all and let them go, putting the negroes out of the brigantine aboard Yeats' vessel.

Captain Vane always treated his consort with very little respect, and assumed a superiority over him and his crew, regarding the vessel but as a tender to his own: this gave them disgust; for they thought themselves as good pirates, and as great rogues as the best of them; so they caballed together, and resolved the first opportunity, to leave the company, and accept of his majesty's pardon, or set up for themselves; either of which they thought to be more honourable than to be servants to Vane: the putting aboard so many negroes,

where there were so few hands to take care of them aggravated the matter, though they thought fit to conceal or stifle their resentment at that time.

In a day or two, the pirates lying off at anchor, Yeats in the evening slipped his cable, and put his vessel under sail, standing into the shore; which when Vane saw, he was highly provoked, and got his sloop under sail to chase his consort. Vane's brigantine sailing best, he gained ground of Yeats, and would certainly have come up with them, had he had a little longer run; but just as he got over the bar, when Vane came within gunshot of him, he fired a broadside at his old friend, and so took his leave.

Yeats came into North Eddisto river, about ten leagues to the southward of Charlestown, and sent an express to the governor, to know if he and his comrades might have the benefit of his majesty's pardon; promising that, if they might, they would surrender themselves to his mercy, with the sloops and negroes. Their request being granted, they all came up, and received certificates; and Captain Thomson, from whom the negroes were taken, had them all restored to him, for the use of his owners.

Vane cruised some time off the bar, in hopes to catch Yeats at his coming out again, but therein he was disappointed; however, he there took two ships from Charlestown, which were bound home to England. It happened just at this time, that two sloops well manned and armed, were equipped to go after a pirate, which the governor of South Carolina was informed lay then in Cape Fear river, cleaning: but Colonel Rhet, who commanded the sloops, meeting with one of the ships that Vane had plundered, going back over the bar for such necessaries as had been taken from her; and she giving the colonel an account of being taken by the

pirate Vane, and also, that some of her men, while they were prisoners on board of him, had heard the pirates say they should clean in one of the rivers to the southward, he altered his first design, and instead of standing to the northward, in pursuit of the pirate in Cape Fear river, turned to the southward after Vane, who had ordered such reports to be given out, on purpose to put any force that should come after him upon a wrong scent: for he stood away to the northward, so that the pursuit proved to be of no effect. Colonel Rhet's speaking with this ship was the most unlucky thing that could have happened, because it turned him out of the road which, in all probability, would have brought him into the company of Vane, as well as of the pirate he went after, and so they might have been both destroyed; whereas, by the colonel's going a different way, he not only lost the opportunity of meeting with one, but if the other had not been infatuated, and lain six weeks together at Cape Fear, he would have missed him likewise; however, the colonel having searched the rivers and inlets, as directed, for several days, without success, at length sailed in prosecution of his first design, and met with the pirate accordingly, whom he fought and took.

Captain Vane went into an inlet to the northward, where he met with Captain Teach, otherwise Black Beard, whom he saluted (when he found who he was) with his great guns loaded with shot; it being the custom among pirates when they meet, to do so, though they are wide of one another: Black Beard answered the salute in the same manner, and mutual civilities passed between them some days, when, about the beginning of October, Vane took leave, and sailed farther to the northward.

On the 23d of October, off Long Island, he took a

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small brigantine bound from Jamaica to Salem in New England, besides a little sloop; they rifled the brigantine, and sent her away. From thence they resolved on a cruise between Cape Meise and Cape Nicholas, where they spent some time without seeing or speaking with any vessel, till the latter end of November; they then fell in with a ship, which it was expected would have struck as soon as their black colours were hoisted; but instead of this discharged a broadside upon the pirate, and hoisted French colours, which showed her to be a French man-of-war. Vane desired to have nothing further to say to her, but trimmed his sails, and stood away from the Frenchman; however, Monsieur, having a mind to be better informed who he was, set all his sails and crowded after him. During this chase the pirates were divided in their resolution what to do: Vane, the captain, was for making off as fast as he could, alleging that the man-of-war was too strong for them to cope with; but one John Rackam, their quarter-master, and who was a kind of check upon the captain, rose up in defence of a contrary opinion, saying, "that though she had more guns, and a greater weight of metal, they might board her, and then the best boys would carry the day." Rackam was well seconded, and the majority was for boarding; but Vane urged, "that it was too rash and desperate an enterprise, the man-of-war appearing to be twice their force, and that their brigantine might be sunk by her before they could reach to board her. The mate, one Robert Deal, was of Vane's opinion, as were about fifteen more, and all the rest joined with Rackam, the quarter-master. At length the captain made use of his power to determine this dispute, which in these cases is absolute and uncontrollable, by their own laws, viz. the captain's absolute right of determining in all questions concerning fighting, chasing,

or being chased; in all other matters whatsoever the captain being governed by a majority; so the brigantine having the heels, as they term it, of the Frenchman she came clear off.

But the next day, the captain's conduct was obliged to stand the test of a vote, and a resolution passed against his honour and dignity, which branded him with the name of coward, deposed him from the command, and turned him out of the company with marks of infamy; and with him went all those who did not vote for boarding the French man-of-war. They had with them a small sloop that had been taken by them some time before, which they gave to Vane and the discarded members; and that they might be in a condition to provide for themselves by their own honest endeavours, they let them have a sufficient quantity of provisions and ammunition.

John Rackam was voted captain of the brigantine in Vane's room, and he proceeded towards the Carribee Islands; where we must leave him, till we have finished our history of Charles Vane.

The sloop sailed for the bay of Honduras, and Vane and his crew put her in as good a condition as they could by the way, that they might follow their old trade. They cruised two or three days off the north-west part of Jamaica, and took a sloop and two pettiagas, all the men of which entered with them: the sloop they kept, and Robert Deal was appointed captain.

On the 16th of December, the two sloops came into the bay, where they found only one vessel at anchor. She was called the Pearl of Jamaica, and got under sail at the sight of them; but the pirate sloops coming near Rowland, and showing no colours, he gave them a gun or two, whereupon they hoisted the black flag, and fired three guns, each at the Pearl. She struck, and the

pirates took possession, and carried her away to a small island called Barnacho, where they cleaned. By the way they met with a sloop from Jamaica, as she was going down to the bay, which they also took.

In February, Vane sailed from Barnacho, for a cruise out, some days after he was out, a violent tornado overtook him, which separated him from his consort, and, after two days' distress, threw his sloop upon a small uninhabited island, near the bay of Honduras, where she was staved to pieces, and most of her men were drowned; Vane himself was saved, but reduced to great straits for want of necessaries, having no opportunity to get any thing from the wreck. He lived here some weeks, and was supported chiefly by fishermen, who frequented the island with small crafts from the main, to catch turtles and other fish.

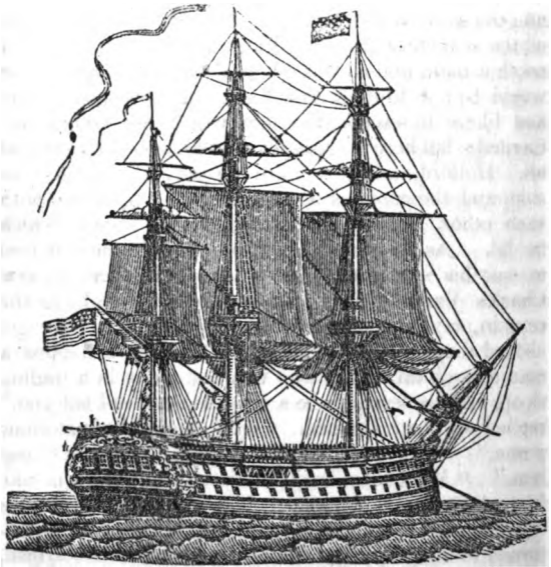
While Vane was upon the island, a ship put in there from Jamaica for water, the captain of which, one Holford, an old Buccaneer, happened to be Vane's acquaintance. He thought this a good opportunity to get off, and accordingly applied to his old friend; but Holford absolutely refused him, saying to him, "Charles, I shan't trust you aboard my ship, unless I carry you as a prisoner, for I shall have you caballing with my men, knocking me on the head, and running away with my ship a pirating." Vane made all the protestations of honour in the world to him; but, it seems, Captain Holford was too intimately acquainted with him, to repose any confidence at all in his words or oaths. He told him, "He might easily find a way to get off, if he had a mind to it:—I am going down the bay," said he, "and shall return hither in about a month, and if I find you upon the island when I come back, I'll carry you to Jamaica, and there hang you." "How can I get away?" answered Vane. "Are there not fishermen's

dories upon the beach? Cant you take one of them?" replied Holford. "What!" said Vane, "would you have me steal a dory then?" "Do you make it a matter of conscience," replied Holford, "to steal a dory, when you have been a common robber and pirate, stealing ships and cargoes, and plundering all mankind that fell in your way! Stay here if you are so squeamish:" and he left him to consider of the matter.

After Captain Holford's departure, another ship put into the same island, in her way home, for water; none of the company knowing Vane, he easily passed for another man, and so was shipped for the voyage. One would be apt to think that Vane was now pretty safe, and likely to escape the fate which his crimes had merited; but here a cross accident happened that ruined all. Holford, returning from the bay, was met by this ship, and the captains being very well acquainted with each other, Holford was invited to dine aboard, which he did. As he passed along to the cabin, he chanced to cast his eye down into the hold, and there he saw Charles Vane at work: he immediately spoke to the captain, saying, "Do you know whom you have got aboard there?" "Why," said he, "I have shipped a man at such an island, who was cast away in a trading sloop, and he seems to be a brisk hand." "I tell you," replied Captain Holford, "it is Vane, the notorious pirate." "If it be he," cried the other, "I won't keep him." "Why then," said Holford, "I'll send and take him aboard, and surrender him at Jamaica." This being agreed upon, Captain Holford, as soon as he returned to his ship, sent his boat with his mate, armed, who, coming to Vane, showed him a pistol, and told him he was his prisoner. No man daring to make opposition, he was brought aboard and put in irons; and when Captain Holford arrived at Jamaica, he delivered



up his old acquaintance to justice, at which place he was tried, convicted, and executed, as was some time before, Vane's consort, Robert Deal, who was brought thither by one of the men-of-war. It is clear from this, how little ancient friendship will avail a great villain, when he is deprived of the power that had before supported and rendered him formidable.



## CAPTAIN JOHN RACKAM.

THIS John Rackam, as has been reported in the foregoing pages, was quarter-master to Vane's company, till the crew were divided, and Vane turned out of it for refusing to board the French man-of-war, Rackam being voted captain of the division that remained in the brigantine. The 24th of November, 1718, was the first day of his command; his first cruise was among the Carribbee Islands, where he took and plundered several vessels.

We have already taken notice, that when Captain Woods Rodgers went to the island of Providence with the King's pardon to such of the pirates as should surrender, this brigantine, which Rackam now commanded, made its escape through another passage, bidding defiance to the mercy that was offered.

To the windward of Jamaica, a Maderia-man fell into the pirate's way, which he detained two or three days, till they had their market out of her, and then they gave her back to the master, and permitted one Hosea Tidsel, a tavern-keeper at Jamaica, who had been picked up in one of their prizes, to depart in her, she being bound for that Island.

After this cruise, they went into a small island, and cleaned, and spent their Christmas ashore,\* drinking and carousing as long as they had any liquor left, and then went to sea again for more. They succeeded but too well, though they took no extraordinary prize for above two months, except a ship laden with convicts from

Newgate, bound for the plantations, which in a few days was retaken, with all her cargo, by an English man-of-war that was stationed in those seas.

Rackam stood towards the Island of Bermuda, and took a ship bound to England from Carolina, and a small pink from New England, both of which he brought to the Bahama Islands, where, with the pitch, tar, and stores, they cleaned again, and refitted their own vessel; but staying too long in that neighbourhood, Captain Rodgers, who was Governor of Providence, hearing of these ships being taken, sent out a sloop well manned and armed, which retook both the prizes, though in the mean while the pirate had the good fortune to escape.

From hence they sailed to the back of Cuba, where Rackam kept a little kind of family; at which place they stayed a considerable time, living ashore with their Delilahs, till their money and provisions were expended, and they concluded it time to look out for more. They repaired their vessel, and were making ready to put to sea, when a guarda de costa came in with a small English sloop, which she had taken as an interloper on the coast. The Spanish guard-ship attacked the pirate, but Rackam being close in behind a little island, she could do but little execution where she lay; the Dons therefore warped into the channel that evening, in order to make sure of her the next morning. Rackam, finding his case desperate, and that there was hardly any possibility of escaping, resolved to attempt the following enterprise. The Spanish prize lying for better security close into the land, between the little island and the Main, our desperado took his crew into the boat with their cutlasses, rounded the little Island, and fell aboard their prize silently in the dead of the night without being discovered, telling the Spaniards that were aboard her,

that if they spoke a word, or made the least noise, they were all dead men ; and so they became masters of her.

When this was done, he slipped her cable, and drove out to sea. The Spanish man-of-war was so intent upon their expected prize, that they minded nothing else, and as soon as day broke, they made a furious fire upon the empty sloop ; but it was not long before they were rightly apprized of the matter, when they cursed themselves sufficiently for a company of fools, to be bit out of a good rich prize, as she proved to be, and to have nothing but an old crazy hull in the room of her.

Rackam and his crew had no occasion to be displeased at the exchange, as it enabled them to continue some time longer in a way of life that suited their depraved minds. In August, 1720, we find him at sea again, scouring the harbours and inlets of the north and west parts of Jamaica, where he took several small craft, which proved no great booty to the rovers ; but they had but few men, and therefore were obliged to run at low game till they could increase their company and their strength.

In the beginning of September, they took seven or eight fishing-boats in Harbour Island, stole their nets and other tackle, and then went off to the French part of Hispaniola, where they landed, and took the cattle away, with two or three Frenchmen, whom they found near the water-side, hunting wild hogs in the evening. The Frenchmen came on board, whether by consent or compulsion is not certainly known. They afterwards plundered two sloops, and returned to Jamaica, on the north coast of which island, near Porto Maria Bay, they took a schooner, Thomas Spenlow, master ; it being then the 19th of October. The next day Rackam seeing a sloop in Dry Harbour Bay stood in and fired a gun ; the men all ran ashore, and he took the sloop and lading ;

but when those ashore found that they were pirates, they hailed the sloop, and let them know they were all willing to come aboard of them.

Rackam's coasting the island in this manner, proved fatal to him; for intelligence of his expedition, came to the governor, by a canoe which he had surprised ashore in Ocho Bay; upon this a sloop was immediately fitted out, and sent round the island in quest of him, commanded by Captain Barnet, and manned with a good number of hands. Rackam, rounding the island, and drawing round the western point, called Point Negril, saw a small pettiaga, which, at sight of the sloop, ran ashore and landed her men, when one of them hailed her. Answer was made that they were Englishmen, and begged the pettiaga's men to come on board and drink a bowl of punch; which they prevailed upon them to do. Accordingly, the company, in an evil hour, came all aboard of the pirate, consisting of nine persons; they were armed with muskets and cutlasses, but what was their real design by so doing we shall not take it upon us to say. They had no sooner laid down their arms and taken up their pipes, than Barnet's sloop, which was in pursuit of Rackam's, came in sight.

The pirates, finding she stood directly towards them, feared the event, and weighed their anchor, which they had but lately let go, and stood off. Captain Barnet gave them chase, and, having the advantage of little breezes of wind which blew off the land, came up with her, and brought her into Port Royal in Jamaica.

About a fortnight after, the prisoners were brought ashore, viz., November 16, 1720, and Captain Rackam and eight of his men condemned and executed. Captain Rackam and two others were hung in chains.

But what was very surprising, was the conviction of the nine men that came aboard the sloop on the same

day she was taken. They were tried at an adjournment of the court, on the 24th of January, the magistracy waiting all that time, it is supposed, for evidence to prove the piratical intention of going aboard the said sloop; for it seems there was no act of piracy committed by them, as appeared by the witnesses against them two Frenchmen taken by Rackam off the island of Hispaniola; who merely deposed that the prisoners came on board the pirate without compulsion.

The court considered the prisoners' cases, and the majority of the commissioners being of opinion that they were all guilty of the piracy and felony they were charged with, viz., the going over with a piratical and felonious intent to John Rackam, &c. then notorious pirates, and by them known to be so, they all received sentence of death, and were executed on the 17th of February, at Gallows Point, at Port Royal.



## MARY READ.

THE attention of our readers is now to be directed to the history of two female pirates—a history which is chiefly remarkable from the extraordinary circumstance of the softer sex assuming a character peculiarly distinguished for every vice that can disgrace humanity—and, at the same time, for the exertion of the most daring though brutal courage.

Mary Read was a native of England, but at what place she was born is not recorded. Her mother married a sailor when she was very young, who, soon after their marriage, went to sea and never returned. The fruit of that marriage was a sprightly boy. The husband not returning, she again found herself with child, and, to cover her shame, she took leave of her husband's relations, and went to live in the country, taking her boy along with her. Her son in a short time died, and she was relieved from the burden of his maintenance and education. The mother had not resided long in the country before Mary Read, the subject of the present narrative, was born.

After the birth of Mary, her mother resided in the country for three or four years, until her money was all spent; and her ingenuity was set at work to contrive how to obtain a supply. She knew that her husband's mother was in good circumstances, and could easily support her child, provided she could make her pass for a boy, and her son's child. But it seemed impossible to impose upon an old experienced mother. She, however,

presented Mary in the character of her grandson. The old woman proposed to take the boy to live with her, but the mother would not on any account part with her boy; therefore, the grandmother allowed a crown per week for his support.

The ingenuity of the mother being successful, she reared her daughter as a boy. But as she grew up, her mother informed her of the secret of her birth, in order that she might conceal her sex. The grandmother, however, dying, the support from that quarter failed, and she was obliged to hire him out as a foot-boy to a French lady. The strength and manly disposition of this boy increased with his years; and, leaving that servile employment, he engaged on board a man-of-war.

The volatile disposition of this supposed youth did not permit him to remain long in this station, and he next went into Flanders, and joined a regiment of foot as a cadet. Though in every station she conducted herself with the greatest bravery, yet she could not obtain a commission, as they were in general bought and sold. She accordingly quitted that service, and enlisted into a regiment of horse; there she behaved herself so valiantly, that she gained the esteem of all her officers. It however happened that her comrade was a handsome young Fleming, and she fell violently in love with him. The violence of her feelings rendered her negligent of her duty, and effected such a change in her behaviour as attracted the attention of all. Both her comrade and the rest of the regiment deemed her mad. Love, however, is inventive; and, as they slept in the same tent, she found means to discover her sex without any seeming design. He was both surprised and pleased, supposing that he would have a mistress to himself; but he was greatly mistaken, and he found that it was necessary to court her for his wife. A mutual attachment took

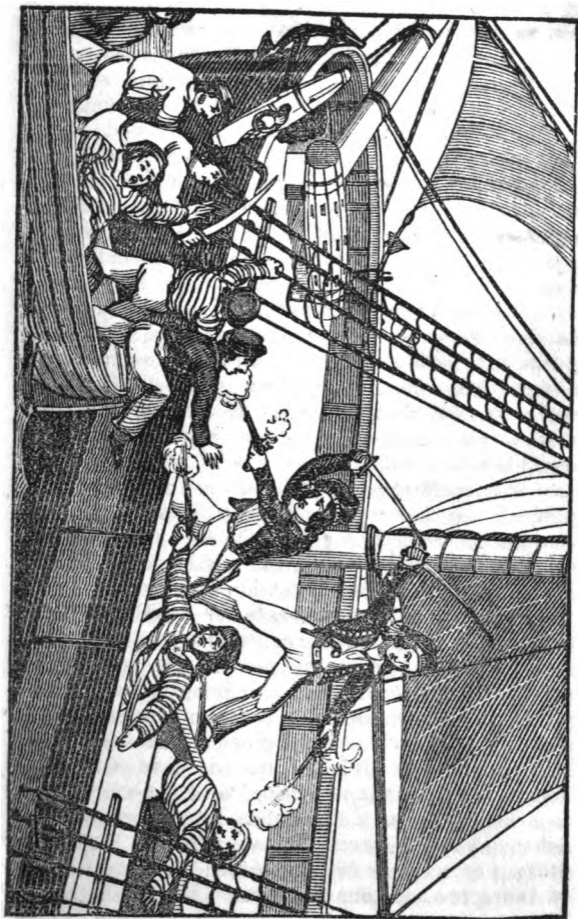


place; and, as soon as convenient, women's clothes were provided for her, and they were publicly married.

The singularity of two troopers marrying produced a general conversation, and many of the officers honoured the ceremony with their presence, and resolved to make presents to the bride, to provide her with necessaries. After marriage they were desirous to quit the service, and his discharge being easily obtained, they set up an ordinary, with the sign of the "Three Shoes," and soon acquired a considerable run of business.

But her felicity was of short duration; the husband died, and, peace being concluded, her business diminished. In these circumstances she again resumed her man's dress, and, going into Holland, enlisted into a regiment of foot quartered in one of the frontier towns. But there being no view of preferment in time of peace, she left that service, and went on board a vessel bound for the West Indies.

During the voyage, the ship was captured by English pirates; and, as Mary was the only English person on board, they detained her, and, having plundered the vessel of what they chose, they allowed it to depart. Mary continued in that unlawful commerce for some time; but the royal pardon being tendered to all those in the West Indies who should, before a specified day, surrender, the crew to which she was attached availed themselves of this, and lived quietly on shore with the fruits of their adventures. But, from the want of their usual supplies, their money became exhausted; and, being informed that Captain Rogers, in the Island of Providence, was fitting out some vessels for privateering, Mary, with some others, repaired to that island to serve on board his privateers. We have already heard, that scarcely had the ships sailed, when some of their crews mutinied, and run off with the ships,





to pursue their former mode of life. Among these was Mary Read. She indeed frequently declared, that the life of a pirate was what she detested, and that she was constrained to it both on the former and present occasion. It was, however, sufficiently ascertained, that both Mary Read and Anne Bonney were among the bravest and most resolute fighters of the whole crew; that when the vessel was taken, these two heroines, along with another of the pirates, were the last three upon deck; and that Mary, having in vain endeavoured to rouse the courage of the crew, who had fled below, discharged a pistol among them, killed one, and wounded another.

Nor was Mary less modest than brave; for though she had remained many years in the character of a sailor, yet no one had ever discovered her sex, until she was under the necessity of doing so to Anne Bonney. The reason of this was, that Anne, supposing her to be a handsome fellow, became greatly enamoured of her, and discovered her sex and her wishes to Mary, who was thus constrained to reveal her secret to Anne. Rackam, being the paramour of Bonney, and observing her partiality towards Mary, threatened to shoot her lover; so that, to prevent any mischief, Anne also informed the captain of the sex of her companion.

Rackam was enjoined secrecy; and here he behaved honourably; but love again assailed and conquered Mary. It was usual with the pirates to retain all the artists who were captured in the trading-vessels: among these there was a handsome young man, of very engaging manners, who vanquished the heart of Mary. In a short time her love became so violent, that she took every opportunity of enjoying his company and conversation; and, after she had gained his friendship, discovered her sex. Esteem and friendship were speedily converted into the most ardent affection, and a mutual

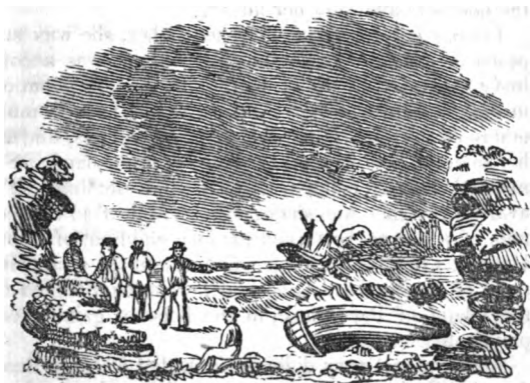
flame burned in the hearts of these two lovers. An occurrence soon happened that put the attachment of Mary to a severe trial. Her lover, having quarrelled with one of the crew, they agreed to fight a duel on shore. Mary was all anxiety for the fate of her lover; and she manifested a greater concern for the preservation of his life, than that of her own; but she could not entertain the idea that he should refuse to fight, and so be esteemed a coward. Accordingly she quarrelled with the man who had challenged her lover, and called him to the field two hours before his appointment with her lover, engaged him with sword and pistol, and laid him dead at her feet.

Though no esteem or love had formerly existed, this action was sufficient to have kindled the most violent flame. But this was not necessary, for the lover's attachment was equal, if not stronger; they pledged their faith, which they esteemed as binding as, if the ceremony had been performed by a clergyman. Captain Rackam, one day, before he knew that she was a woman, asked her why she followed a line of life that exposed her to so much danger, and at last to the certainty almost of being hanged. She replied, that, as to hanging, she thought it no great hardship, for were it not for that, every cowardly fellow would turn pirate, and so infest the seas, and men of courage would starve; that, if it was put to her choice, she would not have the punishment less than death, the fear of which kept some dastardly rogues honest; that many of those who are now cheating the widows and orphans, and oppressing their poor neighbours who have no money to obtain justice, would then rob at sea, and the ocean would be as crowded with rogues as the land: so that no merchants would venture out, and the trade in a little time would not be worth following.

Being with child at the time of her trial, her execution

was delayed, and it is probable that she would have found favour ; but in the meantime she fell sick and died.

Mary Read was of a strong and robust constitution, capable of enduring much exertion and fatigue. She was vain and bold in her disposition, but susceptible of the most melting affections. Her conduct was directed by virtuous principles—while at the same time she was violent in her attachments. Though she was inadvertently drawn into that dishonourable mode of life which has stained her character, and given her a place among the criminal actors in the drama of this work, yet she possessed a rectitude of principle and of conduct, far superior to many who have not been exposed to so great temptations to swerve from the path of female virtue and honour.



## ANNE BONNEY.

THIS female pirate was a native of Cork in Ireland. Her father was an attorney, and, by his activity in business, rose to considerable respectability in that place. Anne was the fruit of an unlawful connexion with his own servant-maid, with whom he afterwards eloped to America, leaving his own affectionate and lawful wife. He settled at Carolina, and for some time followed his own profession; but soon commenced merchant, and was so successful as to purchase a considerable plantation. There he lived with his servant in the character of his wife; but she dying, Anne his daughter superintended the domestic affairs of her father.

During her residence with her father, she was supposed to have a considerable fortune, and was accordingly addressed by young men of respectable situations in life. It happened with Anne, however, as with many others of her youth and sex, that her feelings, and not her interest, determined her choice of a husband. She married a young sailor without a single shilling. The avaricious father was so enraged, that, deaf to the feelings of a parent, he turned his own child out of doors. Upon this cruel usage of her father, and the disappointment of her fortune, Anne and her husband sailed for the Island of Providence, in the hope of gaining employment.

Acting a part very different from that of Mary Read, Anne's affections were soon estranged from her husband by Captain Rackam, and, eloping with him, went to sea in men's clothes. Proving with child, the captain put

her on shore, and intrusted her to the care of some friends, until her recovery, when she again accompanied him in his expeditions.

Upon the king's proclamation, offering a pardon to all pirates, he surrendered, and went into the privateering business, as was related in the former life. He, however, soon embraced an opportunity to return to his favourite employment. In all his piratical exploits, Anne accompanied him, and, as we have already related, displayed such courage and intrepidity, that she, along with Mary Read and another seaman, were the last three who remained on deck when the vessel was taken.

Anne was known to many of the planters in Jamaica, who remembered to have seen her in her father's house, and they were disposed to intercede in her behalf. Her unprincipled conduct in leaving her own husband, and forming an illicit connexion with Rackam, tended, however, to render them less active. By a special favour, Rackam was permitted to visit her the day before he was executed; but, instead of condoling him on account of his sad fate, she only observed, that she was sorry to see him there, but if he had fought like a man, he needed not have been hanged like a dog. Being with child, she remained in prison until her recovery—was reprieved from time to time; and, though we cannot communicate to our readers any particulars of her future life, or the manner of her death, yet we are certain that she was not executed.



## CHARLES GIBBS AND THOMAS WANSLEY.

GIBBS was born in the year 1794, at the house and on the farm of his father, an opulent agriculturalist of Rhode Island.

Wansley, it is by some asserted, was born on a plantation on the Mississippi; by others that he was a native of one of the West India Islands; while others, again, as confidently, locate his birth-place in a number of other dissimilar positions. Of course we are not enabled to give any thing certain on this point, nor is it important, as it is known that he and Gibbs never met until on board the Vineyard. To the career of the latter, then, from his boyhood to the event just alluded to, let us return.

Charles, when he had reached a proper age, was sent by his parents to an excellent school in the neighbourhood of their residence; and although by their own excellent precepts they had sought to prepare his youthful mind for the discipline and duties of the scholar, (a fact which he often, in his subsequent career, acknowledged with the most bitter self-reproach) yet, though a "quick boy," his conduct at the academy was so outrageously bad that, notwithstanding every means was first tried to make him mend, so as to avoid it, he was finally expelled therefrom.

Being a stout, hardy boy, his father placed him at work among the labourers on his farm, by way of punishment for his pranks; but it was of little avail,

neither the rod nor persuasion would make him work except "just when he took the notion," while, at the same time, if any outrage was committed in the neighbourhood, it was almost invariably traced to Gibbs as its author.

Such was the *boy*—we have yet to relate the characteristics of the *man*—enough be it now to say that it fully realises Wordsworth's remarkable line :

"The child is father to the man."

Just after he had passed the age of fifteen, in the year 1809, he ran away from the farm, and at Boston entered the states'service on board the *Hornet*, Captain James Lawrence, and continued in that ship until after the war between the United States and Great Britain broke out. He was in the action between her and the *Peacock*; and when, after her return home, and the brave but unfortunate Lawrence had been transferred to the command of the *Chesapeake*, Gibbs followed him to her, for he was very much attached to his commander, and in the action with the *Shannon* distinguished himself greatly, exciting by his deeds in the action, as he had by his words before it began, the almost mutinous crew to forget all minor matters in the love and honour for their country's glory; but the result is known to the reader. Gibbs, with the other prisoners, was sent to Dartmoor prison, in which he remained until peace being restored between the two countries, opened his prison doors. After he reached home, he announced his determination to desert the hazards of the seaman's life for ever, and after he had spent some time at the paternal mansion, where the prodigal was as joyfully received as if he had been the best of sons, he announced to his parents his intention to go to Boston, and try his luck in trade, asserting that he understood the business of a

grocer perfectly. With this end his father gave him one thousand dollars in cash to begin with. He faithfully kept his word so far as opening a grocery was concerned; but he established himself in a most disreputable part of the city, where the temptations of the abandoned of the other sex were in almost every house near him. His shop being licensed also to retail liquor brought this class of people continually into his place of business, but unfortunately for him their custom was not a cash one, and Gibbs, finding his substance dwindling away, sold every thing he had, raised from it but about one hundred dollars, and shipped once more. He went in the ship John to Buenos Ayres, where he remained until all his money was gone, and then joined a crew which was going out of Buenos Ayres in a privateer; on the cruise, we believe, the first idea of piracy entered his thoughts, and every thing seemed to favour his design, for shortly after, what the crew considered an unfair division of prize money, raised great discontent between them and the officers. Gibbs with all his energies fomented the anger of these men, and finally succeeded in so widening the breach between them that a mutiny was the result. The belligerent men, after a hard struggle, overpowered the officers and all of their fellows who had taken part against them. They then put them under hatches, but did not otherwise treat them badly. They would not bestow the command on Gibbs, or any one else, but "took turns about" in sailing the vessel. They first made the southernmost coast of Florida, where they landed the officers and their adherents, and then made all sail for the West India Islands, on one of which, in a retired inlet, they took a position, from which they used to sally out, take a vessel, bring her into their colony, change her appearance, man her, sail in her to Havana, and there dispose of

her. On one of these cruises the pirates met, attacked and took the American ship *Caroline*, and took her into their port; but while landing her cargo, they were observed by a British man-of-war, the *Jarius*. The commander had his boats manned, and commenced an attack upon their position, which was a small battery they had erected in quite a commanding position. The man-of-war's men, however, forced them to fly, but did not pursue them. On landing, according to the account of the officers of the *Jarius*, they found the charred hulls of twelve vessels burnt to the water's edge. These, with the number sold at the Havana, render it probable they must have captured in their time from twenty to thirty vessels, the crews of which, at the lowest computation, must have amounted to five hundred souls; were doubtless sent to "that bourne from whence no traveller returns."

Gibbs by this time was wrought up to the highest pitch of desperation, and his sanguinary behaviour, added to his courage, coolness and skill in navigation, caused him to be unanimously chosen their leader in all future enterprises. To reap a golden harvest without the hazard of being betrayed by living witnesses, it was resolved to spare no lives, and to burn and plunder without mercy; and such was the ferocity of the Spaniards that Gibbs never had occasion to order the work of death, for the unhappy victims generally were murdered the moment the pirates gained the deck of their prize.

In one of the cruises which he made from this place they captured a Dutch ship, with a cargo of West India goods and a quantity of silver plate; the passengers and crew, to the number of thirty, were all destroyed with the exception of a young and beautiful girl about 17, who fell on her knees and implored Gibbs to save her

life; this he promised to do, though he knew it would lead to dangerous consequences among his crew. She was carried to Cape Antonio and kept there about two months, but the discontent increased until it broke out into open mutiny, and one of the pirates was shot by Gibbs for daring to lay hold of her with a view of dashing out her brains. Gibbs was compelled, in the end, to submit her fate to a council of war, at which it was decided that her sacrifice was necessary to their own preservation. It was resolved that she should be poisoned, and Gibbs at last consenting, it was instantly carried into execution.

After the departure of the *Jarius*, Gibbs and some of his companions found means to reach Havana, where he was comparatively unknown, and where if he had been, in those days, he could have remained with impunity. The developments made by the *Jarius*, however, and (the world being, after a quarter of a century of war, once more at peace) the increasing vigilance of all the powers in a determination to expel piracy, if possible, from the "face of the deep," determined Gibbs to return to his native country. With admirable foresight, in the midst of his career, he had deposited in safe hands at Havana, the sum of thirty thousand dollars, with which, after he bought the best bills on New York, he sailed as passenger for that city, where he arrived, after a short passage, about the close of the year 1819. After his arrival in his native country, he became addicted to the pleasures of "women and wine," and having a good stock of money on hand as capital, he became, also, a professional gambler, visiting the different cities, watching for the unplucked, and entering into all the schemes of the fraternity. Gibbs, however, came off from this speculation a loser. He was not calculated for *land piracy*. His skill was that of the





tiger, who leaps upon and annihilates his victim; not that of the fascinating snake, who charms as he meditates your ruin. Leaving, then, this pursuit, he was seized with an inclination to see the old world, and sailed with that intention from Boston for Liverpool; but in consequence of the fascination of a woman whom he met at the latter city, and the influence she acquired over him, he never went farther, not even to London, but remained day and night in this woman's presence, almost her slave. This dream was dispelled by her leaving Liverpool with another man, which had such an effect upon him that he took passage immediately for his native country, where he arrived in due time. He lived in various parts of the Union, as the whim prompted him, until the declaration of war between Buenos Ayres and Brazil. Gibbs had lived well, playing the gentleman every where, so that his funds had of course diminished in consequence; and judging that this was an excellent opportunity to replenish his coffers, he took passage as soon as possible for Buenos Ayres, and immediately on his arrival had an interview with the governor and the admiral, and succeeded in obtaining a commission as fifth lieutenant of "The 'Twenty-fifth of May," a thirty-four gun ship. This interview and his subsequent adventures until he returned to Boston, he thus himself describes:

"When the governor gave me the commission, he told me that he wanted no cowards in their navy; to which I replied, that I thought he would have no apprehension of my cowardice or skill when he became acquainted with me; he thanked me, and said he hoped he should not be deceived; upon which, we drank to his health and the success of the republic; he then presented me with a sword, and told me to wear that as my companion through the doubtful struggle in which the



republic was engaged ; I told him I never would disgrace it so long as I had a nerve in my arm.

“ I remained on board the ship in the capacity of fifth lieutenant for about four months, during which time we had a number of skirmishes with the enemy. Having succeeded in gaining the confidence of Admiral Brown, he sent me in command of a privateer schooner, mounting two long twenty-four pounders and forty-six men. I sailed from Buenos Ayres, made two good cruises, and returned safely to port. I then bought one half of a new Baltimore schooner, and sailed again, but was captured seven days out, and carried into Rio Janeiro, where the Brazilians paid me my change. I remained there until peace took place, then returned to Buenos Ayres, and thence to New York.

“ After the lapse of about a year, which I passed in travelling from place to place, the war between France and Algiers attracted my attention. Knowing that the French commerce presented a fine opportunity for plunder, I determined to embark for Algiers and offer my services to the Dey. I accordingly took passage from New York in the Sally Ann, belonging to Bath, landed at Barcelona, crossed to Port Mahon, and endeavoured to make my way to Algiers. The vigilance of the French fleet prevented the accomplishment of my design, and I proceeded to Tunis. There, finding it unsafe to attempt a journey to Algiers across the desert, I amused myself with contemplating the ruins of Carthage, and reviving my recollections of her war with the Romans. I afterwards took passage to Marseilles, and thence to Boston.”

Gibbs from that city took passage for New Orleans, and he had been there but a short time when, all his money being gone, he shipped on board the brig Vineyard, Captain Thornby, for Philadelphia, for which port

she sailed on the 9th of November, 1830, with the following persons: William Thornby, captain; William Roberts, mate; James Talbot, seaman; Robert Dawes, seaman; John Brownrigg, seaman; Edward Church, seaman; Henry Atwell, seaman; Charles Gibbs, seaman; Thomas J. Wansley, a black man, cook; making a crew of nine men. There was included in the cargo fifty-four thousand Spanish dollars, consigned to the late opulent Philadelphia merchant, Stephen Girard. When the brig was fairly clear of the land, Gibbs and Wansley, having had, it is believed, many conversations respecting this money, determined to sound the residue of the crew. They did this for a time at "subtle distance," but at length became more bold, when they observed that the rest seemed afraid of them. Church openly joined them; Atwell also implied his consent; Talbot refused, because, he said, he did not believe they would find any money after all; Brownrigg agreed with him; and Dawes would give them no satisfaction. They then told the three latter that they were able to despatch them as well as the captain and mate, and would do it, if they did not keep quiet, which, strange to say, they did, for the united power of those indisposed to the attempt was certainly superior to that of the disaffected. The four coadjutors made all preparation in the way of arms and opportunity, and on the night of the 23d of November, this bloody tragedy was performed. Captain Thornby was standing, about twelve o'clock, a little forward of the companion way, when Wansley came up the steps, without attracting his attention, and deposited the lantern, which he had held in his hand, on the deck as a guide to recognising the mate, who was below in his berth, when he should be attracted by the noise. In the other hand he had a knife, but did not use it, for he snatched the pump-break, and felled the captain with

that. While senseless from the blow, he and Gibbs carried him to the side and threw him overboard. The mate, alarmed, rushed up the companion, and as he was about to ask the reason of the noise, Church and Atwell, who were stationed on each side of the door, struck him simultaneous blows, which caused him to retreat back again. Gibbs seized the light, by the aid of which Dawes was steering, and with Atwell and Church followed him below, Gibbs caught his arms and held him while his two companions beat him nearly to death. He was then also thrown overboard. The deed done, Gibbs took command of the brig. As soon as day broke, all hands were ordered to overhaul the cargo and find, if there, the money. This being shared, they set to work and made bags of sail cloth, and stowed it away. Dawes, who best understood the duty of steering, was placed at the helm, and ordered to make in for the land. On the next evening they made Southampton light, and when from ten to fifteen miles out, Gibbs ordered the boats to be got out, and had his own share, and that of Wansley, Brownrigg, and Dawes, put in the long boat; while Atwell, Church, and Talbot, with what had been awarded them, were put in the jolly boat. The four first named got in the boat with their portion of the ill-gotten spoils; and then, all hands being off, the brig was set on fire and scuttled. About daylight both boats struck on a bar; but the long boat was got clear, while the other foundered, and the three in her perished. Their companions saw their dying struggles, but rendered them no assistance. The remaining four landed on Pelican Island. There it was that, in the sand, they buried the money, except what they needed for immediate use, and they then crossed to Great Bar Island, where they remained during the day and that night, during which Brownrigg found an opportunity to com-

municate to Mr. Johnson, the owner of the house, an account of what has just been related.

On leaving Mr. Johnson they proceeded to the house of Mr. Leonard, and having made arrangements for a horse and wagon to carry them farther, they were about to get in when Brownrigg refused to go, saying, they were murderers, and that if they would send for a magistrate he would substantiate all he had said. On hearing this Gibbs and Wansley fled to the woods, but were soon taken, and with Brownrigg and Dawes conveyed to New York.

The confession of the prisoners made to Messrs. Meritt and Stevenson, while on their way from Flatbush, was full and conclusive, and not a shadow of doubt could rest on the mind of any persons who heard the testimony of those officers. Occasionally prompted by Gibbs, Wansley told the whole story, fairly implicating Dawes, but exculpating Brownrigg from all participation in their crime. Gibbs was tried for the murder of William Roberts, and Wansley for that of Captain Thornby. Dawes and Brownrigg were admitted as *state's evidence*; both being found guilty, the attorney general moved for judgment on the verdict. During the trial the iron visage of Gibbs was often darkened with a passing emotion; but having abandoned all hope of escape, he sat the greater part of the time with his hands between his knees surveying with calmness the scene around him. Wansley betrayed much agitation, and when the verdict of the jury was read he trembled violently, and with difficulty supported himself.

*Wansley*, in reply to the judge, whether he had any thing to say why sentence of death should not be pronounced upon him, said that he felt disposed to say a few words, though doubtful of its being of any use to him. Coloured men, when white men were judges, he

said, stood but a poor chance. White men stole the Africans from their own country; and there always existed among the whites a strong dislike of the blacks; which was plain in his case, both in respect to witnesses, jurors, and the conduct of the attorney general. Of the evidence given to the court a great deal was false, as he of course had an opportunity within himself of knowing. Of one of the indictments found against him the charge was entirely false. He guessed he had said sufficient.

But being encouraged by the court to continue, he further stated that he was the first man who went on board of the Vineyard, and that he saw the specie brought on board. It was Atwell, he said, who first told him of the conspiracy that had been formed to rob the vessel and requested him to join, for they were the strongest party and intended to take the lives of the officers and any of the men who would not agree to their proposals. "I felt no inclination to join them," says Wansley, "and so I told Church, who was the only one of the crew that I knew before I shipped in the Vineyard. Church told me by all means not to inform against the conspirators. If I had informed upon them I should have only been in the same situation in which I am at present. I have nothing more to say."

Gibbs said he wished to make it known how far he was guilty, and how far innocent. He knew only Church and Dawes when he went on board of the Vineyard. When first solicited by Atwell to join the conspirators he declined. After further thoughts upon the subject, however, he assented to it; as did the whole crew, Brownrigg and Dawes inclusive. Thinking afterwards how dreadful a crime it was to take the life of a human being, he declared he would not consent to killing the captain and the mate; and that he persuaded

all, except Church and Dawes, who were doggedly obstinate, to relinquish that part of their dreadful intention. Such was the stubborn opposition of Church and Dawes, who overruled the others at last, that he too yielded to the murder of the unfortunate captain and mate. Brownrigg called up the captain. Church and Dawes threw the mate overboard. "I protest before my God!" was Gibbs' emphatic language, in conclusion, "that of the murder of the mate I am innocent!" He further acknowledged that he did assist in throwing the captain overboard.

After the preceding confessions upon the part of Wansley and Gibbs, the judge prepared to pass the sentence of the law. The brief remarks of the prisoners, he observed, though calculated to excite some feeling, were only confirmatory of the justice of their sentence. To Wansley he observed, that whatever prejudices existed in his imagination as emanating from the difference of colour, he could assure him that strict impartiality had been exercised throughout the whole proceedings. Even let it be admitted that Brownrigg and Dawes had falsely sworn, enough had fallen from their own lips to convict them of having taken life without provocation. If there was a shadow of doubt in regard to the evidence, the court would extend to Wansley a new trial;—but nothing of the kind existed. When the crime charged against him is denied by the accused, said the judge, the only course for the court to adhere to, is to proceed upon the testimony as elicited from the several witnesses in the case, in the progress of the trial. In the present instance all was clear and conclusive. Embarrassments of no sort interposed to arrest the judgment of the court. The prisoners had admitted their crime, and stood for the last time in the presence of an earthly tribunal. There were no palliating circumstances in the case of

the prisoners, as frequently happens. The captain and the mate had never given either of them offence,—but they trusted in them as able mariners and worthy citizens, and confided to their protection lives and property. For the paltry consideration of a sum of money did the prisoners long and warily deliberate upon the murder of the unfortunate men whose lives were sacrificed. It was in every sense of the term a *bold-blooded murder* ! Gibbs, though he did not strike the blow which deprived his fellow-creatures of life (if what he states is true) was nevertheless guilty in the eye of the law as an abettor, standing by, as he did, encouraging the homicides in their dreadful work, without attempting to stay the others from their cruel deeds. And yet, the judge continued, he could not believe the prisoners hardened to their situation and incapable of contrition, for they had proved in what they had that day uttered in the court, they were both intelligent men; men who had certainly enjoyed more of the advantages of education than most of those who were engaged as mariners. The court, said the judge, would fully believe their statement that up to a certain period they revolted at the commission of the crime. But the testimony convicted them of every offence in the indictment, mutiny, murder, robbery on the high seas, and scuttling the vessel—the award of each of which is *death* !

The judge then passed sentence on each—that each should be taken from the place where they then were, thence to the place of their confinement, and should be hanged by the neck until dead; and that the marshal of the southern district of New York should see this sentence put into execution on the 22d of April next, between hours of ten and four o'clock. In many countries, said the judge, the execution immediately follows the sentence, nor was there any reason, legally, why the pri-

soners should not instantly be conducted to the scaffold to encounter their fate. Six weeks, however, were allowed them for preparation; but they must by no means indulge a hope of pardon. As certain as they now breathed the breath of life, on the 22d of April they must *die!* The judge then stated, that the court scarcely knew how to present to the prisoners its closing remarks in the most efficient manner—in such a manner as should reach the convictions, and depict to the prisoners the enormity of their crime, and subdue their hearts to repentance. They surely must have felt, at times, in the course of their lives, that it is an awful thing to die. In the precarious profession which they followed, when sometimes exposed to danger by the violence of a tempest upon the “bosom of the deep,” they must have experienced the power of that instinct which urges human nature to exert every means to protect itself from the fate which overhangs it. When thus situated, they had surely felt that inward conviction which cries aloud as a warning voice “*it is an awful thing to die!*” But if the prisoners, said the judge, had never felt the awful responsibility of death, now, *now* was the time to consider it—to *consider what would come after death!* Every communication with pious men would be granted to them by the humanity of the marshal. The duty of the court was discharged.

While in prison, Gibbs wrote two letters, in which he advises the female previously mentioned in this narrative, to forsake the vicious life she was then pursuing and seek repentance ere it should be too late. These letters show him to be a man of but limited education, but prove him to be possessed of much innate talent.

On Friday, the 22d of April, 1831, Charles Gibbs and Thomas Wansley, escorted by the marshal, his aids, and thirty or more marines, reached the gallows at



about 12 o'clock, attended to the fatal spot by two clergymen likewise, who offered up to the Throne of Mercy a devout prayer for the souls of those who were about to be launched into eternity. Wansley prayed earnestly himself, and subsequently joined in chaunting a hymn. These services ended, Gibbs addressed the spectators, denying the murder of William Roberts, but admitting that he stood by and saw the deed done. "The law believes me guilty of the charge," said he, "but I take my God, before whose tribunal I shall in a few moments be summoned, to witness that I did not murder the mate!"

Wansley then spoke. He might be called a pirate and a murderer, he said, but he had hope in the Lord Jesus, and trusted that his crimes would be pardoned. He spoke of his emotions as being powerful; so much that it was with the greatest effort he could summon to himself the ability to speak to the bystanders, and concluded by frankly acknowledging the justice of his sentence. He then took leave of his fellow convict, as well as the officers and clergymen. The caps having then been drawn over their faces—a handkerchief was dropped by Gibbs as the signal to the executioner—the cord was severed—and as quick as thought they were suspended between earth and sky. Wansley died easily; but Gibbs struggled much, and evidently died very hard—after hanging two minutes he elevated his right hand as high as his head and partly removed his cap, and before another minute had elapsed he was observed to again raise the same hand to his mouth.

What a warning to others is the sad fate of these two men; it should be a beacon-light for others to shun the broad road to ruin and pursue the paths of virtue, which conduct to honour and happiness in this world, and a crown of immortality in the world to come!

## HISTORY OF THE CAPTURE OF THE

# BRIG MEXICAN

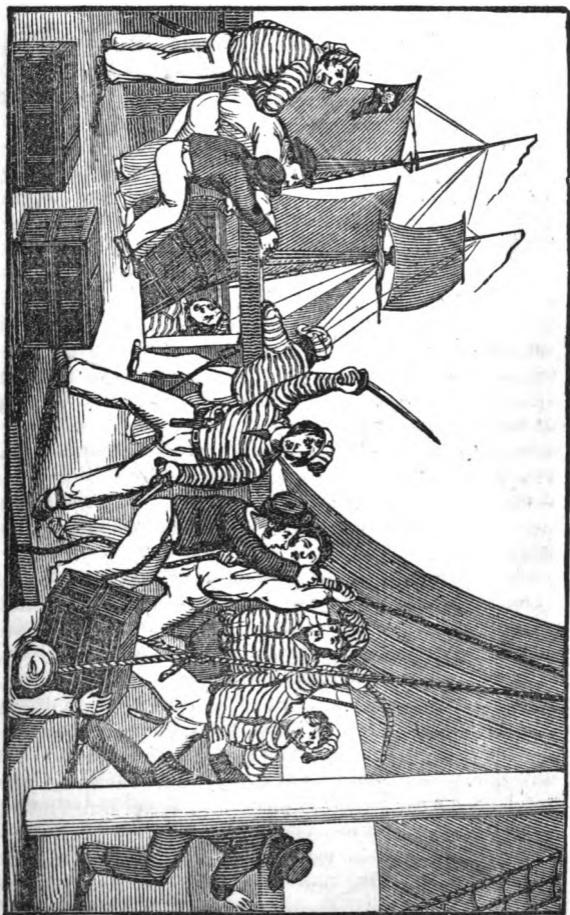
BY THE SPANISH PIRATES;

AND AN ACCOUNT OF THEIR TRIAL AND EXECUTION.

**THERE** is something peculiarly gratifying to the looker-on in the sight of a trim-built vessel lying at anchor on a calm sea—her raking masts scraped bright, her ropes taut, her sides glistening with the white streak and fresh black, and her appearance altogether denoting her to be under the perfect control of her officers and seamen. Such was the appearance of the clipper-built schooner *Panda* as she reposed upon the “bosom of the waters,” in the Havana, on the 20th of August, 1832. Don Pedro Gibert was the captain, and Don Bernardo De Soto mate and owner of this schooner. Gibert and De Soto were both natives of Spain, sons of Spanish grandees, and allied to the first families in that country. At the age of twenty-five, De Soto was united in wedlock to a beautiful daughter of a merchant in Corunna of the name of Peyrara. The Christian name of this beautiful girl was Petrona; and at the time of her marriage with Bernardo de Soto she was but fifteen years of age. Time, with its many vicissitudes, had passed over Gibert and De Soto, and at the period in question,

we find them engaged in the African slave trade. Upon the night of the 20th of August, the Panda left her anchorage and passed through the Bahama channel on the ordinary course for the coast of Guinea; but another object than the traffic in human flesh and blood now directed the movements of the Panda—*piracy*—and for this object a look-out was uninterruptedly kept at the mast-head. On the morning of the 20th of September, (one month exactly from the time of their departure from the Havana) the man at the mast-head descried a brig heading to the south. Gibert, the captain, who was in his berth, was wakened; he came on deck, where De Soto and Francisco Ruiz, the carpenter, (a desperate character and principal adviser in the matter) were in consultation. Ruiz proposed that the brig in sight should be boarded, her specie taken out, the crew put under the hatches, and the vessel destroyed. With this horrible project the captain promptly complied. "Fire a musket," was his command. A musket was immediately discharged as a signal for the stranger to heave to.

"The American brig Mexican, Captain Butman, sailed from the harbour of Salem, Mass., in the latter end of August, bound for Rio Janeiro," says Captain Butman in his evidence. "Nothing remarkable," he says, "occurred on board until the morning of Sept. 20th, when the watch on deck noticed a vessel which passed across our stern at about a half-mile from us. We made her out to be a schooner with fore-top and top-gallant sail. Next morning at eight o'clock she was two miles to windward; and as we could see a great number of men on her deck and a look-out on her fore-top-gallant-yard we became quite suspicious of her. Soon after this we saw a brig on our weather-bow steering N. E. and expecting that the schooner would





keep on for the brig a head of us, we tacked to the westward to get clear of her, if possible. But the schooner presently wore round, squared her sails, and came directly down upon us, and, as soon as within gun-shot of us, fired, and run up patriot colours. He ran along side, hailed us to know where we were from and where bound, and then ordered me to come on board in my boat. I saw that there was no chance for us if attempting to resist, and went. I no sooner got along-side the schooner, which I found was called the Panda, than five ruffians, each armed with a knife, sprung into my boat, and ordered me to go on board the brig again. When on board, they threateningly drew their knives, and insisted that we had money, swearing death to us if we did not instantly tell them where it was. As soon as they discovered it, they compelled my crew to assist in getting it out, urging them with blows to do it quicker. When they had got the cash all on deck, they hailed the schooner,—they sent their launch and took the cash on board, amounting to twenty thousand dollars, contained in ten boxes. They came back to the Mexican again, and drove all my crew into the fore-castle. They then commenced ransacking the cabin, overhauling every chest, trunk and drawer. They rifled my pockets, took my watch and some doubloons, and robbed the mate of his watch and about two hundred dollars in specie. Not satisfied with this, they continued to insist that there was more money in the hold. I told them there was not, and they retorted by beating me severely upon my back, still continuing their search and threatening with dreadful oaths to cut the throats of myself and the whole crew if they found any. Searching some time, and not finding any more specie, they returned to the Panda. In a few moments they came hastily back to the Mexican, sent us all below, fastened the companion-

way as well as the fore-scuttle and after-hatchway, stove our compasses in the binnacles, cut the tiller-ropes, halyards and braces and the greater part of our running rigging. They then collected all the materials that they could find about the deck, with a tub of tarred rope-yarn, and put them in the caboose-house, which they set afire, and then left the brig, taking with them our boat and colours.

“The pirates, in their haste to get away,” continues Captain Butman, “forgot to secure the cabin-scuttle, by which neglect upon their part, as it providentially happened, the crew were enabled to get upon deck and extinguish the fire which in a minute or two would have caught the sails, burnt the masts and completely consumed the brig, involving the utter destruction of the crew and myself. Soon after, we saw the schooner giving chase to a ship, steering to the S. E. but which she did not overtake while in our sight.

“Our money being gone,” adds Captain Butman, “and the object of our voyage defeated, the best to be done was for the Mexican to return to Salem, which she reached in safety.”

As soon as the report of this audacious piracy reached the government of the United States, they immediately ordered out a vessel in quest of the pirates. The cruiser touched at various places upon the African coast, which might probably be a retreat for them, but no trace of them could be found, and after every exertion had been made, the search was finally given up.

After the robbery of the Mexican, as it appears, the pirates continued their way to the gulf of Guinea and some of the crew becoming sick, they sailed for Prince's Island, which they eventually left with much haste for Cape Lopez, and put into the river Nazareth, up which, at several miles from the mouth, they anchored.

His Britannic Majesty's brig, Curlew, Captain Trotter, having arrived at Prince's Island and obtained information of the robbery of the Mexican, and learning that a suspicious looking schooner was then at anchor in the river Nazareth, and finding that the description given of the piratical vessel accorded with the description given of the one lying up the river, he immediately started in pursuit. As Captain Trotter neared the coast he discovered the schooner, and promptly got out three boats, with forty men, and taking the command himself, started up the river with a favourable wind and tide and colours flying. On their approach, the pirates, after setting fire to some combustibles near the magazine, in the hope of annihilating their assailants at a blow, took to their boats. Captain Trotter, not being able to overtake them, boarded the schooner, which he found to be on fire and which he succeeded in extinguishing. -

The first care of the pirates, after leaving their schooner, was to insinuate themselves into the favour of the African King, at Cape Lopez. For this purpose, Captain Gibert, of the Panda, while at Prince's Island, had purchased with money taken from the Mexican, two valuable cloth coats, some Guinea cloth, and black and green paint, as a present for his African majesty. By these means the natives were prevailed upon to associate themselves with the pirates in hostility towards the captain and crew of the British brig. An expedition was equipped by Captain Trotter to pursue the pirates up the river. The long boat and pinnance were armed and provisions put on board in quantity sufficient to supply their crews for weeks. Each boat was mounted with a gun. To shelter the men from the intensity of the solar heat during the day, and the heavy dews a night, awnings were fixed over each of the boats, and every comfort provided that the nature of the expedition



would admit of. The pirates, joined by the natives in their war canoes, were ascertained to be in expectation of the attack at some distance beyond where the *Panda* was taken. The English boats were all the time under the necessity of observing the utmost caution for fear of an ambuscade. The boats grounded near a mangrove, just in sight of a village, which obliged the crew to jump out and track the boat over the sand until they should again find the channel of the river. Whilst his sailors were thus engaged, Captain Trotter, through his glass, saw a large number of the natives, in company with some of the *Panda's* desperadoes, stealing down the other side of a low point; they were armed with spears and muskets, he observed, and he had no doubt their design was to give battle to himself and crew. His men were just fortunate enough to get the boats into deep water when a great number of war-canoes were seen coming round the point, others running down the beach with their boats to launch, amounting in all to twenty-eight canoes and something like a hundred and fifty persons. With loud and animating shouts and fierce gesticulation, they assembled, and paddled rapidly towards the English boats, the crews of which promptly prepared for the fight by taking down their awnings, loading their muskets, and charging the two big guns with grape-shot. Conspicuous, in the midst of the natives, were seen Bernardo De Soto and the fiendish Francisco Ruiz, inciting the negroes and manœuvring their canoes for the fight. With appalling yells and a straggling fire the canoes advanced. In the English boats all was as quiet as the grave—each man armed with a cutlass and musket. As soon as the distance of pistol-shot only intervened between the hostile parties, a sudden and effective discharge from the English boats was poured into the canoes, of which two were imme-

diately submerged. A sharp conflict ensued, during which a great number of the natives were killed, and some of the pirates, whilst the loss upon the part of the English was inconsiderable. The destruction of the negroes presently became general; if not shot down, they were so completely panic-struck that they hastily paddled towards shore or jumped into the river and were drowned or killed by the sharks, which surrounded the boats in shoals. The captain and the owner of the Panda were both captured, as well as several of the piratical crew; Ruiz and the rest got ashore and escaped to an inland village; Ruiz and his fellow-pirates succeeded in urging the negroes to resume the conflict. Ruiz was desperate and desperately did he and his fellow-pirates fight; but to no purpose, for they were finally driven back into the woods, and were eventually delivered into the custody of Captain Trotter by the king of Cape Lopez.

Gibert, De Soto, Ruiz, and the piratical crew (what remained of them after the battle), were put on board of the Curlew and taken to England, where they were transferred from the Curlew to the British gun-brig Savage, and brought to Salem harbour, on the 26th of August, 1834—the British government justly awarding to the U. S. the right to try the prisoners, inasmuch as against the U. States had aggression been committed. They were removed from Salem to Boston and there imprisoned, where one of their number committed suicide. He cut his throat with a piece of glass and bled to death.

On the 11th of November, 1834, they were all arraigned before the Circuit Court of the U. S., charged with their heinous crime. Two Portugese sailors, who had been shipped while the Panda was at Prince's Island, were the witnesses against them,—and Josep Perez appeared as *state's evidence*. Among the witnesses also were captain Butman of the Mexican, (from whose testi-

mony we have already made an extract) and the mate and some of the seamen. The seamen were called upon to identify the pirates, which they unhesitatingly did, designating this one or that as men by whom they were beaten and who had superintended the transportation of the money from the brig to the schooner. In this stage of the trial a singular incident took place. Thomas Fuller, one of the seamen of the Mexican, thus called upon, irritated by the memory of the abuse he had received from the hands of Ruiz, and so indignant at the moment as to be entirely lost to the propriety of such a proceeding, walked up to where Ruiz was sitting and struck a violent blow upon the monster's shoulder. Fuller was of course reprimanded by the court.

The names of the prisoners were as follows: Don Pedro Gibert (captain), Don Bernardo De Soto (mate and owner), Francisco Ruiz (carpenter), Nicolia Costa (cabin boy aged 15), Antonio Ferrer (cook), Domingo De Gusman (an Indian), Manuel Boyga, I. Antonio Portana, M. Castillo, Angel Garcia, Jose Velasquez, and Juan Montenegro (seamen). The prisoners were ably defended by Messrs. Child and Hilliard. Gibert, De Soto, Ruiz, Boyga, Castillo, Garcia and Montenegro were pronounced *guilty*, and Costa, Ferrer, Guzman, Portana, and Velasquez *not guilty*.

The foreman of the Jury, after their verdict was declared, read to the court the subjoined recommendation to mercy:

"The sympathies of the Jury have been strongly moved in behalf of BERNARDO DE SOTO, on account of his generous, noble and self-sacrificing conduct in saving the lives of more than seventy human beings, constituting the passengers and crew of the ship Minerva; and they desire that his case should be presented to the merciful consideration of the Government."

The presiding Judge answered that the desire of the Jury should be attended to.

The news of her husband's condition reached the wife of De Soto—she was residing with her father at Corunna, and actuated by love, she resolved to encounter the dangers of the Atlantic, and plead for her husband's life—at any rate to behold him once more! At the end of a precarious voyage, the vessel in which Petrona had entrusted herself, arrived at New York, where she was informed that Bernardo was already condemned to die. Advised by some humane people in that metropolis, she hurried on to Washington, solicited an interview with President Jackson, interceded for the life of her husband, and (in consideration of the fact that De Soto had been instrumental in saving the lives of seventy Americans, which had already been communicated to the President from the court at the request of the Jury, who had recommended the prisoner to mercy,) his pardon was granted. With this she hurried to Boston, and herself revealed to him the joyful tidings.

The 11th of June, 1835, was the day fixed for the execution of those who had been condemned and to whom no pardon was extended. How awful must be the feelings of any one thus circumstanced—with the weight of crime upon his soul, and but a few hours intervening ere he must ascend a scaffold to meet an ignominious death—the most abandoned of wretches, however callous may have been his career, in such an hour *must* feel! Death, not in the *melee* of the fight, not in the excitement of enterprize, but shorn of all that can induce us to encounter it—*death*, near at hand, accompanied with the slow and solemn ceremonies of a public execution, *how awful!* In dread of the fate to which they were doomed, the prisoners, during the night previous to the morning of the 11th, had mutually agreed

upon suicide. The first one to attempt it was Angel Garcia ; he endeavoured to effect his purpose by trying to open the veins of his arms with a piece of glass, in the same manner that one of their number had previously destroyed himself by cutting his throat ; but he was prevented. Boyga, however, while preparations were making for the execution, while the officer's eyes were turned from him for a moment, succeeded in inflicting a horrible gash upon his neck, and was almost immediately in convulsions from loss of blood. Medical aid was at hand and the gash was sewed up, but he did not revive. In this state he was carried to the scaffold and placed in a chair beneath the rope prepared for him. The warrant for their execution having been read by the Marshal, and it being announced by him that De Soto was respited for sixty days, and Ruiz for thirty, the cords were placed round the necks of the others,—the platform fell,—and they were summoned before another tribunal than that which on earth had meted out to them the temporal award of their crimes.

Ruiz affected to be crazy—but after the expiration of his second respite, two surgeons of the U. S. Navy perfectly conversant with the Spanish language, being introduced to his cell, and having at different times attended in order to make a careful investigation, pronounced his insanity an utter counterfeit. He was in consequence informed that an evasion of his sentence was no longer possible and that he had but half an hour to live. Truly awful were the last moments of this man ; he had feigned madness to avoid his sentence, and had been twice respited ; and he now shrunk from death as much as if he had never known death in any form ;—and who to have seen him in his last moments entirely absorbed with the apprehension of a sudden death, could reconcile the fact that he had mingled in deeds of blood—had

roved the seas, with a band of ruffians, to plunder—massacre—consume!

At the hour of ten in the morning of the 11th September, 1835, he was taken from his cell to the scaffold, on his way to which, with a powerful voice, the tones of which were painfully tremulous to the listener, he chaunted a Catholic service appropriate to his situation. *Death!* to the grave was he now going—dark, dark was the fate around him—but above him smiled the clear sky of a bright heaven and Nature was rejoicing in the genial warmth of the sun, who shone resplendently upon the green foliage of trees and the “lap of earth.” He stands upon the scaffold—the cord is adjusted about his neck—the signal given—the body drops heavily—and thus, in the prime of his life, without a friend or even an acquaintance at his side, or a living soul to mourn his fate, ending his career in a foreign country, perishes *Francisco Ruiz!*



# A BRIEF NARRATIVE

OF

## THE AFRICANS,

ON BOARD THE SCHOONER AMISTAD,

Who rose upon the captain and one of the crew, killed them, took charge of the schooner themselves, and were subsequently captured, by the United States brig Washington, Lieutenant Gedney.

A SPANISH vessel, built in Cuba, called the Amistad, duly and legally licensed to carry on the coasting trade, sailed from Havana, on the 28th of June, 1839, commanded by Ramon Ferrar, for the port of Guanaja, in the island of Cuba, having on board a cargo of sundry articles of merchandise, two Spanish citizens as passengers, with fifty-three negroes, purchased by them as *Sadinoes*, (that is not natives of Cuba) in the city of Havana, with regular permits for the Spaniards, negroes and merchandise. About four days after sailing, when three or four leagues from Cuba and forty from Havana, the negroes rose upon and killed the master and one of the crew of the vessel, and took the charge and com-

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mand of the same, and wounded and injured the two Spanish passengers. On the 20th of Aug. 1839, the said schooner *Amistad* was found in the waters near the east end of Long Island, within one mile of the shore, in possession of the negroes aforesaid, from whom she was captured by the United States brig *Washington* and brought into the port of New London, in the district of Connecticut, where the said negroes were apprehended by the Marshal of this district, in whose custody they yet are (March 1841). While said vessel was in the possession of said negroes, the boxes and trunks of goods were broken open by them, and some of the goods appropriated by them to their own use.

These Africans, as it appears from their own testimony, left Africa about three months prior to their capture by Lieutenant Gedney of the *Washington*. On board of the vessel upon her passage from Africa to Havana, there was a large number of men, but the women and children were by far the most numerous. The slaves were confined in the hold and on decks of the vessel, fastened together in couples by the wrists and legs, and kept in that situation day and night. The space between decks was so small—not exceeding four feet, according to their account—that they were obliged, if they attempted to stand, to keep a crouching posture. The decks fore and aft were crowded to overflowing. They suffered terribly. They had rice enough to eat but very little to drink. If they left any of the rice that was given to them uneaten, either from sickness or any other cause, they were whipped. It was a common thing for them to be forced to eat so much that they vomited in consequence. Many of the men, women and children died on the passage.

They were landed by night at a small village near Havana. Soon several white men came to buy them,



and among them was one who claimed to be their master, called Pipi, said to be a Spanish nickname for Jose. Pipi selected such as he liked, and made them stand in a row. He then felt each of them in every part of the body; made them open their mouths to see if their teeth were sound, and carried the examination to a degree of minuteness of which only a practical slave-dealer would be guilty.

The men bought by Pipi were taken on foot through Havana in the night, and put on board a vessel. During the night they were kept in irons, placed about the hands, feet and neck. They were treated during the day in a somewhat milder manner, though all the irons were never taken off at once. They suffered much in the hot days and nights from thirst. In addition to this there was much whipping, and the cook told them that when they reached land they would all be eaten. This "made their hearts burn," to use their own words as interpreted. To avoid being eaten and to escape the bad treatment they experienced, they rose upon the crew with the design of returning to Africa.

This is the substance of the story as related by one of the sufferers, which, having been repeated to Cinquz and a number of the other Africans, Cinquz added there was scarcely room enough to lie down. Another showed the marks of the irons on his wrists, which must at the time have been severely lacerated. On their separation at Havana, Cinquz remarked "that almost all of them were in tears, himself among the rest, because they had come from the same country, and were now to be parted forever." To the question how it was possible for the Africans, when chained in the manner described, to rise upon the crew, he replied that the chain which connected the iron collars about their necks, was fastened at the end by a padlock, and that this was first broken

and afterwards the other irons. Their object in the affray, he said, was to make themselves free.

These African captives are now held in custody as prisoners, but are in the keeping of the United States marshal as "merchandise, or chattels," under the claim of the Spaniards, Captain Gedney and others. They are provided with comfortable quarters at the county house in New-Haven, and are taken out every pleasant day upon the green, to exercise their limbs—when Jiqua, especially, performs astonishing feats of agility. There is some thing very prepossessing and pleasant in his countenance, and his authority over the others is absolute, but exercised by him with justice and mildness.

The Africans were at first committed for trial on a charge of murder, but that process is at an end, because the Circuit Court has decided that it has no legal cognizance of the transaction on board a Spanish vessel. Next Captain Gedney, of the United States Navy, has filed a libel on the vessel and cargo, *including the prisoners*, claiming salvage for "meritorious services" performed; Montez, one of the passengers, has filed a claim for the four children as his property; and the District Attorney has filed a claim and libel, first on behalf of the United States, at the instance of the Spanish minister, for the restoration of the Africans to the Spaniards, and secondly, in behalf of the United States, claiming that they are free persons, wrongfully brought into this country, and consequently should be returned to the land of their birth.

In the Circuit Court of the United States, District of Connecticut, Hon. Smith Thompson, and the Hon. A. T. Judson, presiding, September term, 1839, L. P. Staples, Esq. on the affidavit of Theodore Sedgwick, Jr. moved for a writ of *Habeas Corpus*, directing the marshal to bring before the court three girls, named Teme,

alias Juanna, Ka-gue, alias Josepha, and Margui, alias Francisco, now confined in the jail in the city of Hartford, and to show cause, if any there be, why they should not be released.

William Hungerford, Esq. said that these individuals were persons claimed by two Spanish gentlemen as heir slaves. He would also suggest that there was a libel pending before the court on these persons as part of the cargo of the Amistad, in behalf of Lieutenant Gedney for salvage.

Writ granted—returnable to-morrow morning.

*Thursday afternoon, September 19.*

The court room was crowded with spectators, whose countenances evinced a deep interest in the proceedings. The marshal brought into the court three little African girls, in obedience to the writ of *habeas corpus*. They were evidently in great fear, all of them weeping and clasping the hands of the jailor who came into court with them. Endeavours, but partly successful, were made to pacify them with some fruit.

R. J. Ingersoll, Esq. read the marshal's return, of which the third item was as follows: the libel of Lieut. Gedney for salvage, in which these girls were seized as *part of the cargo* of the Amistad; fourth, the libel of Don Pedro Montez, a Spanish gentleman, claiming these girls as his slaves, valued at \$1300—stating that these slaves were legally purchased in the Island of Cuba, where slavery is allowed, and claiming that, according to the treaties existing between the United States and Spain, they ought to be delivered up to him, without loss.

*Friday morning, September 20.*

Theodore Sedgwick, Esq. said the three African girls, brought up on a writ of *habeas corpus*, answer and

reply to the marshal's return, by their proper guardian appointed by the court, that they are not now and never were the slaves or property of Don Pedro Montez, but native Africans, born at some place in the district of Senegambia in Africa; that on the 20th of April last they were seized by the said Pedro Montez, or his agents, or some other person or persons, and illegally put on board of a Portuguese or Spanish vessel, and carried to the Island of Cuba, in the dominions of the queen of Spain, contrary to the laws of nations and the laws of nature, and contrary to the laws of Spain; that when they arrived on the said Island of Cuba, they were secretly and privately landed and taken to a secret place, where they remained two or three weeks; from whence they were taken in the night, by the said Pedro Montez, or his agents, and put on board of the schooner *Amistad*; and after being at sea for two or three months, they were brought into the port of New London, where they were seized by the marshal of the district of Connecticut and imprisoned; and that the allegations contained in the marshal's return are insufficient in law to warrant their detention in custody of the said marshal.

In testimony of these facts, Mr. Sedgwick presented the affidavits of Aug. Wm. Hanson and John Perry, stating that they were native Africans, and that they had seen and conversed with the African girls imprisoned in the jail at Hartford; and that these said girls were native Africans, the eldest about nine years old, and the youngest about seven; and that they can speak neither the Spanish or Portuguese languages.

The affidavit of one of the Africans, was introduced and is as follows. "I, Bahoo, of Bandaboo in Africa, being duly cautioned, depose and say, that I knew Marngroo and Kenyee, two little girls, now in prison at Hartford; they were born at Bandaboo, in Mandingo,

and came over in the same vessel that I did to Havana, as did Penna, and the little boy Carre; that they were two moons in coming from Africa to Havana, where they stayed less than one moon. Good many in the vessel and many died—were tight together, two and two chained by hands and feet, night and day, until near Havana, when the chains were taken off—were landed on the coast at a little place, near sun-set—stayed until night, and walked into the city, put them in an old building and fastened them in—after some time the people now in jail were put on board the same vessel they came here in, in the night, and sailed away about the time the gun fired. I know that these children are the same that came over from Africa, and that Marngroo and Kenyee were born in the same place that I was, which was Bandaboo, and further sayeth not.”

BAHOO, his × mark.

*State of Connecticut,*  
HARTFORD, *September 20th, 1839.*

In order to authenticate the foregoing, the affidavit of John Perry, (one of the interpreters,) was introduced. Mr. INGERSOLL stated that he wished to examine Perry, which was acceded to. On this examination, Perry said that it was about 17 years since he left Africa—his age at that time was guessed to be about 11 or 12—supposed himself to be about 30 now—was not a native of Gallina—stayed there a good while, better than a year he should think—learned the language during that time—came from Gallina to the WEST INDIES—had an opportunity of speaking the Gallina’s language once or twice a week, when he could get a chance of visiting a plantation, where there were natives of Gallina. Understood Bahoo to say that he (Bahoo) understood what he (Perry) said. Bahoo is Mandingo, but speaks Gallina’s.

Explained to Bahoo the questions—told him what the justice wished him to say—inquired whether he understood about God—made him understand he was sworn to tell the whole truth—told him he would be punished if he did not—he appeared to understand and believe it. Saw these persons in New Haven—had no difficulty in conversing with Bahoo and he could converse with others. The captain of the vessel which brought him (Perry) from Africa was a native of Baltimore—took him from Surinam—came to St. Thomas—stayed there sometime, afterwards went to Laguyra—master bound him for five years. The law of General Bolivar freed him. Came to this country in 1830—was in Baltimore 18 months—went back to Laguyra, and afterwards came to New York, where he has remained ever since. Has kept up his knowledge of the Gallina's language, by opportunities of talking with persons who came from Africa. When he first saw these (the Africans on board of the Amistad) and spoke to them, they manifested much joy.

The counsel for the Spaniards, brought in Antonio, the slave of the captain of the Amistad, to invalidate the affidavit of Bahoo. Antonio being able to speak only in Spanish, Lieutenant Meade, of the United States Navy, was introduced as interpreter. Lieut. Meade was first sworn; after which he explained and interpreted the oath to Antonio; and was then again sworn as interpreter. He was then directed what questions to ask, which he did, and interpreted Antonio's answers. Antonio said he was the slave of Captain Ferrar, who was captain of the Amistad. He was on board the Amistad when the three girls were brought on board. They came after the other negroes were on board. The first came about 8 o'clock in the evening. Could see clear. All the world could see them. They were not confined. The rest were not on board even a quarter of an hour

before the girls came. They remained in Havana one day. They walked about on deck, or went below, as they thought proper. They were never tied. Always treated them well—fed them well. There were ships of war in port—Spaniards and Yankees too. Great many English—Yankee men-of-war there—great many vessels, after sailors. Left port about four o'clock in the afternoon. Master, Captain Ferrar, has owned him since he was a very small boy. Always treated him well—not only his master, but mistress treated him well. Does not know Bahoo, the one that spoke to that man, (Perry.) Does not know him by that name.

*Cross-examined by Mr. Baldwin.* Thinks these negroes remained about half a month in Havana. They came in a vessel from Africa, under the Portuguese flag. They could not speak Spanish. They remained on board the Amistad one day—could not sail sooner because the captain wanted papers. They lay off not a musket-shot from shore. Captain paid no attention to the British cruisers. An awning was spread on deck, to shield them from the sun. Don't know who was the captain of the vessel who brought them in. The Amistad was never before employed in carrying slaves—always employed in carrying sugar.

By Mr. Ingersoll. Do you know that they came from Africa in any other way than that they told you so?

Antonio.—They told me so.

“As to the facts,” said the District Attorney, “the gentlemen say they are very recently imported from Africa; going on the ground that they have been introduced into Cuba in violation of the Spanish law. Now, I confess the evidence is exceedingly feeble. I must say it does not prove the fact that they have been recently imported. They have brought forward an affidavit that,

in the opinion of a certain individual, they are not above a certain age. Another has been examined, who claims to be an African, and that individual has stated that, some time in April last, they were taken from the coast of Africa, and brought into Cuba. He goes on and makes a further statement, what course was pursued after he came to Cuba. They were put in a house, where they were kept some time, and then put on board the *Amistad*, in the dead of the night, and carried away. But we have the testimony of another black boy, who has given a very different account, one that conflicts very much with this—he states that these persons were brought on board at 8 o'clock in the evening. Now, at that time, this boy says it was light—that they were not confined to the hold, but entirely loose, free from chains. What then took place? The affidavit represents them as having gone away that night—Antonio says they were brought on board at 8 o'clock in the evening unconfined, and remained till four o'clock the next day, and sailed out amidst the British cruisers. The account of this black boy is entirely different from the affidavit. Again—that they were unable to speak the Spanish language, is not strange. They have a large number of slaves on a plantation—a small colony—they are put on a plantation and remain there for years, entirely ignorant of all language except their own, which is continued by the mother to the children. This is the case with a great portion of the younger part of the slaves in the Island of Cuba. Nor does it appear, from any evidence before the Court, that they were not imported from some other island.

And the claimants themselves, under oath, state that they are the owners of this property. And, it is certainly a matter of very great personal interest to the one who appears here, because to a very great extent his property

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is concerned in the issue. We are entitled, at least, to have them retained till government can make some disposition of them.

*Monday, September 23.*

On the opening of the Circuit Court, Monday, September 23d, Judge Thompson gave his decision with respect to the application of the prisoners' counsel, to have the Africans discharged under the writ of habeas corpus—and denied the motion. He said the question before the Court was simply as to the jurisdiction of the District Court over this subject matter. He regretted that the case had not been held up for further consideration, and that he had so little opportunity to examine the various important questions that are involved in it, with that thoroughness and deliberation that was desirable. He regretted this the more, as the case is a very peculiar and complicated one. It was one also difficult to be understood by the public. He could not be insensible to the fact, that the feelings of the community were deeply involved in the question, and he feared there might be misapprehensions of the real questions to be disposed of by the Court. It is possible, he said, that there may be some misrepresentation. He would therefore have preferred that time should have been allowed for him to give a written opinion. But the counsel having thought it advisable, he did not say it was not excusable, to call upon the Court to dispose of the case now, he was compelled, though much against his wishes, to dispose of it in the best way he could.

The Court does not undertake to decide that these persons have no right to their freedom, but leave that matter in litigation in the District Court, subject to appeal. And for reasons assigned, *deny this motion.*

One of the counsel for the prisoners then asked the Court if they meant to express the opinion, that a foreign-

er coming here with a slave, can call upon the United States' Courts to enforce the claim of the foreigner to the slave? Judge Thompson, in reply, said he did not wish to decide now upon the abstract question. As a Judge, he did not feel called upon to decide it. The Court was then adjourned *sine die*.

When the Court was again opened, the Judge said he should direct that the United States' Attorney should repair to Montauk Point, in the revenue cutter, with a gentleman on the other side, to investigate the facts, ascertain where the seizure was actually made, &c. ; that the Court would be adjourned, to meet in this city on the third Tuesday in November next; and that meantime it would be the duty of the marshal to see that the prisoners were comfortably situated, provided with clothes suited to the season, that they had proper and sufficient food, medical attendance, &c.

The Court would, it is presumed, allow the prisoners to be discharged on giving bail; but as it must be on an *appraisement*, their counsel would not consent to it. The prisoners are remanded to the jail in New Haven.

The following is taken from the Washington Intelligencer of Friday, November 22d, 1839:

#### THE CASE OF THE AMISTAD.

It appears by the following statement, to which we have no doubt entire credit is due, that the view which we took the other day of the imperative obligation upon our Government, under the treaty with Spain, to restore the Spanish vessel (the *Amistad*) with her cargo and equipment unimpaired, to the Spanish owners, has been taken also by the Executive of the United States:

CORRESPONDENCE OF THE COURIER AND ENQUIRER.

*Hartford, Monday Evening.*

"The District Court commences its session to-morrow. It is a special term, and the case of *the Amistad* is the only one to be tried.

“It is understood here that Mr. Secretary Forsyth has expressed the opinion in emphatic and decided terms, that the case cannot properly be litigated in any of our courts; that *it is a question to be settled by the Executive*, and not by the Judiciary, and that *our treaty stipulations with Spain render the obligation on the President imperative to deliver the vessel and cargo into the custody of the Spanish Minister, without injury or diminution*. He thinks that it is not competent for us to call in question the legality of the license and clearance papers furnished to the purchasers of the slaves by the regularly constituted authorities at Havana.

“The Spanish Minister recommends to the claimants to abstain from all action in the premises, and to rely on the good faith of our government for justice.”

### THE AMISTAD CASE SETTLED.

In the Supreme Court at Washington, on Tuesday, the 9th of March, 1841, a decision was rendered in the case of the United States, appellant *vs.* the Amistad, &c. and the judgment of the District Court of Connecticut in that case was affirmed in every respect, except as to sending the negroes back to Africa: they are by the decision discharged as free men.





## THE BURNING OF THE CAROLINE.

**T**HOUGH not strictly of such a nature as to entitle it to a place in a work of this kind, yet in consideration of the fact that the subject is at present the all-engrossing theme of individual conversation, and newspaper remark throughout the United States, from Maine to Georgia, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific, we are of the impression that no exceptions will be taken by any person to the following concise detail of the burning of the steamboat *Caroline*, lying at the wharf in an American harbour, by a party of British soldiers.

**T**HE recent admission by Mr. Fox, the British minister at Washington, in one of his letters to the Secretary of State, that the burning of the *Caroline* was the "act of persons in Her Majesty's service, obeying the orders

of their superior authorities ;” and as the whole of that outrage will probably come up again before the public in consequence of the arrest of Mr. M’Leod, charged with having been concerned in it, and whose release the British government through Mr. Fox, has demanded, the following particulars of the outrage will no doubt prove of interest to the reader.

It was on the night of the 29th of December, 1837, that the affair took place. In peace and quietness, the steamboat Caroline was lying at the wharf at Schlosser, New York. She was an American boat, was owned and managed by American citizens, and carried an American flag. She had been employed during the day as a ferry-boat by her proprietor, a citizen of Buffalo, and had carried men, who from motives of curiosity or business had chosen to visit the adjacent island. Her crew were asleep after the toils of the day, and several strangers who had sought refuge from the inclemency of the weather, were reposing peaceably on board, thanking heaven probably for the hospitality extended to them. *About midnight, boats filled with armed men left the British shore, and with muffled oars approached the devoted vessel.* The watch on board saw them, but he could have no idea of the destruction intended. The boat had been engaged in a harmless trade, and anticipating none, was totally unprepared for a murderous attack. In a moment after, British officers and British soldiers sprang upon deck, and mocking at the flag of our country, and despising its boast of protection, commenced with insatiate greediness the work of death. The slumberers were aroused from their beds by the sharp fire of pistols, the clangor of swords, the oaths and imprecations of the assailants, and the horrid cry as they butchered the Americans of “give the d—d rebels no quarters.” They rushed upon deck, and a fearful pic-

ture presented itself. *All was confusion, terror and bloodshed!* One American, a Mr. Durfee, had reached the wharf in safety, in his flight, for like his fellows he was totally unarmed, when a bullet pierced his brain, and with a leap and a groan of agony, *he fell and expired.* How many were thus inhumanly butchered, the records of eternity alone can show. Some were able to drag themselves, wounded and mutilated to a place of safety. One, a citizen of Buffalo, whose only crime was that he had slept that night on board of the *Caroline*, was found dead upon the shore; and it is conjectured that several met their doom in a still more terrific way, by remaining concealed on board the boat during the massacre. The British boast that in this "*valorous*" attack upon sleeping and unarmed men, they **SLEW SIX OR SEVEN!** So be it! They are welcome to the glory! and we hope our citizens will never forget it! The scene did not end here. When the boat's crew were all escaped or murdered—or perhaps concealed in her, she was cut loose, towed into the stream and set on fire, and a signal light was then seen on the British shore to guide the boats on their return from the expedition.

The scene now became one of awful sublimity. The *Caroline* was in flames, and the resistless flood was bearing her on toward the cataract. As the fires curled about her, her engine began to work by the heat of the burning vessel, and the pitchy flames threw a red glare on the wild scenery around her. It showed the wintery forest, and glowed upon the waters—it revealed the rebel island and the barracks of the British soldiers, and showed too the ghastly corpse and clotted gore of the murdered Durfee! Onward the burning vessel was borne, and nearer and nearer the mighty precipice. From one side of the shore she was viewed with exultation—from the other with deep threats of vengeance;

and as she neared the foaming gulf—the *Falls of Niagara!*—they tell of dark forms that were seen amid the flames—and of death-shrieks, that rose shrill and piercing above the noise of the rushing waters! Still she rushed on, and still the scene increased in grandeur until her burning timbers were extinguished in the flood, and a few blackened fragments, thrown upon the shore, were all that remained of the *Caroline!* Amidst the horrid grandeur of this scene, a shout of triumph from the other shore announced the return of the *midnight murderers.* They had with them *two boys as prisoners.*

This is a true picture of “the burning of the *Caroline;*” an outrage upon our national honour, and an insult to our national flag, to say nothing of the heinous violation of individual rights, and the assassination of our peaceable and virtuous citizens, which, to use the language of a resolution of a meeting of the citizens of Buffalo on the occasion, has “neither been *atoned for, avenged, nor forgotten!*”

In addition to this we have the fact before us, that the miscreants clothed in British authority who were most conspicuous in this infamous affair, instead of being suitably punished for their inhuman and dastardly conduct, have absolutely been *rewarded* and *promoted* by their government for the zeal and alacrity they exhibited! Even now the same “virtuous” government steps forward on behalf of Alexander M’Leod, the late Deputy Sheriff of the Niagara district in Upper Canada, a man arrested and imprisoned by the authorities of Lockport, N. Y., on a charge of murder and arson and distinctly recognized by two American citizens as having been actively engaged in the outrage upon the *Caroline,* and insists upon his unconditional liberation!

The British minister would make the whole matter one of diplomatic discussion between the two govern-

ments, in which case probably it would be atoned for at the day of judgment; and he not only talks of the "necessity" of releasing M'Leod immediately—a threat that is too despicable for notice—but recommends the "taking of such steps as may be requisite for preventing other of her Majesty's subjects from being persecuted or molested in the United States in a similar manner in future." This is nothing more than the usual course of this government. It is on a par with their proceedings at the Battle of Navarino, and their recent unjustifiable attack upon China.—They first send a body of British soldiers into our territory in time of peace, murder our citizens, take, burn and destroy our property, and then boldly declare it an "untoward affair," as they did the battle of Navarino, profess a willingness to submit it to "discussion," and insist upon our freeing from punishment the felons who accomplished it, when caught within our borders. History is full of such "untoward" events on the part of that faithless, and hypocritical nation. It is their common practice summarily to redress what they conceive to be wrong, and afterwards shocked at the palpable infringement of the law of nations and of humanity, of which they have been guilty, to be willing to submit their conduct to diplomatic "discussion." Will "discussion" bring to life the murdered dead? Will "discussion" restore the burning vessel to her owner? Will "discussion" atone for the outrage upon our national dignity, or heal the festering wound upon our national honour?

Characterised by the same flagrancy is the conduct which the English nation are now pursuing towards China. The Chinese prohibit, under penalty of death, the introduction of opium within their territory, because it is both physically and morally poisonous, and because it carries off silver, their circulating medium. As an



independent nation, they have a right to prohibit any thing, upon no other ground than their own caprice or views of expediency; and consequently no other nation has a right to complain of the prohibition. British subjects, knowing that the introduction of opium into China is prohibited, send whole cargoes of it there to be *smuggled*; and British consuls and other governmental agents in that country, aware of this, instead of aiding the Chinese authorities to prevent this violation of their laws, connive at the violation and give them every official facility for its perpetration. At length the Chinese government, resolved upon vigorous measures to suppress this crime, seizes the person of the British governmental agent and threatens to detain him till the opium on board of British ships in Chinese ports is surrendered for destruction. The Chinese were right in this; for the British ships, with their opium, had no *lawful* business in Chinese ports, but were there for a criminal intent; and in this very intent did they receive the countenance and connivance of the British agent, the representative of the British government. According to the laws of nations, these persons had incurred the penalties denounced against the violation, by the subjects of one nation, of the laws of another nation; or, in other words, they had incurred the penalties imposed by the laws of China. Yet, upon the surrender of the opium, this governmental agent is released; and now the *moral, Christian* British government is waging war against China *for attempting to enforce its own laws!!!* Unheard of injustice! *Make China swallow opium! and denounce American slavery!*

We had hoped, that nations professing to be governed by the precepts of Christianity, had learned that its obligations were as imperative in public as private affairs, and that national sins, on account of their greater conse-

quences, deserved severer censure than those of individuals. But when we see a nation professing to be more civilized, just and humane than any other, committing such enormous outrages upon human rights generally and national rights especially, and in an age too, when politicians have more opportunities than any preceding for understanding such rights correctly, we must confess that our hopes of human improvement are not very sanguine. At least we have no such hopes from monarchies, and must therefore look to republics alone for examples of national justice.—The battle of Navarino, the burning of the *Caroline*, and the attack on China, are each alike gross violations of the laws of nations.

Alexander M'Leod was arrested on the 12th of December, 1840. After an examination of the witnesses he was finally committed for trial on the 18th of the same month, and placed in confinement in the jail at Lockport, New York, to await the assizes to be held there in the February following. Mr. Forsyth in reply to Mr. Fox (the correspondence which will presently follow) remarks, very properly, that the case does not present an occasion in which, under the constitution and laws of the United States, it would be proper for the Federal government to interpose; that it was committed within the state of New York, and comes clearly within the competency of its tribunals. This is true independence. If M'Leod be guilty, let him suffer the penalties of the laws of that land whose peace he has violated; if he be innocent he will doubtlessly be acquitted. The blood of the murdered still cries for vengeance, and is it to be silenced by a piece of diplomatic sophistry on the part of a treacherous monarch and her crafty advisers? Forbid it Heaven!

It is maintained upon the part of our government, that there is no international law, or indeed of reason

and justice, which entitles such offenders to impunity before the legal tribunals, when coming voluntarily within their independent and undoubted jurisdiction. Were we to do as the British would do under such circumstances, we would hastily *hang* M'Leod and then "discuss" the propriety of the act when too late to effect any reparation.

On the 27th of January, 1841, the required bail in the case of M'Leod was given by Messrs. Brotherton of Queenstown and Buell of Lockport, and M'Leod was forthwith discharged from custody. The judge gave the order for the prisoner's release to his attorney at 7 o'clock in the evening, but in forty minutes 200 men were assembled in and about the court house and jail. A meeting was organized in the court room, while 40 to 50 guarded the door below, some with muskets; whilst drums and bugles outside must have made the prisoner feel forcibly the gloom of his situation. He was not allowed to see the sheriff or any one else. A committee was appointed to see Judge Bowen and ask him to surrender him, or rather withdraw his name from the bond. Judge Bowen addressed the meeting and attempted to exonerate himself.—The following is one of the resolutions passed by the meeting: "Resolved, that no obstruction to the discharge of said M'Leod, in case he has entered into bail shall be made or countenanced—but that it is the right and duty of this meeting, considering the circumstances of the case, and that the amount of bail is far unequal to the demand of the law, (if bail be allowed at all) to try to prevail on Messrs. Brotherton and Buell to surrender said M'Leod to the sheriff, a privilege which bail in all cases possess."

The next morning the meeting was again convened, and a friend of Mr. Buell stated that if it was the general desire he was quite willing to surrender M'Leod; which

was done accordingly on the spot. Resolutions of thanks to Mr. Buell, approbation of Mr. Forsyth's answer to the demand of Mr. Fox, &c., were then adopted and the meeting adjourned.

"The British Colonist," an official paper, of February 3d, states that "Governor Arthur has forwarded despatches to the governor general of New York and also to the British minister at Washington, in reference to the recent proceedings which took place at Lockport in relation to M'Leod."

On Saturday, the 5th of February, the grand jury found a true bill for *murder* against M'Leod, and he will be tried upon that charge before the next court of Oyer and Terminer.



## CAPTAIN ROBERTS.

**BARTHOLOMEW ROBERTS** was trained to a seafaring life. Among other voyages which he made during the time that he lawfully procured his maintenance, he sailed for the Guinea coast, in November, 1719, where he was taken by the pirate Davis. He was at first very averse from that mode of life, and would certainly have deserted, had any opportunity occurred. It happened to him, however, as to many upon another element, that preferment calmed his conscience, and reconciled him to that which he formerly hated.

Davis having fallen, those who had assumed the title of lords assembled to deliberate concerning the choice of a new commander. There were several candidates, who, by their services, had risen to eminence among their brethren, and each of them thought himself qualified to bear rule. One addressed the assembled lords, saying, "That the good of the whole, and the maintenance of order, demanded a head, but that the proper authority was deposited in the community at large; so that if one should be elected who did not act and govern for the general good, he could be deposed, and another be substituted in his place."

"We are the original," said he, "of this claim, and should a captain be so saucy as to exceed prescription at any time, why, down with him! It will be a caution, after he is dead, to his successors, to what fatal results any undue assumption may lead; however, it is my advice, while we are sober, to pitch upon a man of courage, and one skilled in navigation,—one who, by his

prudence and bravery, seems best able to defend this commonwealth, and ward us from the dangers and tempests of an unstable element, and the fatal consequences of anarchy; and such a one I take Roberts to be: a fellow in all respects worthy of your esteem and favour."

This speech was applauded by all but Lord Simpson, who had himself strong expectations of obtaining the highest command. He at last, in a surly tone, said, he did not regard whom they chose as a commander, provided he was not a papist, for he had conceived a mortal hatred to papists, because his father had been a sufferer in Monmouth's rebellion.

Thus, though Roberts had only been a few weeks among them, his election was confirmed by the lords and commons. He, with the best face he could, accepted of the dignity, saying, "that since he had dipped his hands in muddy water, and must be a pirate, it was better being a commander than a private man."

The governor being settled, and other officers chosen in the room of those who had fallen with Davis, it was resolved not to leave this place without revenging his death. Accordingly, thirty men, under the command of one Kennedy, a bold and profligate fellow, landed, and under cover of the fire of the ship, ascended the hill upon which the fort stood. They were no sooner discovered by the Portuguese, than they abandoned the fort, and took shelter in the town. The pirates then entered without opposition, set fire to the fort, and tumbled the guns into the sea.

Not satisfied with this injury, some proposed to land and set the town in flames. Roberts, however, reminded them of the great danger to which this would inevitably expose them; that there was a thick wood at the back of the town, where the inhabitants could hide themselves, and that, when their all was at stake, they would make

a bolder resistance ; and that the burning or destroying of a few houses, would be a small return for their labour, and the loss that they might sustain. This prudent advice had the desired effect, and they contented themselves with lightening the French vessel, and battering down several houses of the town, to show their high displeasure.

Roberts sailed southward, captured a Dutch Guinea-man, and, having emptied her of every thing they thought proper, returned her to the commander. Two days after, he captured an English ship, and, as the men joined in pirating, emptied and burned the vessel, and then sailed for St. Thomas. Meeting with no prize, he sailed for Anamaboa, and there watered and repaired. Having again put to sea, a vote was taken whether they should sail for the East Indies or for Brazil. The latter place was decided upon, and they arrived there in twenty-eight days.

Upon this coast our rovers cruised for about nine weeks, keeping generally out of sight of land, but without seeing a sail ; which discouraged them so, that they determined to leave the station, and steer for the West Indies ; and, in order thereto, they stood in to make the land for the taking of their departure, by which means they fell in, unexpectedly, with a fleet of forty-two sail of Portuguese ships, off the Bay of Los Todos Santos, with all their lading in for Lisbon ; several of them of good force, who lay there waiting for two men of war of seventy guns each for their convoy. However, Roberts thought it should go hard with him but he would make up his market among them, and thereupon he mixed with the fleet, and kept his men concealed till proper resolutions could be formed ; that done, they came close up to one of the deepest, and ordered her to send the master on board quietly, threatening to give

them no quarter, if any resistance or signal of distress was made. The Portuguese, being surprised at these threats, and the sudden flourish of cutlasses from the pirates, submitted without a word, and the captain came on board. Roberts saluted him in a friendly manner, telling him, that they were gentlemen of fortune, and that their business with him was only to be informed which was the richest ship in that fleet; and if he directed them right, he should be restored to his ship without molestation, otherwise he must expect instant death.

He then pointed to a vessel of forty guns, and a hundred and fifty men; and though her strength was greatly superior to Roberts, yet he made towards her, taking the master of the captured vessel along with him. Coming along side of her, Roberts ordered the prisoner to ask, "How Seignior Captain did?" and to invite him on board, as he had a matter of importance to impart to him. He was answered, "That he would wait upon him presently." Roberts, however, observing more than ordinary bustle on board, at once concluded that they were discovered, and pouring a broadside into her, they immediately boarded, grappled, and took her. She was a very rich prize, laden with sugar, skins, and tobacco, with four thousand moidores of gold, besides other valuable articles.

In possession of so much riches, they now became solicitous to find a safe retreat in which to spend their time in mirth and wantonness. They determined upon a place called the Devil's Islands, upon the river Surinam, where they arrived in safety, and met with a kind reception from the governor and the inhabitants.

In this river they seized a sloop, which informed them that she had sailed in company with a brigantine loaded with provisions. This was welcome intelligence,



as their provisions were nearly exhausted. Deeming this too important a business to trust to foreign hands, Roberts, with forty men in the sloop, gave chase to that sail. In the keenness of the moment, and trusting to his usual good fortune, Roberts supposed he had only to take a short sail, in order to bring in the vessel with her cargo; but to his sad disappointment, he pursued her during eight days, and instead of gaining, was losing way. Under these circumstances, he came to anchor, and sent off the boat to give intelligence of their distress to their companions.

In their extremity of want, they took up part of the floor of the cabin, and patched up a sort of tray with rope-yarns, to paddle on shore to get a little water to preserve their lives. When their patience was almost exhausted, the boat returned, but instead of provisions, brought the displeasing information, that the lieutenant, one Kennedy, had run off with both the ships.

The misfortune and misery of Roberts were greatly aggravated by reflecting upon his own imprudence and want of foresight, as well as from the baseness of Kennedy and his crew. Impelled by the necessity of his situation, he now began to reflect upon the means he should employ for future support. Under the foolish supposition that any laws, oaths, or regulations, could bind those who had bidden open defiance to all divine and human laws, he proceeded to form a code of regulations, for the maintenance of order and unity in his little commonwealth.

But present necessity compelled them to action, and with their small sloop, they sailed for the West Indies. They were not long before they captured two sloops, which supplied them with provisions, and a few days after, a brigantine, and then proceeded to Barbadoes. When off that island they met a vessel of ten guns,

richly laden from Bristol; after plundering, and detaining her three days, they allowed her to prosecute her voyage. This vessel, however, informed the governor of what had befallen them, who sent a vessel of twenty guns and eighty men in quest of the pirates. A severe engagement ensued, and Roberts being hard put to it, lightened his vessel and ran off.

Roberts then sailed for the Island of Dominica, where he watered, and was supplied by the inhabitants with provisions, for which he gave them goods in return. Here he met with fifteen Englishmen left upon the island by a Frenchman, who had made prize of their vessel; and they, entering into his service, proved a seasonable addition to his strength.

They next sailed for Newfoundland, arriving upon the banks in June, 1720, and entered the harbour of Trepassi. It is impossible to describe the injury which they did at this place, by burning or sinking the ships, destroying the plantations, and pillaging the houses. Roberts reserved a Bristol galley from his depredations in the harbour, which he fitted and manned for his own service. Upon the banks he met ten sail of French ships, and destroyed them all, except one of twenty-six guns, which he seized and carried off, and called her the Fortune. Then giving the Bristol galley to the Frenchman, they sailed in quest of new adventures, and soon took several prizes, and out of them increased the number of their own hands.

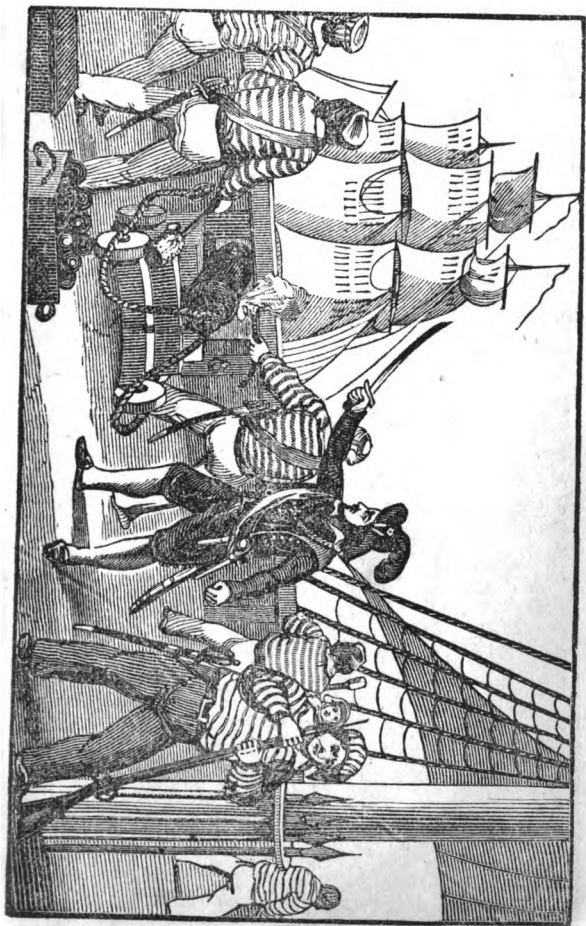
They next sailed for the West Indies, but provisions growing short, proceeded to St. Christopher's, when being denied provisions by the governor, they fired on the town, and burnt two ships in the roads. They then repaired to the Island of St. Bartholomew, where the governor supplied them with every necessary, and caressed them in the kindest manner. Satiated with in-

dulgence, and having taken in a large stock of every thing necessary, they unanimously voted to hasten to the coast of Guinea. In their way they took a Frenchman, and as she was fitter for the pirate service than their own, they informed the captain, that, "as a fair exchange was no robbery," they would exchange sloops with him; accordingly, having shifted their men, they set sail. However, going by mistake out of the track of the trade winds, they were under the necessity of returning to the West Indies.

Dissatisfied with capturing vessels which only afforded them a temporary supply, they directed their course to the Guinea coast, to forage for gold. Intoxication rendered them unruly, and the brigantine at last embraced the cover of night to abandon the commodore. Unconcerned at the loss of his companion, Roberts pursued his voyage. He fell in with two French ships, the one of ten guns and sixty-five men, and the other of sixteen guns and seventy-five men. These dastards no sooner beheld the black flag than they surrendered. With these they went into Sierra Leone, constituting one of them a consort, by the name of the *Ranger*, and the other a store-ship. That port being frequented by the greater part of the traders to that quarter, they remained here six weeks, enjoying themselves in all the splendour and luxury of a piratical life.

After this they renewed their voyage; and, having captured a vessel, the greater part of the men united their fortunes with the pirates.

According to their usual custom, the time of festivity and mirth was prolonged until the want of means recalled them to reason and exertion. Leaving this port, they cruized from place to place with varied success; but in all their captures, either burning, sinking, or devoting their prizes to their own use, according to the whim of





the moment. The *Swallow* and another man-of-war being sent out expressly to pursue and take Roberts and his fleet, he had frequent and certain intelligence of their destination; but having so often escaped their vigilance, he became rather too secure and fearless. It happened, however, that while he lay off Cape Lopez, the *Swallow* had information of his being in that place, and made towards them. Upon the appearance of a sail, one of Roberts' ships was sent to chase and take her. The pilot of the *Swallow* seeing her coming, manœuvred his vessel so well, that though he fled at her approach, in order to draw her out of the reach of her associates, yet he at his own time allowed her to overtake the man-of-war.

Upon her coming up to the *Swallow*, the pirate hoisted the black flag, and fired upon her; but how greatly were her crew astonished, when they saw that they had to contend with a man-of-war; and, seeing that all resistance was vain, they cried out for quarter, which was granted, and they were made prisoners.

Convinced that Roberts would tarry in his station, in the hope of his ship returning with the prize after which she had been sent, they made towards him. As she approached, it was discovered who was about to pay them an unwelcome visit. Roberts inquired at one of his men, who had once sailed on board of her, how she sailed, in order to ascertain the best way of flying from her, should it be necessary. He then dressed himself in the most elegant manner, with his pistols suspended over his shoulders, and a gold chain about his neck. The *Swallow* attacked him with determined bravery and he resisting with equal courage, a desperate and bloody engagement ensued. Roberts at last fell, and, by his own directions, he was immediately thrown overboard. The officers and men being deprived of their

commander, lost courage, and in a short time cried for quarter.

This extraordinary man, and daring pirate, was tall, of a dark complexion, about forty years of age, and born in Pembrokeshire. His parents were honest and respectable, and his natural activity, courage, and invention, were superior to his education. At a very early period, he, in drinking, would imprecate vengeance upon "the head of him who ever lived to wear a halter." He went willingly into the pirate service, and served three years as a second man. It was not for want of employment, but from a roving, wild, and boisterous turn of mind. It was his usual declaration, that, "In an honest service, there is commonly low wages and hard labour; in this plenty, satiety, pleasure, and ease, liberty and power; and who would not balance creditor on this side, when all the hazard that is run for it at worst, is only a sour look or two at choking? No—a merry life and a short one, shall be my motto!" But it was one favourable trait in his character, that he never forced any man into the pirate service.













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