



C H A R L E S E L L M S

PIRATE NARRATIVES

Charles Elms

Pirate Narratives

**The Pirates Own Book: Authentic Narratives of
the Most Celebrated Sea Robbers**

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Preface

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In the mind of the mariner, there is a superstitious horror connected with the name of Pirate; and there are few subjects that interest and excite the curiosity of mankind generally, more than the desperate exploits, foul doings, and diabolical career of these monsters in human form. A piratical crew is generally formed of the desperadoes and runagates of every clime and nation. The pirate, from the perilous nature of his occupation, when not cruising on the ocean, the great highway of nations, selects the most lonely isles of the sea for his retreat, or secretes himself near the shores of rivers, bays and lagoons of thickly wooded and uninhabited countries, so that if pursued he can escape to the woods and mountain glens of the interior. The islands of the Indian Ocean, and the east and west coasts of Africa, as well as the West Indies, have been their haunts for centuries; and vessels navigating the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, are often captured by them, the passengers and crew murdered, the money and most valuable part of the cargo plundered, the vessel destroyed, thus obliterating all trace of their unhappy fate, and leaving friends and relatives to mourn their loss from the inclemencies of the elements, when they were butchered in cold blood by their fellow men, who by practically adopting the maxim that "dead men tell no tales," enable themselves to pursue their diabolical career with impunity. The pirate is truly fond of women and wine, and when not engaged in robbing, keeps maddened with intoxicating liquors, and passes his time in debauchery, singing old songs with chorusses like

"Drain, drain the bowl, each fearless soul,
Let the world wag as it will:
Let the heavens growl, let the devil howl,
Drain, drain the deep bowl and fill."

Thus his hours of relaxation are passed in wild and extravagant frolics amongst the lofty forests of palms and spicy groves of the Torrid Zone, and amidst the aromatic and beautiful flowering vegetable productions of that region. He has fruits delicious to taste, and as companions, the unsophisticated daughters of Africa and the Indies. It would be supposed that his wild career would be one of delight.

But the apprehension and foreboding of the mind, when under the influence of remorse, are powerful, and every man, whether civilized or savage, has interwoven in his constitution a moral sense, which secretly condemns him when he has committed an atrocious action, even when he is placed in situations which raise him above the fear of human punishment, for

"Conscience, the torturer of the soul, unseen.
Does fiercely brandish a sharp scourge within;
Severe decrees may keep our tongues in awe,
But to our minds what edicts can give law?
Even you yourself to your own breast shall tell
Your crimes, and your own conscience be your hell."

With the name of pirate is also associated ideas of rich plunder, caskets of buried jewels, chests of gold ingots, bags of outlandish coins, secreted in lonely, out of the way places, or buried about the wild shores of rivers, and unexplored sea coasts, near rocks and trees bearing mysterious marks, indicating where the treasure was hid. And as it is his invariable practice to secrete and bury his booty, and from the perilous life he leads, being often killed

or captured, he can never re-visit the spot again; immense sums remain buried in those places, and are irrecoverably lost. Search is often made by persons who labor in anticipation of throwing up with their spade and pickaxe, gold bars, diamond crosses sparkling amongst the dirt, bags of golden doubloons, and chests, wedged close with moidores, ducats and pearls; but although great treasures lie hid in this way, it seldom happens that any is so recovered.



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By the universal law of nations, robbery or forcible depredation upon the "high seas," *animo furandi*, is piracy. The meaning of the phrase "high seas," embraces not only the waters of the ocean, which are out of sight of land, but the waters on the sea coast below low water mark, whether within the territorial boundaries of a foreign nation, or of a domestic state. Blackstone says that the main sea or high sea begins at low water mark. But between the high water mark and low water mark, where the tide ebbs and flows, the common law and the Admiralty have *divisum imperium*, an alternate jurisdiction, one upon the water when it is full sea; the other upon the land when it is ebb. He doubtless here refers to the waters of the ocean on the sea coast, and not in creeks and inlets. Lord Hale says that the sea is either that which lies within the body of a country or without. That which lies without the body of a country is called the main sea or ocean. So far then as regards the states of the American union, "high seas," may be taken to mean that part of the ocean which washes the sea coast, and is without the body of any country, according to the common law; and so far as regards foreign nations, any waters on their sea coasts, below low water mark.

Piracy is an offence against the universal law of society, a pirate being according to Sir Edward Coke, *hostis humani generis*. As, therefore, he has renounced all the benefits of society and government, and has reduced himself to the savage state of nature, by declaring war against all mankind, all mankind must declare war against him; so that

every community has a right by the rule of self-defense, to inflict that punishment upon him which every individual would in a state of nature otherwise have been entitled to do, for any invasion of his person or personal property. By various statutes in England and the United States, other offences are made piracy. Thus, if a subject of either of these nations commit any act of hostility against a fellow subject on the high seas, under color of a commission from any foreign power, this act is piracy. So if any captain of any vessel, or mariner, run away with the vessel, or the goods, or yield them up to a pirate voluntarily, or if any seaman lay violent hands on his commander, to hinder him from fighting in defence of the ship or goods committed to his charge, or make a revolt in the ship, these offences are acts of piracy, by the laws of the United States and England. In England by the statute of 8 George I, c. 24, the trading or corresponding with known pirates, or the forcibly boarding any merchant vessel, (though without seizing her or carrying her off,) and destroying any of the goods on board, are declared to be acts of piracy; and by the statute 18 George II. c. 30, any natural born subject or denizen who in time of war, shall commit any hostilities at sea, against any of his fellow subjects, or shall assist an enemy, on that element, is liable to be punished as a pirate. By statute of George II. c. 25, the ransoming of any neutral vessel, which has been taken by the captain of a private ship of war, is declared piracy. By the act of congress, April 30, 1790, if any person upon the high seas, or in any river, haven, or bay, out of the jurisdiction of any particular state, commit murder or robbery, or any other offence which if committed within the body of a county, would by the laws of the United States, be punishable by death, such offender is to be deemed a pirate. By the act of congress, 1820, c. 113, if any

citizen of the United States, being of the crew of any foreign vessel, or any person being of the crew of any vessel owned in whole or part by any citizen of the United States, shall be engaged in the foreign slave trade, he shall be adjudged a pirate. Notwithstanding the expression used in this statute, the question, says Chancellor Kent, remains to be settled, whether the act of being concerned in the slave trade would be adjudged piracy, within the code of international law. In England by the act of parliament passed March 31, 1824, the slave trade is also declared to be piracy. An attempt has been made to effect a convention between the United States and Great Britain, by which it should be agreed that both nations should consider the slave trade as piratical; but this attempt has hitherto been unsuccessful. In the time of Richard III, by the laws of Oberon, all infidels were regarded as pirates, and their property liable to seizure wherever found. By the law of nations, the taking of goods by piracy does not divest the actual owner of them. By the civil institutions of Spain and Venice, ships taken from pirates became the property of those who retake them. Piracy is every where pursued and punished with death, and pirates can gain no rights by conquest. It is of no importance, for the purpose of giving jurisdiction in cases of piracy, on whom or where a piratical offence is committed. A pirate who is one by the law of nations, may be tried and punished in any country where he may be found; for he is reputed to be out of the protection of all laws. But if the statute of any government declares an offence, committed on board one of their own vessels, to be piracy; such an offence will be punished exclusively by the nation which passes the statute. In England the offence was formerly cognizable only by the Admiralty courts, which proceeded without a jury in a method founded on the civil law. But by the statute of Henry

VIII. c. 15, it was enacted that piracy should be tried by commissioners nominated by the lord chancellor, the indictment being first found by a grand jury, of twelve men, and afterwards tried by another jury, as at common law. Among the commissioners, there are always some of the common law judges. In the United States, pirates are tried before the circuit court of the United States. Piracy has been known from the remotest antiquity; for in the early ages every small maritime state was addicted to piracy, and navigation was perilous. This habit was so general, that it was regarded with indifference, and, whether merchant, traveller, or pirate, the stranger was received with the rights of hospitality. Thus Nestor, having given Mentor and Telemachus a plenteous repast, remarks, that the banquet being finished, it was time to ask his guests to their business. "Are you," demands the aged prince, "merchants destined to any port, or are you merely adventurers and pirates, who roam the seas without any place of destination, and live by rapine and ruin."



The Danish and Norman Pirates

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The Saxons, a people supposed to be derived from the Cimbri, uniting the occupations of fishing and piracy, commenced at an early period their ravages in the German Ocean; and the shores of Gaul and Britain were for ages open to their depredations. About the middle of the fifth century, the unwarlike Vortigern, then king of Britain, embraced the fatal resolution of requesting these hardy warriors to deliver him from the harassing inroads of the Picts and Scots; and the expedition of Hengist and Horsa was the consequence. Our mention of this memorable epoch is not for its political importance, great as that is, but for its effects on piracy; for the success attending such enterprises seems to have turned the whole of the northern nations towards sea warfare. The Danes, Norwegians, and Swedes, from their superior knowledge of navigation, gave into it most; and on whatever coast the winds carried them, they made free with all that came in their way. Canute the Fourth endeavored in vain to repress these lawless disorders among his subjects; but they felt so galled by his restrictions, that they assassinated him. On the king of Sweden being taken by the Danes, permission was given to such of his subjects as chose, to arm themselves against the enemy, pillage his possessions, and sell their prizes at Ribnitz and Golnitz. This proved a fertile nursery of pirates, who became so formidable under the name of "Vitalien Broders," that several princes were obliged to arm against them, and hang some of their chiefs.

Even the females of the North caught the epidemic spirit, and proudly betook themselves to the dangers of sea-life. Saxo-Grammaticus relates an interesting story of one of them. Alwilda, the daughter of Synardus, a Gothic king, to deliver herself from the violence imposed on her inclination, by a marriage with Alf, the son of Sygarus, king of Denmark, embraced the life of a rover; and attired as a man, she embarked in a vessel of which the crew was composed of other young women of tried courage, dressed in the same manner. Among the first of her cruises, she landed at a place where a company of pirates were bewailing the loss of their commander; and the strangers were so captivated with the air and agreeable manners of Alwilda, that they unanimously chose her for their leader. By this reinforcement she became so formidable, that Prince Alf was despatched to engage her. She sustained his attacks with great courage and talent; but during a severe action in the gulf of Finland, Alf boarded her vessel, and having killed the greatest part of her crew, seized the captain, namely herself; whom nevertheless he knew not, because she had a casque which covered her visage. The prince was agreeably surprised, on removing the helmet, to recognize his beloved Alwilda; and it seems that his valor had now recommended him to the fair princess, for he persuaded her to accept his hand, married her on board, and then led her to partake of his wealth, and share his throne.

Charlemagne, though represented as naturally generous and humane, had been induced, in his extravagant zeal for the propagation of those tenets which he had himself adopted, to enforce them throughout Germany at the point of the sword; and his murders and decimations on that account disgrace humanity. The more warlike of the Pagans flying into Jutland, from whence the Saxons had issued

forth, were received with kindness, and furnished with the means of punishing their persecutor, by harassing his coasts. The maritime towns of France were especially ravaged by those pirates called "Normands," or men of the North; and it was owing to their being joined by many malcontents, in the provinces since called Normandy, that that district acquired its name. Charlemagne, roused by this effrontery, besides fortifying the mouths of the great rivers, determined on building himself a fleet, which he did, consisting of 400 of the largest galleys then known, some having five or six benches of oars. His people were, however, extremely ignorant of maritime affairs, and in the progress of having them taught, he was suddenly called to the south, by the invasion of the Saracens.



Awilda, the Female Pirate.

Another division of Normans, some years afterwards, in the same spirit of emigration, and thirsting, perhaps, to avenge their injured ancestors, burst into the provinces of France, which the degeneracy of Charlemagne's posterity, and the dissensions which prevailed there, rendered an affair of no great difficulty. Louis le Debonnaire had taken every means

of keeping on good terms with them; annually persuading some to become Christians, and then sending them home so loaded with presents, that it was discovered they came to be baptized over and over again, merely for the sake of the gifts, as Du Chesne tells us. But on the subsequent division of the empire among the undutiful sons of Louis, the pirates did not fail to take advantage of the general confusion; braving the sea almost every summer in their light coracles, sailing up the Seine, the Somme, or the Loire, and devastating the best parts of France, almost without resistance. In 845, they went up to Paris, pillaged it, and were on the point of attacking the royal camp at St. Dennis; but receiving a large sum of money from Charles the Bald, they retreated from thence, and with the new means thus supplied them, ravaged Bordeaux, and were there joined by Pepin, king of Aquitaine. A few years afterwards, they returned in great numbers. Paris was again sacked, and the magnificent abbey of St. Germain des Prés burnt. In 861, Wailand, a famous Norman pirate, returning from England, took up his winter quarters on the banks of the Loire, devastated the country as high as Tourraine, shared the women and girls among his crews, and even carried off the male children, to be brought up in his own profession. Charles the Bald, not having the power to expel him, engaged the freebooter, for 500 pounds of silver, to dislodge his countrymen, who were harassing the vicinity of Paris. In consequence of this subsidy, Wailand, with a fleet of 260 sail, went up the Seine, and attacked the Normans in the isle of Oiselle: after a long and obstinate resistance, they were obliged to capitulate; and having paid 6000 pounds of gold and silver, by way of ransom, had leave to join their victors. The riches thus acquired rendered a predatory life so popular, that the pirates were continually

increasing in number, so that under a "sea-king" called Eric, they made a descent in the Elbe and the Weser, pillaged Hamburg, penetrated far into Germany, and after gaining two battles, retreated with immense booty. The pirates, thus reinforced on all sides, long continued to devastate Germany, France, and England; some penetrated into Andalusia and Hetruria, where they destroyed the flourishing town of Luni; whilst others, descending the Dnieper, penetrated even into Russia.



A Priest thrown from the Ramparts of an Abbey

Meanwhile the Danes had been making several attempts to effect a *lodgment* in England; and allured by its fertility, were induced to try their fortune in various expeditions,

which were occasionally completely successful, and at other times most fatally disastrous. At length, after a struggle of several years, their success was so decided, that king Alfred was obliged for a time to abandon his kingdom, as we all know, to their ravages. They immediately passed over to Ireland, and divided it into three sovereignties; that of Dublin fell to the share of Olaufr; that of Waterford to Sitrih; and that of Limerick to Yivar. These arrangements dispersed the forces of the enemy, and watching his opportunity, Alfred issued from his retreat, fell on them like a thunderbolt, and made a great carnage of them. This prince, too wise to exterminate the pirates after he had conquered them, sent them to settle Northumberland, which had been wasted by their countrymen, and by this humane policy gained their attachment and services. He then retook London, embellished it, equipped fleets, restrained the Danes in England, and prevented others from landing. In the twelve years of peace which followed his fifty-six battles, this great man composed his body of laws; divided England into counties, hundreds, and tithings, and founded the University of Oxford. But after Alfred's death, fresh swarms of pirates visited the shores, among the most formidable of whom were the Danes, who spread desolation and misery along the banks of the Thames, the Medway, the Severn, the Tamar, and the Avon, for more than a century, though repeatedly tempted to desist by weighty bribes, raised by an oppressive and humiliating tax called *Danegelt*, from its object; and which, like most others, were continued long after it had answered its intent.

About the end of the 9th century, one of the sons of Rognwald, count of the Orcades, named Horolf, or Rollo, having infested the coasts of Norway with piratical descents, was at length defeated and banished by Harold,

king of Denmark. He fled for safety to the Scandinavian island of Soderoe, where finding many outlaws and discontented fugitives, he addressed their passions, and succeeded in placing himself at their head. Instead of measuring his sword with his sovereign again, he adopted the wiser policy of imitating his countrymen, in making his fortune by plundering the more opulent places of southern Europe. The first attempt of this powerful gang was upon England, where, finding Alfred too powerful to be coped with, he stood over to the mouth of the Seine, and availed himself of the state to which France was reduced. Horolf, however, did not limit his ambition to the acquisition of booty; he wished permanently to enjoy some of the fine countries he was ravaging, and after many treaties made and broken, received the dutchy of Normandy from the lands of Charles the Simple, as a fief, together with Gisle, the daughter of the French monarch, in marriage. Thus did a mere pirate found the family which in a few years gave sovereigns to England, Naples, and Sicily, and spread the fame of their talents and prowess throughout the world.

Nor was Europe open to the depredations of the northern pirates only. Some Asiatic moslems, having seized on Syria, immediately invaded Africa, and their subsequent conquests in Spain facilitated their irruption into France, where they pillaged the devoted country, with but few substantial checks. Masters of all the islands in the Mediterranean, their corsairs insulted the coasts of Italy, and even threatened the destruction of the Eastern empire. While Alexis was occupied in a war with Patzinaces, on the banks of the Danube, Zachas, a Saracen pirate, scoured the Archipelago, having, with the assistance of an able Smyrniote, constructed a flotilla of forty brigantines, and some light fast-rowing boats, manned by adventurers like himself. After

taking several of the surrounding islands, he established himself sovereign of Smyrna, that place being about the centre of his newly-acquired dominions. Here his fortunes prospered for a time, and Soliman, sultan of Nicea, son of the grand Soliman, sought his alliance, and married his daughter, about AD. 1093. But in the following year, young Soliman being persuaded that his father-in-law had an eye to his possessions, with his own hand stabbed Zachas to the heart. The success of this freebooter shows that the Eastern emperors could no longer protect, or even assist, their islands.

Maritime pursuits had now revived, the improvement of nautical science was progressing rapidly, and the advantages of predatory expeditions, especially when assisted and masked by commerce, led people of family and acquirements to embrace the profession. The foremost of these were the Venetians and Genoese, among whom the private adventurers, stimulated by an enterprising spirit, fitted out armaments, and volunteered themselves into the service of those nations who thought proper to retain them; or they engaged in such schemes of plunder as were likely to repay their pains and expense. About the same time, the Roxolani or Russians, became known in history, making their debut in the character of pirates, ravenous for booty, and hungry for the pillage of Constantinople--a longing which 900 years have not yet satisfied. Pouring hundreds of boats down the Borysthenes, the Russian marauders made four desperate attempts to plunder the city of the Caesars, in less than two centuries, and appear only to have been repulsed by the dreadful effects of the celebrated Greek fire.

England, in the mean time, had little to do with piracy; nor had she any thing worthy the name of a navy; yet Coeur de Lion had given maritime laws to Europe; her seamen, in

point of skill, were esteemed superior to their contemporaries; and King John enacted that those foreign ships which refused to lower their flags to that of Britain should, if taken, be deemed lawful prizes. Under Henry III., though Hugh de Burgh, the governor of Dover Castle, had defeated a French fleet by casting lime into the eyes of his antagonists, the naval force was impaired to such a degree that the Normans and Bretons were too powerful for the Cinque Ports, and compelled them to seek relief from the other ports of the kingdom. The taste for depredation had become so general and contagious, that privateers were now allowed to be fitted out, which equipments quickly degenerated to the most cruel of pirates. Nay more: on the disputes which took place between Henry and his Barons, in 1244, the Cinque Ports, who had shown much indifference to the royal requisitions, openly espoused the cause of the revolted nobles; and, under the orders of Simon de Montfort, burnt Portsmouth. From this, forgetful of their motives for arming, they proceeded to commit various acts of piracy, and considering nothing but their private interests, extended their violence not only against the shipping of all countries unfortunate enough to fall in their way, but even to perpetrate the most unwarrantable ravages on the property of their own countrymen. Nor was this confined to the Cinque Port vessels only; the example and the profits were too stimulating to the restless; and one daring association on the coast of Lincolnshire seized the Isle of Ely, and made it their receptacle for the plunder of all the adjacent countries. One William Marshall fortified the little island of Lundy, in the mouth of the Severn, and did so much mischief by his piracies, that at length it became necessary to fit out a squadron to reduce him, which was accordingly done, and he was executed in London; yet the

example did not deter other persons from similar practices. The sovereign, however, did not possess sufficient naval means to suppress the enormities of the great predatory squadrons, and their ravages continued to disgrace the English name for upwards of twenty years, when the valor and conciliation of the gallant Prince Edward brought them to that submission which his royal parent had failed in procuring.

Those "harum-scarum" expeditions, the Crusades, were perhaps influential in checking piracy, although the rabble that composed the majority of them had as little principle as the worst of the freebooters. From the time that Peter the Hermit set Europe in a blaze, all ranks, and all nations, streamed to the East, so that few vessels were otherwise employed than in conveying the motly groups who sought the shores of Palestine; some from religious zeal; some from frantic fanaticism; some from desire of distinction; some for the numberless privileges which the crusaders acquired; and the rest and greater portion, for the spoil and plunder of which they had a prospect. The armaments, fitted in no fewer than nine successive efforts, were mostly equipped with such haste and ignorance, and with so little choice, that ruinous delays, shipwrecks, and final discomfiture, were naturally to be expected. Still, the effect of such incredible numbers of people betaking themselves to foreign countries, advanced civilization, although vast means of forwarding its cause were buried in the East; and those who assert that no benefit actually resulted, cannot deny that at least some evils were thereby removed. Montesquieu says, that Europe then required a general shock, to teach her, but the sight of contrasts, the theorems of public economy most conducive to happiness. And it is evident, that notwithstanding these follies wasted the population of

Europe, squandered its treasures, and infected us with new vices and diseases, still the crusades diminished the bondage of the feudal system, by augmenting the power of the King, and the strength of the Commons; while they also occasioned a very increased activity in commerce: thus taming the ferocity of men's spirits, increasing agriculture in value from the safety it enjoyed, and establishing a base for permanent prosperity.



Adventures and Exploits of Captain Avery

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Containing an Account of his capturing one of the great Mogul's ship's laden with treasure: and an interesting history of a Colony of Pirates on the Island of Madagascar.

During his own time the adventures of Captain Avery were the subject of general conversation in Europe. It was reported that he had married the Great Mogul's daughter, who was taken in an Indian ship that fell into his hands, and that he was about to be the founder of a new monarchy--that he gave commissions in his own name to the captains of his ships, and the commanders of his forces, and was acknowledged by them as their prince. In consequence of these reports, it was at one time resolved to fit out a strong squadron to go and take him and his men; and at another time it was proposed to invite him home with all his riches, by the offer of his Majesty's pardon. These reports, however, were soon discovered to be groundless, and he was actually starving without a shilling, while he was represented as in the possession of millions. Not to exhaust the patience, or lessen the curiosity of the reader, the facts in Avery's life shall be briefly related.

He was a native of Devonshire (Eng.), and at an early period sent to sea; advanced to the station of a mate in a merchantman, he performed several voyages. It happened previous to the peace of Ryswick, when there existed an alliance between Spain, England, Holland, and other powers, against France, that the French in Martinique carried on a smuggling trade with the Spaniards on the continent of

Peru. To prevent their intrusion into the Spanish dominions, a few vessels were commanded to cruise upon that coast, but the French ships were too strong for them; the Spaniards, therefore, came to the resolution of hiring foreigners to act against them. Accordingly, certain merchants of Bristol fitted out two ships of thirty guns, well manned, and provided with every necessary munition, and commanded them to sail for Corunna to receive their orders.

Captain Gibson commanded one of these ships, and Avery appears to have been his mate, in the year 1715. He was a fellow of more cunning than courage, and insinuating himself into the confidence of some of the boldest men in the ship, he represented the immense riches which were to be acquired upon the Spanish coast, and proposed to run off with the ship. The proposal was scarcely made when it was agreed upon, and put in execution at ten o'clock the following evening. Captain Gibson was one of those who mightily love their bottle, and spent much of his time on shore; but he remained on board that night, which did not, however, frustrate their design, because he had taken his usual dose, and so went to bed. The men who were not in the confederacy went also to bed, leaving none upon deck but the conspirators. At the time agreed upon, the long boat of the other ship came, and Avery hailing her in the usual manner, he was answered by the men in her, "Is your drunken boatswain on board?" which was the watchword agreed between them. Avery replying in the affirmative, the boat came alongside with sixteen stout fellows, who joined in the adventure. They next secured the hatches, then softly weighed anchor, and immediately put to sea without bustle or noise. There were several vessels in the bay, besides a Dutchman of forty guns, the captain of which was offered a considerable reward to go in pursuit of Avery, but he

declined. When the captain awoke, he rang his bell, and Avery and another conspirator going into the cabin, found him yet half asleep. He inquired, saying, "What is the matter with the ship? does she drive? what weather is it?" supposing that it had been a storm, and that the ship was driven from her anchors. "No, no," answered Avery, "we're at sea, with a fair wind and a good weather." "At sea!" said the captain: "how can that be?" "Come," answered Avery, "don't be in a fright, but put on your clothes, and I'll let you into a secret. You must know that I am captain of this ship now, and this is my cabin, therefore you must walk out; I am bound to Madagascar, with a design of making my own fortune, and that of all the brave fellows joined with me."

The captain, having a little recovered his senses, began to understand his meaning. However, his fright was as great as before, which Avery perceiving, desired him to fear nothing; "for," said he, "if you have a mind to make one of us, we will receive you; and if you turn sober, and attend to business, perhaps in time I may make you one of my lieutenants; if not, here's a boat, and you shall be set on shore." Gibson accepted of the last proposal; and the whole crew being called up to know who was willing to go on shore with the captain, there were only about five or six who chose to accompany him.

Avery proceeded on his voyage to Madagascar, and it does not appear that he captured any vessels upon his way. When arrived at the northeast part of that island, he found two sloops at anchor, which, upon seeing him, slipped their cables and ran themselves ashore, while the men all landed and concealed themselves in the woods. These were two sloops which the men had run off with from the East Indies, and seeing Avery's ship, supposed that he had been sent out after them. Suspecting who they were, he sent some of

his men on shore to inform them that they were friends, and to propose a union for their common safety. The sloops' men being well armed, had posted themselves in a wood, and placed sentinels to observe whether the ship's men were landing to pursue them. The sentinels only observing two or three men coming towards them unarmed, did not oppose them. Upon being informed that they were friends, the sentinels conveyed them to the main body, where they delivered their message. They were at first afraid that it was a stratagem to entrap them, but when the messengers assured them that their captain had also run away with his ship, and that a few of their men along with him would meet them unarmed, to consult matters for their common advantage, confidence was established, and they were mutually well pleased, as it added to their strength.

Having consulted what was most proper to be attempted they endeavored to get off the sloops, and hastened to prepare all things, in order to sail for the Arabian coast. Near the river Indus, the man at the mast-head espied a sail, upon which they gave chase; as they came nearer to her, they discovered that she was a tall vessel, and might turn out to be an East Indiaman. She, however, proved a better prize; for when they fired at her she hoisted Mogul colors, and seemed to stand upon her defence. Avery only cannonaded at a distance, when some of his men began to suspect that he was not the hero they had supposed. The sloops, however attacked, the one on the bow, and another upon the quarter of the ship, and so boarded her. She then struck her colors. She was one of the Great Mogul's own ships, and there were in her several of the greatest persons in his court, among whom, it was said, was one of his daughters going upon a pilgrimage to Mecca; and they were carrying with them rich offerings to present at the shrine of

Mahomet. It is a well known fact, that the people of the east travel with great magnificence, so that these had along with them all their slaves and attendants, with a large quantity of vessels of gold and silver, and immense sums of money to defray their expenses by land; the spoil therefore which they received from that ship was almost incalculable.



Captain Avery engaging the Great Mogul's Ship

Taking the treasure on board their own ships, and plundering their prize of every thing valuable, they then

allowed her to depart. As soon as the Mogul received this intelligence, he threatened to send a mighty army to extirpate the English from all their settlements upon the Indian coast. The East India Company were greatly alarmed, but found means to calm his resentment, by promising to search for the robbers, and deliver them into his hands. The noise which this made over all Europe, gave birth to the rumors that were circulated concerning Avery's greatness.

In the mean time, our adventurers made the best of their way back to Madagascar, intending to make that place the deposit of all their treasure, to build a small fort, and to keep always a few men there for its protection. Avery, however, disconcerted this plan, and rendered it altogether unnecessary.