

**EXQUEMELIN  
ALEXANDRE  
OLIVIER**

THE PIRATES OF PANAMA

**Alexandre Exquemelin**  
**The Pirates of Panama**

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*The Pirates of Panama / or, The Buccaneers of America; a True Account of  
the Famous Adventures and Daring Deeds of Sir Henry Morgan and Other  
Notorious Freebooters of the Spanish Main:*

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**A. O. Exquemelin**  
**The Pirates of Panama / or,**  
**The Buccaneers of America; a**  
**True Account of the Famous**  
**Adventures and Daring Deeds**  
**of Sir Henry Morgan and**  
**Other Notorious Freebooters**  
**of the Spanish Main**

**INTRODUCTION**

This volume was originally written in Dutch by John Esquemeling, and first published in Amsterdam in 1678 under the title of *De Americaeneche Zee Roovers*. It immediately became very popular and this first hand history of the Buccaneers of America was soon translated into the principal European languages. The first English edition was printed in 1684.

Of the author, John Esquemeling, very little is known although it is generally conceded that he was in all probability a Fleming or Hollander, a quite natural supposition as his first works were written in the Dutch language. He came to the island of Tortuga, the headquarters of the Buccaneers, in 1666 in the employ of the French West India Company. Several years later this same company, owing to unsuccessful business arrangements, recalled their representatives to France and gave their officers orders to sell the company's land and all its servants. Esquemeling then a servant of the company was sold to a stern master by whom he was treated with great cruelty. Owing to hard work, poor food and exposure he became dangerously ill, and his master seeing his weak condition and fearing to lose the money Esquemeling had cost him resold him to a surgeon. This new master treated him kindly so that Esquemeling's health was speedily restored, and after one year's service he was set at liberty upon a promise to pay his benefactor, the surgeon, 100 pieces of eight at such a time as he found himself in funds.

Once more a free man he determined to join the pirates and was received into their society and remained with them until 1672. Esquemeling served the Buccaneers in the capacity of barber-surgeon, and was present at all their exploits. Little did he suspect that his first hand observations would some day be cherished as the only authentic and true history of the Buccaneers and Marooners of the Spanish Main.

From time to time new editions of this work have been

published, but in many cases much new material, not always authentic, has been added and the result has been to mar the original narrative as set forth by Esquemeling. In arranging this edition, the original English text only has been used, and but few changes made by cutting out the long and tedious description of plant and animal life of the West Indies of which Esquemeling had only a smattering of truth. But, the history of Captain Morgan and his fellow buccaneers is here printed almost identical with the original English translation, and we believe it is the first time this history has been published in a suitable form for the juvenile reader with no loss of interest to the adult.

The world wide attention at this time in the Isthmus of Panama and the great canal connecting the Atlantic with the Pacific Ocean lends to this narrative an additional stimulus. Here are set forth the deeds of daring of the wild freebooters in crossing the isthmus to attack the cities, Puerto Bellow and Panama. The sacking and burning of these places accompanied by pillage, fire, and treasure seeking both on land and on sea form exciting reading. *The Buccaneers and Marooners of America* well deserves a place on the book shelf with those old world-wide favorites *Robinson Crusoe* and the *Swiss Family Robinson*.

*George Alfred Williams.*

# THE TRANSLATOR TO THE READER (of 1684)

*THE present Volume, both for its Curiosity and Ingenuity, I dare recommend unto the perusal of our English nation, whose glorious actions it containeth. What relateth unto the curiosity hereof, this Piece, both of Natural and Humane History, was no sooner published in the Dutch Original, than it was snatch't up for the most curious Library's of Holland; it was Translated into Spanish (two impressions thereof being sent into Spain in one year); it was taken notice of by the learned Academy of Paris; and finally recommended as worthy our esteem, by the ingenious Author of the Weekly Memorials for the Ingenious, printed here at London about two years ago. Neither all this undeservedly, seeing it enlargeth our acquaintance of Natural History, so much prized and enquir'd for, by the Learned of this present Age, with several observations not easily to be found in other accounts already received from America: and besides, it informeth us (with huge novelty) of as great and bold attempts, in point of Military conduct and valour, as ever were performed by mankind; without excepting, here, either Alexander the Great, or Julius Cæsar, or the rest of the Nine Worthy's of Fame. Of all which actions, as we cannot confess ourselves to have been ignorant hitherto (the very name of Bucaniers being, as yet, known but unto few of*

*the Ingenious; as their Lives, Laws, and Conversation, are in a manner unto none) so can they not choose but be admired, out of this ingenuous Author, by whosoever is curious to learn the various revolutions of humane affairs. But, more especially by our English Nation; as unto whom these things more narrowly do appertain. We having here more than half the Book filled with the unparallel'd, if not inimitable, adventures and Heroick exploits of our own Country-men, and Relations; whose undaunted, and exemplary courage, when called upon by our King and Country, we ought to emulate.*

*From whence it hath proceeded, that nothing of this kind was ever, as yet, published in England, I cannot easily determine; except, as some will say, from some secret Ragion di Stato. Let the reason be as t'will; this is certain, so much the more we are obliged unto this present Author, who though a stranger unto our Nation, yet with that Candour and Fidelity hath recorded our Actions, as to render the Metal of our true English Valour to be the more believed and feared abroad, than if these things had been divulged by our selves at home. From hence peradventure will other Nations learn, that the English people are of their Genius more inclinable to act than to write; seeing as well they as we have lived unacquainted with these actions of our Nation, until such time as a Foreign Author to our Country came to tell them.*

*Besides the merits of this Piece for its curiosity, another point of no less esteem, is the truth and sincerity wherewith everything seemeth to be penned. No greater ornament or dignity can be*

*added unto History, either humane or natural, than truth. All other embellishments, if this be failing, are of little or no esteem; if this be delivered, are either needless or superfluous. What concerneth this requisite in our Author, his lines do everywhere declare the faithfulness and sincerity of his mind. He writeth not by hearsay, but was an eye witness, as he somewhere telleth you, unto all and every one of the bold and hazardous attempts which he relateth. And these he delivereth with such candour of stile, such ingenuity of mind, such plainness of words, such conciseness of periods, so much divested of Rhetorical Hyperboles, or the least flourishes of Eloquence, so hugely void of Passion or national Reflections, as that he strongly perswadeth all-along to the credit of what he saith; yea, raiseth the mind of the Reader to believe these things far greater than what he hath said; and having read him, leaveth onely this scruple or concern behind, that you can read him no longer. In a word, such are his deserts, that some persons peradventure would not stickle to compare him to the Father of Historians, Philip de Comines; at least thus much may be said, with all truth imaginable, that he resembleth that great Author in many of his excellent qualities.*

*I know some persons have objected against the greatness of these prodigious Adventures, intimating that the resistance our Bucaniers found in America, was everywhere but small. For the Spaniards, say they, in the West Indies, are become of late years nothing less, but rather much more degenerate than in Europe. The continual Peace they have enjoyed in those parts,*

*the defect of Military Discipline, and European souldiers for their Commanders, much contributing hereunto. But more especially, and above all other reasons, the very luxury of the Soil and Riches, the extreme heat of those Countries, and influence of the Stars being such, as totally inclineth their bodies unto an infinite effeminacy and cowardize of minds.*

*Unto these Reasons I shall only answer in brief. This History will convince them to be manifestly false. For as to the continual Peace here alleadged, we know that no Peace could ever be established beyond the Line, since the first possession of the West-Indies by the Spaniards, till the burning of Panama. At that time, or few months before, Sir William Godolphin by his prudent negotiation in quality of Embassadour for our most Gracious Monarch, did conclude at Madrid a peace to be observed even beyond the Line, and through the whole extent of the Spanish Dominions in the West-Indies. This transaction gave the Spaniards new causes of complaints against our proceedings, that no sooner a Peace had been established for those parts of America, but our forces had taken and burnt both Chagre, St. Catherine, and Panama. But our reply was convincing, That whereas eight or ten months of time had been allowed by Articles for the publishing of the said Peace through all the Dominions of both Monarchies in America, those Hostilities had been committed, not onely without orders from his Majesty of England, but also within the space of the said eight or ten months of time. Until that time the Spanish Inhabitants of America being, as it*

were, in a perpetual War with Europe, certain it is that no Coasts nor Kingdoms in the World have been more frequently infested nor alarm'd with the invasions of several Nations than theirs. Thus from the very beginning of their Conquests in America, both English, French, Dutch Portuguese, Swedes, Danes, Curlanders, and all other nations that navigate the Ocean, have frequented the West-Indies, and filled them with their robberies and Assaults. From these occasions have they been in continual watch and ward, and kept their Militia in constant exercise, as also their Garrisons pretty well provided and paid; as fearing every sail they discovered at Sea, to be Pirats of one Nation or another. But much more especially, since that Curasao, Tortuga, and Jamaica have been inhabited by English, French, and Dutch, and bred up that race of Hunts-men, than which, no other ever was more desperate, nor more mortal enemies to the Spaniards, called Bucaniers. Now shall we say, that these People, through too long continuation of Peace, have utterly abolished the exercises of War, having been all-along incessantly vexed with the Tumults and Alarms thereof?

In like manner is it false, to accuse their defect of Military Discipline for want of European Commanders. For who knoweth not that all places, both Military and Civil, through those vast dominions of the West-Indies, are provided out of Spain? And those of the Militia most commonly given unto expert Commanders, trained up from their infancy in the Wars of Europe, either in Africa, Milan, Sicily, Naples, or Flanders,

*fighting against either English, French, Dutch, Portuguese, or Moors? Yea their very Garrisons, if you search them in those parts, will peradventure be found to be stock'd three parts to four with Souldiers both born and bred in the Kingdom of Spain.*

*From these Considerations it may be inferr'd what little difference ought to be allowed betwixt the Spanish Souldiers, Inhabitants of the West-Indies, and those of Europe. And how little the Soil or Climate hath influenced or caused their Courage to degenerate towards cowardize or baseness of mind. As if the very same Argument, deduced from the nature of that Climate, did not equally militate against the valour of our famous Bucaniers, and represent this to be of as degenerate Metal as theirs.*

*But nothing can be more clearly evinced, than is the Valour of the American Spaniards, either Souldiers or Officers, by the sequel of this History. What men ever fought more desperately than the Garrison of Chagre? Their number being 314, and of all these, only thirty remaining; of which number scarce ten were unwounded; and among them, not one officer found alive? Were not 600 killed upon the spot at Panama, 500 at Gibraltar, almost as many more at Puerto del Principe, all dying with their Arms in their hands, and facing bravely the Enemy for the defence of their Country and private Concerns? Did not those of the Town of San Pedro both fortifie themselves, lay several Ambuscades, and lastly sell their lives as dear as any European Souldier could do; Lolonois being forced to gain step by step his advance unto the Town, with huge loss both of bloud and men? Many other*

*instances might be produced out of this compendious Volume, of the generous resistance the Spaniards made in several places, though Fortune favoured not their Arms.*

*Next, as to the personal Valour of many of their Commanders, What man ever behaved himself more briskly than the Governour of Gibraltar, than the Governour of Puerto del Principe, both dying for the defence of their Towns; than Don Alonso del Campo, and others? Or what examples can easily parallel the desperate courage of the Governour of Chagre? who, though the Palizda's were fired, the Terraplens were sunk into the Ditch, the Breaches were entred, the Houses all burnt above him, the whole Castle taken, his men all killed; yet would not admit of any quarter, but chose rather to die under his Arms, being shot into the brain, than surrender himself as a Prisoner unto the Bucaniers. What lion ever fought to the last gasp more obstinately than the Governour of Puerto Velo? who, seeing the Town enter'd by surprizal in the night, one chief Castle blown up into the Air, all the other Forts and Castles taken, his own assaulted several ways, both Religious men and women placed at the front of the Enemy to fix the Ladders against the Walls; yet spared not to kill as many of the said Religious persons as he could. And at last, the walls being scaled, the Castle enter'd and taken, all his own men overcome by fire and sword, who had cast down their Arms, and begged mercy from the Enemy; yet would admit of none for his own life. Yet, with his own hands killed several of his Souldiers, to force them to stand to their Arms, though all were lost. Yea, though his own Wife and*

*Daughter begged of him upon their knees that he would have his life by craving quarter, though the Enemy desired of him the same thing; yet would hearken to no cries nor perswasions, but they were forced to kill him, combating with his Arms in his hands, being not otherwise able to take him Prisoner, as they were desirous to do. Shall these men be said to be influenced with Cowardize, who thus acted to the very last Scene of their own Tragedies? Or shall we rather say that they wanted no Courage, but Fortune? It being certainly true, that he who is killed in a Batel, may be equally couragious with him that killeth. And that whosoever derogateth from the Valour of the Spaniards in the West-Indies, diminisheth in like manner the Courage of the Bucaniers, his own Countrymen, who have seemed to act beyond mortal men in America.*

*Now, to say something concerning John Esquemeling, the first Author of this History. I take him to be a Dutch-man, or at least born in Flanders, notwithstanding that the Spanish Translation representeth him to be a Native of the Kingdom of France. His printing this History originally in Dutch, which doubtless must be his native Tongue, who otherwise was but an illiterate man, together with the very sound of his name, convincing me thereunto. True it is, he set sail from France, and was some years at Tortuga; but neither of these two Arguments, drawn from the History, are prevalent. For were he to be a French-man born, how came he to learn the Dutch language so perfectly as to prefer it to his own? Especially that not being spoken at Tortuga nor Jamaica, where he resided all the while.*

*I hope I have made this English Translation something more plain and correct than the Spanish. Some few notorious faults either of the Printer or the Interpreter, I am sure I have redressed. But the Spanish Translator complaining much of the intricacy of Stile in the Original (as flowing from a person who, as hath been said, was no Scholar) as he was pardonable, being in great haste, for not rendring his own Version so distinct and elaborate as he could desire; so must I be excused from the one, that is to say, Elegancy, if I have cautiously declined the other, I mean Confusion.*

# THE PIRATES OF PANAMA THE BUCCANEERS OF AMERICA

## CHAPTER I

The introduction – The author sets forth for the Western islands, in the service of the West-India Company of France – They meet with an English frigate, and arrive at the Island of Tortuga.

WE set sail from Havre-de-Grace in France, from whence we set sail in the ship called *St. John*, May 2, 1666. Our vessel was equipped with twenty-eight guns, twenty mariners, and two hundred and twenty passengers, including those whom the company sent as free passengers. Soon after we came to an anchor under the Cape of Barfleur, there to join seven other ships of the same West-India company, which were to come from Dieppe, under convoy of a man-of-war, mounted with thirty-seven guns, and two hundred and fifty men. Of these ships two were bound for Senegal, five for the Caribbee islands, and ours for Tortuga. Here gathered to us about twenty sail of other ships, bound for Newfoundland, with some Dutch vessels going for Nantz, Rochel, and St. Martin's, so that in all we made thirty sail. Here we put ourselves in a posture of defence, having

noticed that four English frigates, of sixty guns each, waited for us near Aldernay. Our admiral, the Chevalier Sourdis, having given necessary orders, we sailed thence with a favourable gale, and some mists arising, totally impeded the English frigates from discovering our fleet. We steered our course as near as we could to the coast of France, for fear of the enemy. As we sailed along, we met a vessel of Ostend, who complained to our admiral, that a French privateer had robbed him that very morning; whereupon we endeavoured to pursue the said pirate; but our labour was in vain, not being able to overtake him.

Our fleet, as we sailed, caused no small fears and alarms to the inhabitants of the coasts of France, these judging us to be English, and that we sought some convenient place for landing. To allay their fright, we hung out our colours; but they would not trust us. After this we came to an anchor in the bay of Conquet in Brittany, near Ushant, there to take in water. Having stored ourselves with fresh provisions here, we prosecuted our voyage, designing to pass by the Ras of Fontenau, and not expose ourselves to the Sorlingues, fearing the English that were cruising thereabouts. The river Ras is of a current very strong and rapid, which, rolling over many rocks, discharges itself into the sea, on the coast of France, in 48 deg. 10 min. latitude; so that this passage is very dangerous, all the rocks, as yet, being not thoroughly known.

Here I shall mention the ceremony, which, at this passage, and some other places, is used by the mariners, and by them called

baptism, though it may seem little to our purpose. The master's mate clothed himself with a ridiculous sort of garment, that reached to his feet, and on his head he put a suitable cap, made very burlesque; in his right hand he had a naked wooden sword, and in his left a pot full of ink: his face was horribly blacked with soot, and his neck adorned with a collar of many little pieces of wood. Thus apparelled, he commanded every one to be called who had never passed through that dangerous place before; and then, causing them to kneel down, he made the sign of the cross on their foreheads, with ink, and gave every one a stroke on the shoulders with his wooden sword. Meanwhile, the standers-by cast a bucket of water upon each man's head; and so ended the ceremony. But that done, each of the baptized must give a bottle of brandy, placing it nigh the main-mast, without speaking a word; even those who have no such liquor not being excused. If the vessel never passed that way before, the captain is obliged to distribute some wine among the mariners and passengers; but as for other gifts, which the newly-baptized frequently offer, they are divided among the old seamen, and of them they make a banquet among themselves.

The Hollanders likewise, not only at this passage, but also at the rocks called Berlingues, nigh the coast of Portugal, in 39 deg. 40 min. (being a passage very dangerous, especially by night, when, in the dark, the rocks are not distinguishable, the land being very high) they use some such ceremony: but their manner of baptizing is very different from that of the French;

for he that is to be baptized is fastened, and hoisted up thrice, at the mainyard's end, as if he were a criminal. If he be hoisted the fourth time, in the name of the Prince of Orange, or of the captain of the vessel, his honour is more than ordinary. Thus every one is dipped several times in the main ocean; but he that is dipped first has the honour of being saluted with a gun. Such as are not willing to fall, must pay twelve pence for ransom; if he be an officer, two shillings; and if a passenger, at their own pleasure. If the ship never passed that way before, the captain is to give a small rundlet of wine, which, if he denies, the mariners may cut off the stem of the vessel. All the profit accruing by this ceremony is kept by the master's mate, who, after reaching their port, usually lays it out in wine, which is drank amongst the ancient seamen. Some say this ceremony was instituted by the Emperor Charles V. though it is not amongst his laws. But here I leave these sea customs, and return to our voyage.

Having passed the Ras, we had very good weather, till we came to Cape Finis Terræ: here a sudden tempest surprised us, and separated our ship from the rest that were in our company. This storm continued eight days; in which time it would move compassion to see how miserably the passengers were tumbled to and fro, on all sides of the ship; insomuch, that the mariners, in the performance of their duty, were compelled to tread upon them. This boisterous weather being over, we had very favourable gales again, till we came to the tropic of Cancer. This tropic is an imaginary circle, which astronomers have invented

in the heavens, limiting the progress of the sun towards the north pole. It is placed in the latitude of 23 deg. 30 min. Here we were baptized a second time, as before. The French always perform this ceremony at the tropic of Cancer, as also under the tropic of Capricorn. In this part of the world we had very favourable weather, at which we were very glad, because of our great want of water; for that element is so scarce with us, that we were stinted to two half pints a man every day.

About the latitude of Barbadoes, we met an English frigate, or privateer, who first began to give us chase; but finding herself not to exceed us in force, presently got away: hereupon, we pursued her, firing several guns, eight-pounders, at her; but at length she escaped, and we returned to our course. Soon after, we came within sight of Martinico. We were bent to the coast of the isle of St. Peter, but were frustrated by a storm, which took us hereabouts. Hence we resolved to steer to Gaudaloupe, yet we could not reach this island, by reason of the said storm; so that we directed our course to the isle of Tortuga, being the very same land we were bound to. We passed along the coast of Punta Rica, which is extremely agreeable and delightful to the sight, being adorned with beautiful woods, even to the tops of the mountains. Then we discovered Hispaniola (of which I shall give a description), and we coasted about it till we came to Tortuga, our desired port. Here we anchored, July 7, in the same year, not having lost one man in the voyage. We landed the goods that belonged to the West-India company, and, soon after, the ship

was sent to Cal de Sac with some passengers.

## CHAPTER II

A description of Tortuga – The fruits and plants there – How the French first settled there, at two several times, and forced out the Spaniards – The author twice sold in the said island.

THE island of Tortuga is situate on the north side of Hispaniola, in 20 deg. 30 min. latitude; its just extent is threescore leagues about. The Spaniards, who gave name to this island, called it so from the shape of the land, in some manner resembling a great sea-tortoise, called by them Tortuga-de-mar. The country is very mountainous, and full of rocks, and yet thick of lofty trees, that grow upon the hardest of those rocks, without partaking of a softer soil. Hence it comes that their roots, for the greatest part, are seen naked, entangled among the rocks like the branching of ivy against our walls. That part of this island which stretches to the north is totally uninhabited: the reason is, first, because it is incommodious, and unhealthy: and, secondly, for the ruggedness of the coast, that gives no access to the shore, unless among rocks almost inaccessible: for this cause it is peopled only on the south part, which hath only one port indifferently good: yet this harbour has two entries, or channels, which afford passage to ships of seventy guns; the port itself being without danger, and capable of receiving a great number of vessels. The inhabited parts, of which the first is called the Low-

Lands, or Low-Country: this is the chief among the rest, because it contains the port aforesaid. The town is called Cayona, and here live the chiefest and richest planters of the island. The second part is called the Middle Plantation: its soil is yet almost new, being only known to be good for tobacco. The third is named Ringot, and is situate towards the west part of the island. The fourth and last is called the Mountain, in which place were made the first plantations upon this island.

As to the wood that grows here, we have already said that the trees are exceeding tall, and pleasing to the sight; whence no man will doubt, but they may be applied to several uses. Such is the yellow saunder, which by the inhabitants is called bois de chandel, or, in English, candle-wood, because it burns like a candle, and serves them with light while they fish by night. Here grows, also, *lingnum sanctum*, or *guaiacum*: its virtues are very well known, more especially to those who observe not the Seventh Commandment, and are given to impure copulations! – physicians drawing hence, in several compositions, the greatest antidote for venereal diseases; as also for cold and viscous humours. The trees, likewise, which afford *gummi elemi*, grow here in great abundance; as doth *radix Chinae*, or China root: yet this is not so good as that of other parts of the western world. It is very white and soft, and serves for pleasant food to the wild boars, when they can find nothing else. This island, also, is not deficient in aloes, nor an infinite number of the other medicinal herbs, which may please the curiosity of such as are given to their

contemplation: moreover, for building of ships, or any other sort of architecture, here are found several sorts of timber. The fruits, likewise, which grow here abundantly, are nothing inferior, in quantity or quality, to what other islands produce. I shall name only some of the most ordinary and common: such are magnoit, potatoes, Abajou apples, yannas, bacones, paquays, carosoles, mamayns, annananes, and divers other sorts, which I omit to specify. Here grow likewise, in great numbers, those trees called palmitoes, or palmites, whence is drawn a certain juice which serves the inhabitants instead of wine, and whose leaves cover their houses instead of tiles.

In this island aboundeth, also, the wild boar. The governor hath prohibited the hunting of them with dogs, fearing lest, the island being but small, the whole race of them, in a short time, should be destroyed. The reason why he thought convenient to preserve these wild beasts was, that, in case of any invasion, the inhabitants might sustain themselves with their food, especially were they once constrained to retire to the woods and mountains. Yet this sort of game is almost impeded by itself, by reason of the many rocks and precipices, which, for the greatest part, are covered with little shrubs, very green and thick; whence the huntsmen have oftentimes fallen, and left us the sad remembrance of many a memorable disaster.

At a certain time of the year there resort to Tortuga large flocks of wild pigeons, and then the inhabitants feed on them very plentifully, having more than they can consume, and leaving

totally to their repose all other sorts of fowl, both wild and tame; that so, in the absence of the pigeons, these may supply their place. But as nothing in the universe, though never so pleasant, can be found, but what hath something of bitterness with it; the very symbol of this truth we see in the aforesaid pigeons: for these, the season being past, can scarce be touched with the tongue, they become so extremely lean, and bitter even to admiration. The reason of this bitterness is attributed to a certain seed which they eat about that time, even as bitter as gall. About the sea-shores, everywhere, are found great multitudes of crabs, both of land and sea, and both sorts very big. These are good to feed servants and slaves, whose palates they please, but are very hurtful to the sight: besides, being eaten too often, they cause great giddiness in the head, with much weakness of the brain; so that, very frequently, they are deprived of sight for a quarter of an hour.

The French having settled in the isle of St. Christopher, planted there a sort of trees, of which, at present, there possibly may be greater quantities; with the timber whereof they made long-boats, and hoys, which they sent thence westward, well manned and victualled, to discover other islands. These setting sail from St. Christopher, came within sight of Hispaniola, where they arrived with abundance of joy. Having landed, they marched into the country, where they found large quantities of cattle; such as cows, bulls, horses, and wild boars: but finding no great profit in these animals, unless they could enclose them, and knowing,

likewise, the island to be pretty well peopled by the Spaniards, they thought it convenient to enter upon and seize the island of Tortuga. This they performed without any difficulty, there being upon the island no more than ten or twelve Spaniards to guard it. These few men let the French come in peaceably, and possess the island for six months, without any trouble; meanwhile they passed and repassed, with their canoes, to Hispaniola, from whence they transported many people, and at last began to plant the whole island of Tortuga. The few Spaniards remaining there, perceiving the French to increase their number daily, began, at last, to repine at their prosperity, and grudge them the possession: hence they gave notice to others of their nation, their neighbours, who sent several boats, well armed and manned, to dispossess the French. This expedition succeeded according to their desires; for the new possessors, seeing the great number of Spaniards, fled with all they had to the woods, and hence, by night, they wafted over with canoes to the island of Hispaniola: this they the more easily performed, having no women or children with them, nor any great substance to carry away. Here they also retired into the woods, both to seek for food, and from thence, with secrecy, to give intelligence to others of their own faction; judging for certain, that within a little while they should be in a capacity to hinder the Spaniards from fortifying in Tortuga.

Meanwhile, the Spaniards of the great island ceased not to seek after their new guests, the French, with intent to root them out of the woods if possible, or cause them to perish with hunger;

but this design soon failed, having found that the French were masters both of good guns, powder, and bullets. Here therefore the fugitives waited for a certain opportunity, wherein they knew the Spaniards were to come from Tortuga with arms, and a great number of men, to join with those of the greater island for their destruction. When this occasion offered, they in the meanwhile deserting the woods where they were, returned to Tortuga, and dispossessed the small number of Spaniards that remained at home. Having so done, they fortified themselves the best they could, thereby to prevent the return of the Spaniards in case they should attempt it. Moreover, they sent immediately to the governor of St. Christopher's, craving his aid and relief, and demanding of him a governor, the better to be united among themselves, and strengthened on all occasions. The governor of St. Christopher's received their petition with much satisfaction, and, without delay, sent Monsieur le Passeur to them in quality of a governor, together with a ship full of men, and all necessaries for their establishment and defence. No sooner had they received this recruit, but the governor commanded a fortress to be built upon the top of a high rock, from whence he could hinder the entrance of any ships or other vessels to the port. To this fort no other access could be had, than by almost climbing through a very narrow passage that was capable only of receiving two persons at once, and those not without difficulty. In the middle of this rock was a great cavity, which now serves for a storehouse: besides, here was great convenience for raising a battery. The fort being

finished, the governor commanded two guns to be mounted, which could not be done without great toil and labour; as also a house to be built within the fort, and afterwards the narrow way, that led to the said fort, to be broken and demolished, leaving no other ascent thereto than by a ladder. Within the fort gushes out a plentiful fountain of pure fresh water, sufficient to refresh a garrison of a thousand men. Being possessed of these conveniences, and the security these things might promise, the French began to people the island, and each of them to seek their living; some by hunting, others by planting tobacco, and others by cruising and robbing upon the coasts of the Spanish islands, which trade is continued by them to this day.

The Spaniards, notwithstanding, could not behold, but with jealous eyes, the daily increase of the French in Tortuga, fearing lest, in time, they might by them be dispossessed also of Hispaniola. Thus taking an opportunity (when many of the French were abroad at sea, and others employed in hunting), with eight hundred men, in several canoes, they landed again in Tortuga, almost without being perceived by the French; but finding that the governor had cut down many trees for the better discovery of any enemy in case of an assault, as also that nothing of consequence could be done without great guns, they consulted about the fittest place for raising a battery. This place was soon concluded to be the top of a mountain which was in sight, seeing that from thence alone they could level their guns at the fort, which now lay open to them since the cutting down of the

trees by the new possessors. Hence they resolved to open a way for the carriage of some pieces of ordnance to the top. This mountain is somewhat high, and the upper part thereof plain, from whence the whole island may be viewed: the sides thereof are very rugged, by reason a great number of inaccessible rocks do surround it; so that the ascent was very difficult, and would always have been the same, had not the Spaniards undergone the immense labour and toil of making the way before mentioned, as I shall now relate.

The Spaniards had with them many slaves and Indians, labouring men, whom they call matades, or, in English, half-yellow men; these they ordered with iron tools to dig a way through the rocks. This they performed with the greatest speed imaginable; and through this way, by the help of many ropes and pulleys, they at last made shift to get up two pieces of ordnance, wherewith they made a battery next day, to play on the fort. Meanwhile, the French knowing these designs, prepared for a defence (while the Spaniards were busy about the battery) sending notice everywhere to their companions for help. Thus the hunters of the island all joined together, and with them all the pirates who were not already too far from home. These landed by night at Tortuga, lest they should be seen by the Spaniards; and, under the same obscurity of the night, they all together, by a back way, climbed the mountain where the Spaniards were posted, which they did the more easily being acquainted with these rocks. They came up at the very instant that the Spaniards,

who were above, were preparing to shoot at the fort, not knowing in the least of their coming. Here they set upon them at their backs with such fury as forced the greatest part to precipitate themselves from the top to the bottom, and dash their bodies in pieces: few or none escaped; for if any remained alive, they were put to the sword. Some Spaniards did still keep the bottom of the mountain; but these, hearing the shrieks and cries of them that were killed, and believing some tragical revolution to be above, fled immediately towards the sea, despairing ever to regain the island of Tortuga.

The governors of this island behaved themselves as proprietors and absolute lords thereof till 1664, when the West-India company of France took possession thereof, and sent thither, for their governor, Monsieur Ogeron. These planted the colony for themselves by their factors and servants, thinking to drive some considerable trade from thence with the Spaniards, even as the Hollanders do from Curacao: but this design did not answer; for with other nations they could drive no trade, by reason they could not establish any secure commerce from the beginning with their own; forasmuch as at the first institution of this company in France they agreed with the pirates, hunters, and planters, first possessors of Tortuga, that these should buy all their necessaries from the said company upon trust. And though this agreement was put in execution, yet the factors of the company soon after found that they could not recover either monies or returns from those people, that they were constrained to bring some armed

men into the island, in behalf of the company, to get in some of their payments. But neither this endeavour, nor any other, could prevail towards the settling a second trade with those of the island. Hereupon, the company recalled their factors, giving them orders to sell all that was their own in the said plantation, both the servants belonging to the company (which were sold, some for twenty, and others for thirty pieces of eight), as also all other merchandizes and proprieties. And thus all their designs fell to the ground.

On this occasion I was also sold, being a servant under the said company in whose service I left France: but my fortune was very bad, for I fell into the hands of the most cruel and perfidious man that ever was born, who was then governor, or rather lieutenant-general, of that island. This man treated me with all the hard usage imaginable, yea, with that of hunger, with which I thought I should have perished inevitably. Withal, he was willing to let me buy my freedom and liberty, but not under the rate of three hundred pieces of eight, I not being master of one at a time in the world. At last, through the manifold miseries I endured, as also affliction of mind, I was thrown into a dangerous sickness. This misfortune, added to the rest, was the cause of my happiness: for my wicked master, seeing my condition, began to fear lest he should lose his monies with my life. Hereupon he sold me a second time to a surgeon, for seventy pieces of eight. Being with this second master, I began soon to recover my health through the good usage I received, he being much more humane and civil

than my first patron. He gave me both clothes and very good food; and after I had served him but one year, he offered me my liberty, with only this condition, that I should pay him one hundred pieces of eight when I was in a capacity so to do; which kind proposal of his I could not but accept with infinite joy and gratitude.

Being now at liberty, though like Adam when he was first created – that is, naked and destitute of all human necessaries – not knowing how to get my living, I determined to enter into the order of the pirates or robbers at sea. Into this society I was received with common consent, both of the superior and vulgar sort, where I continued till 1672. Having assisted them in all their designs and attempts, and served them in many notable exploits (of which hereafter I shall give the reader a true account), I returned to my own native country. But before I begin my relation, I shall say something of the island Hispaniola, which lies towards the western part of America; as also give my reader a brief description thereof, according to my slender ability and experience.

## CHAPTER III

A Description of Hispaniola. – Also a Relation of the French Buccaneers.

THE large and rich island called Hispaniola is situate from 17 degrees to 19 degrees latitude; the circumference is 300 leagues; the extent from east to west 120; its breadth almost 50, being broader or narrower at certain places. This island was first discovered by Christopher Columbus, a. d. 1492; he being sent for this purpose by Ferdinand, king of Spain; from which time to this present the Spaniards have been continually possessors thereof. There are upon this island very good and strong cities, towns, and hamlets, as well as a great number of pleasant country houses and plantations, the effects of the care and industry of the Spaniards its inhabitants.

The chief city and metropolis hereof is Santo Domingo; being dedicated to St. Dominic, from whom it derives its name. It is situate towards the south, and affords a most excellent prospect; the country round about being embellished with innumerable rich plantations, as also verdant meadows and fruitful gardens; all which produce plenty and variety of excellent pleasant fruits, according to the nature of those countries. The governor of the island resides in this city, which is, as it were, the storehouse of all the cities, towns, and villages, which hence export and provide themselves with all necessaries for human life; and yet

hath it this particularity above many other cities, that it entertains no commerce with any nation but its own, the Spaniards. The greatest part of the inhabitants are rich and substantial merchants or shopkeepers.

Another city of this island is San Jago, or St. James, being consecrated to that apostle. This is an open place, without walls or castle, situate in 19 deg. latitude. The inhabitants are generally hunters and planters, the adjacent territory and soil being very proper for the said exercises: the city is surrounded with large and delicious fields, as much pleasing to the view as those of Santo Domingo; and these abound with beasts both wild and tame, yielding vast numbers of skins and hides, very profitable to the owners.

In the south part of this island is another city, called Nuestra Sennora de Alta Gracia. This territory produces great quantities of cacao, whereof the inhabitants make great store of the richest chocolate. Here grows also ginger and tobacco, and much tallow is made of the beasts which are hereabouts hunted.

The inhabitants of this beautiful island of Hispaniola often resort in their canoes to the isle of Savona, not far distant, where is their chief fishery, especially of tortoises. Hither those fish constantly resort in great multitudes, at certain seasons, there to lay their eggs, burying them in the sands of the shoal, where, by the heat of the sun, which in those parts is very ardent, they are hatched. This island of Savona has little or nothing that is worthy consideration, being so very barren by reason of its sandy

soil. True it is, that here grows some small quantity of lignum sanctum, or guaiacum, of whose use we say something in another place.

Westward of Santo Domingo is another great village called El Pueblo de Aso, or the town of Aso: the inhabitants thereof drive great traffic with those of another village, in the very middle of the island, and is called San Juan de Goave, or St. John of Goave. This is environed with a magnificent prospect of gardens, woods, and meadows. Its territory extends above twenty leagues in length, and grazes a great number of wild bulls and cows. In this village scarce dwell any others than hunters and butchers, who flay the beasts that are killed. These are for the most part a mongrel sort of people; some of which are born of white European people and negroes, and called mulattoes: others of Indians and white people, and termed mesticos: but others come of negroes and Indians, and are called alcatraces. From the said village are exported yearly vast quantities of tallow and hides, they exercising no other traffic: for as to the lands in this place, they are not cultivated, by reason of the excessive dryness of the soil. These are the chiefest places that the Spaniards possess in this island, from the Cape of Lobos towards St. John de Goave, unto the Cape of Samana nigh the sea, on the north side, and from the eastern part towards the sea, called Punta de Espada. All the rest of the island is possessed by the French, who are also planters and hunters.

This island hath very good ports for ships, from the Cape of

Lobos to the Cape of Tiburon, on the west side thereof. In this space there are no less than four ports, exceeding in goodness, largeness, and security, even the very best of England. Besides these, from the Cape of Tiburon to the Cape of Donna Maria, there are two very excellent ports; and from this cape to the Cape of St. Nicholas, there are no less than twelve others. Every one of these ports hath also the confluence of two or three good rivers, in which are great plenty of several sorts of fish very pleasing to the palate. The country hereabouts is well watered with large and deep rivers and brooks, so that this part of the land may easily be cultivated without any great fear of droughts, because of these excellent streams. The sea-coasts and shores are also very pleasant, to which the tortoises resort in large numbers to lay their eggs.

This island was formerly very well peopled, on the north side, with many towns and villages; but these, being ruined by the Hollanders, were at last, for the greatest part, deserted by the Spaniards.

The spacious fields of this island commonly are five or six leagues in length, the beauty whereof is so pleasing to the eye, that, together with the great variety of their natural productions, they captivate the senses of the beholder. For here at once they not only with diversity of objects recreate the sight, but with many of the same do also please the smell, and with most contribute delights to the taste; also they flatter and excite the appetite, especially with the multitudes of oranges and lemons

here growing, both sweet and sour, and those that participate of both tastes, and are only pleasantly tartish. Besides here abundantly grow several sorts of fruit, such are citrons, toronjas, and limas; in English not improperly called crab lemons.

Beside the fruit which this island produces, whose plenty, as is said, surpasses all the islands of America; it abounds also with all sorts of quadrupeds, as horses, bulls, cows, wild boars, and others, very useful to mankind, not only for food, but for cultivating the ground, and the management of commerce.

Here are vast numbers of wild dogs: these destroy yearly many cattle; for no sooner hath a cow calved, or a mare foaled, but these wild mastiffs devour the young, if they find not resistance from keepers and domestic dogs. They run up and down the woods and fields, commonly fifty, threescore, or more, together; being withal so fierce, that they will often assault an entire herd of wild boars, not ceasing to worry them till they have fetched down two or three. One day a French buccaneer showed me a strange action of this kind: being in the fields a-hunting together, we heard a great noise of dogs which has surrounded a wild boar: having tame dogs with us, we left them to the custody of our servants, being desirous to see the sport. Hence my companion and I climbed up two several trees, both for security and prospect. The wild boar, all alone, stood against a tree, defending himself with his tusks from a great number of dogs that enclosed him; killed with his teeth, and wounded several of them. This bloody fight continued about an hour; the

wild boar, meanwhile, attempting many times to escape. At last flying, one dog, leaping upon his back, fastened on his throat. The rest of the dogs, perceiving the courage of their companion, fastened likewise on the boar, and presently killed him. This done, all of them, the first only excepted, laid themselves down upon the ground about the prey, and there peaceably continued, till he, the first and most courageous of the troop, had ate as much as he could: when this dog had left off, all the rest fell in to take their share, till nothing was left. What ought we to infer from this notable action, performed by wild animals, but this: that even beasts themselves are not destitute of knowledge, and that they give us documents how to honour such as have deserved well; even since these irrational animals did reverence and respect him that exposed his life to the greatest danger against the common enemy?

The governor of Tortuga, Monsieur Ogeron, finding that the wild dogs killed so many of the wild boars, that the hunters of that island had much ado to find any; fearing lest that common substance of the island should fail, sent for a great quantity of poison from France to destroy the wild mastiffs: this was done, a. d. 1668, by commanding horses to be killed, and empoisoned, and laid open at certain places where the wild dogs used to resort. This being continued for six months, there were killed an incredible number; and yet all this could not exterminate and destroy the race, or scarce diminish them; their number appearing almost as large as before. These wild dogs are easily

tamed among men, even as tame as ordinary house dogs. The hunters of those parts, whenever they find a wild bitch with whelps, commonly take away the puppies, and bring them home; which being grown up, they hunt much better than other dogs.

But here the curious reader may perhaps inquire how so many wild dogs came here. The occasion was, the Spaniards having possessed these isles, found them peopled with Indians, a barbarous people, sensual and brutish, hating all labour, and only inclined to killing, and making war against their neighbours; not out of ambition, but only because they agreed not with themselves in some common terms of language; and perceiving the dominion of the Spaniards laid great restrictions upon their lazy and brutish customs, they conceived an irreconcilable hatred against them; but especially because they saw them take possession of their kingdoms and dominions. Hereupon, they made against them all the resistance they could, opposing everywhere their designs to the utmost: and the Spaniards finding themselves cruelly hated by the Indians, and nowhere secure from their treacheries, resolved to extirpate and ruin them, since they could neither tame them by civility, nor conquer them with the sword. But the Indians, it being their custom to make the woods their chief places of defence, at present made these their refuge, whenever they fled from the Spaniards. Hereupon, those first conquerors of the New World made use of dogs to range and search the intricate thicket of woods and forests for those their implacable and unconquerable enemies: thus they forced

them to leave their old refuge, and submit to the sword, seeing no milder usage would do it; hereupon they killed some of them, and quartering their bodies, placed them in the highways, that others might take warning from such a punishment; but this severity proved of ill consequence, for instead of fighting them and reducing them to civility, they conceived such horror of the Spaniards, that they resolved to detest and fly their sight for ever; hence the greatest part died in caves and subterraneous places of the woods and mountains, in which places I myself have often seen great numbers of human bones. The Spaniards finding no more Indians to appear about the woods, turned away a great number of dogs they had in their houses, and they finding no masters to keep them, betook themselves to the woods and fields to hunt for food to preserve their lives; thus by degrees they became unacquainted with houses, and grew wild. This is the truest account I can give of the multitudes of wild dogs in these parts.

But besides these wild mastiffs, here are also great numbers of wild horses everywhere all over the island: they are but low of stature, short bodied, with great heads, long necks, and big or thick legs: in a word, they have nothing handsome in their shape. They run up and down commonly in troops of two or three hundred together, one going always before to lead the multitude: when they meet any person travelling through the woods or fields, they stand still, suffering him to approach till he can almost touch them: and then suddenly starting, they betake themselves

to flight, running away as fast as they can. The hunters catch them only for their skins, though sometimes they preserve their flesh likewise, which they harden with smoke, using it for provisions when they go to sea.

Here would be also wild bulls and cows in great number, if by continual hunting they were not much diminished; yet considerable profit is made to this day by such as make it their business to kill them. The wild bulls are of a vast bigness of body, and yet they hurt not any one except they be exasperated. Their hides are from eleven to thirteen feet long.

It is now time to speak of the French who inhabit great part of this island. We have already told how they came first into these parts: we shall now only describe their manner of living, customs, and ordinary employments. The callings or professions they follow are generally but three, either to hunt or plant, or else to rove the seas as pirates. It is a constant custom among them all, to seek out a comrade or companion, whom we may call partner in their fortunes, with whom they join the whole stock of what they possess towards a common gain. This is done by articles agreed to, and reciprocally signed. Some constitute their surviving companion absolute heir to what is left by the death of the first: others, if they be married, leave their estates to their wives and children; others, to other relations. This done, every one applies himself to his calling, which is always one of the three afore-mentioned.

The hunters are again subdivided into two sorts; for some

of these only hunt wild bulls and cows, others only wild boars. The first of these are called bucaniers, and not long ago were about six hundred on this island, but now they are reckoned about three hundred. The cause has been the great decrease of wild cattle, which has been such, that, far from getting, they now are but poor in their trade. When the bucaniers go into the woods to hunt for wild bulls and cows, they commonly remain there a twelvemonth or two years, without returning home. After the hunt is over, and the spoil divided, they commonly sail to Tortuga, to provide themselves with guns, powder, and shot, and other necessaries for another expedition; the rest of their gains they spend prodigally, giving themselves to all manner of vices and debauchery, particularly to drunkenness, which they practise mostly with brandy: this they drink as liberally as the Spaniards do water. Sometimes they buy together a pipe of wine; this they stave at one end, and never cease drinking till it is out. Thus sottishly they live till they have no money left. The said bucaniers are very cruel and tyrannical to their servants, so that commonly they had rather be galley-slaves, or saw Brazil wood in the rasphouses of Holland, than serve such barbarous masters.

The second sort hunt nothing but wild boars; the flesh of these they salt, and sell it so to the planters. These hunters have the same vicious customs, and are as much addicted to debauchery as the former; but their manner of hunting is different from that in Europe; for these bucaniers have certain places designed for hunting, where they live for three or four months, and sometimes

a whole year. Such places are called *deza boulan*; and in these, with only the company of five or six friends, they continue all the said time in mutual friendship. The first *bucaniers* many times agree with planters to furnish them with meat all the year at a certain price: the payment hereof is often made with two or three hundredweight of tobacco in the leaf; but the planters commonly into the bargain furnish them with a servant, whom they send to help. To the servant they afford sufficient necessaries for the purpose, especially of powder and shot to hunt withal.

The planters here have but very few slaves; for want of which, themselves and their servants are constrained to do all the drudgery. These servants commonly bind themselves to their masters for three years; but their masters, having no consciences, often traffic with their bodies, as with horses at a fair, selling them to other masters as they sell negroes. Yea, to advance this trade, some persons go purposely into France (and likewise to England, and other countries) to pick up young men or boys, whom they inveigle and transport; and having once got them into these islands, they work them like horses, the toil imposed on them being much harder than what they enjoin the negroes, their slaves; for these they endeavour to preserve, being their perpetual bondmen: but for their white servants, they care not whether they live or die, seeing they are to serve them no longer than three years. These miserable kidnapped people are frequently subject to a disease, which in these parts is called *coma*, being a total privation of their senses. This distemper is judged to proceed

from their hard usage, and the change of their native climate; and there being often among these some of good quality, tender education, and soft constitutions, they are more easily seized with this disease, and others of those countries, than those of harder bodies, and laborious lives. Beside the hard usage in their diet, apparel, and rest, many times they beat them so cruelly, that they fall down dead under the hands of their cruel masters. This I have often seen with great grief. Of the many instances, I shall only give you the following history, it being remarkable in its circumstances.

A certain planter of these countries exercised such cruelty towards one of his servants, as caused him to run away. Having absconded, for some days, in the woods, at last he was taken, and brought back to the wicked Pharaoh. No sooner had he got him, but he commanded him to be tied to a tree; here he gave him so many lashes on his naked back, as made his body run with an entire stream of blood; then, to make the smart of his wounds the greater, he anointed him with lemon-juice, mixed with salt and pepper. In this miserable posture he left him tied to the tree for twenty-four hours, which being past, he began his punishment again, lashing him, as before, so cruelly, that the miserable wretch gave up the ghost, with these dying words: "I beseech the Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth, that he permit the wicked spirit to make thee feel as many torments before thy death, as thou hast caused me to feel before mine." A strange thing, and worthy of astonishment and admiration!

Scarce three or four days were past, after this horrible fact, when the Almighty Judge, who had heard the cries of the tormented wretch, suffered the evil one suddenly to possess this barbarous and inhuman homicide, so that those cruel hands which had punished to death his innocent servant, were the tormentors of his own body: for he beat himself and tore his flesh, after a miserable manner, till he lost the very shape of a man; not ceasing to howl and cry, without any rest by day or night. Thus he continued raving mad, till he died. Many other examples of this kind I could rehearse; but these not belonging to our present discourse, I omit them.

The planters of the Caribbee islands are rather worse, and more cruel to their servants, than the former. In the isle of St. Christopher dwells one named Bettesa, well known to the Dutch merchants, who has killed above a hundred of his servants with blows and stripes. The English do the same with their servants; and the mildest cruelty they exercise towards them is, that when they have served six years of their time (they being bound among the English for seven) they use them so cruelly, as to force them to beg of their masters to sell them to others, though it be to begin another servitude of seven years, or at least three or four. And I have known many, who have thus served fifteen or twenty years, before they could obtain their freedom. Another law, very rigorous in that nation, is, if any man owes another above twenty-five shillings English, if he cannot pay it, he is liable to be sold for six or eight months. Not to trouble the reader any longer with

relations of this kind, I shall now describe the famous actions and exploits of the greatest pirates of my time, during my residence in those parts: these I shall relate without the least passion or partiality, and assure my reader that I shall give him no stories upon trust, or hearsay, but only those enterprises to which I was myself an eye-witness.

# CHAPTER IV

Original of the most famous pirates of the coasts of America – Famous exploit of Pierre le Grand.

I HAVE told you in the preceding chapters how I was compelled to adventure my life among the pirates of America; which sort of men I name so, because they are not authorized by any sovereign prince: for the kings of Spain having on several occasions sent their ambassadors to the kings of England and France, to complain of the molestations and troubles those pirates often caused on the coasts of America, even in the calm of peace; it hath always been answered, "that such men did not commit those acts of hostility and piracy as subjects to their majesties; and therefore his Catholic Majesty might proceed against them as he should think fit." The king of France added, "that he had no fortress nor castle upon Hispaniola, neither did he receive a farthing of tribute from thence." And the king of England adjoined, "that he had never given any commissions to those of Jamaica, to commit hostilities against the subjects of his Catholic Majesty." Nor did he only give this bare answer, but out of his royal desire to please the court of Spain, recalled the governor of Jamaica, placing another in his room; all which could not prevent these pirates from acting as heretofore. But before I relate their bold actions, I shall say something of their rise and exercises; as also of the chiefest of them, and their manner of

arming themselves before they put to sea.

The first pirate that was known upon Tortuga was Pierre le Grand, or Peter the Great. He was born at Dieppe in Normandy. That action which rendered him famous was his taking the vice-admiral of the Spanish flota, near the Cape of Tiburon, on the west side of Hispaniola; this he performed with only one boat, and twenty-eight men. Now till that time the Spaniards had passed and repassed with all security, through the channel of Bahama; so that Pierre le Grand setting out to sea by the Caycos, he took this great ship with all the ease imaginable. The Spaniards they found aboard they set ashore, and sent the vessel to France. The manner how this undaunted spirit attempted and took this large ship I shall give you, out of the journal of the author, in his own words. "The boat," says he, "wherein Pierre le Grand was with his companions, had been at sea a long time without finding any prize worth his taking; and their provisions beginning to fail, they were in danger of starving. Being almost reduced to despair, they spied a great ship of the Spanish flota, separated from the rest; this vessel they resolved to take, or die in the attempt. Hereupon, they sailed towards her, to view her strength. And though they judged the vessel to be superior to theirs, yet their covetousness, and the extremity they were reduced to, made them venture. Being come so near that they could not possibly escape, they made an oath to their captain, Pierre le Grand, to stand by him to the last. 'Tis true, the pirates did believe they should find the ship unprovided to fight, and

thereby the sooner master her. It was in the dusk of the evening they began to attack; but before they engaged, they ordered the surgeon of the boat to bore a hole in the sides of it, that their own vessel sinking under them, they might be compelled to attack more vigorously, and endeavour more hastily to board the ship. This was done accordingly, and without any other arms than a pistol in one hand and a sword in the other, they immediately climbed up the sides of the ship, and ran altogether into the great cabin, where they found the captain, with several of his companions, playing at cards. Here they set a pistol to his breast, commanding him to deliver up the ship. The Spaniards, surprised to see the pirates on board their ship, cried 'Jesus bless us! are these devils, or what are they?' Meanwhile some of them took possession of the gun-room, and seized the arms, killing as many as made any opposition; whereupon the Spaniards presently surrendered. That very day the captain of the ship had been told by some of the seamen that the boat which was in view, cruising, was a boat of pirates; whom the captain slightly answered, 'What then, must I be afraid of such a pitiful thing as that is? No, though she were a ship as big and as strong as mine is.' As soon as Pierre le Grand had taken this rich prize, he detained in his service as many of the common seamen as he had need of, setting the rest ashore, and then set sail for France, where he continued, without ever returning to America again."

The planters and hunters of Tortuga had no sooner heard of the rich prize those pirates had taken, but they resolved

to follow their example. Hereupon, many of them left their employments, and endeavoured to get some small boats, wherein to exercise piracy; but not being able to purchase, or build them at Tortuga, they resolved to set forth in their canoes, and seek them elsewhere. With these they cruised at first upon Cape de Alvarez, where the Spaniards used to trade from one city to another in small vessels, in which they carry hides, tobacco, and other commodities, to the Havannah, and to which the Spaniards from Europe do frequently resort.

Here it was that those pirates at first took a great many boats laden with the aforesaid commodities; these they used to carry to Tortuga, and sell the whole purchase to the ships that waited for their return, or accidentally happened to be there. With the gains of these prizes they provided themselves with necessaries, wherewith to undertake other voyages, some of which were made to Campechy, and others toward New Spain; in both which the Spaniards then drove a great trade. Upon those coasts they found great numbers of trading vessels, and often ships of great burden. Two of the biggest of these vessels, and two great ships which the Spaniards had laden with plate in the port of Campechy, to go to the Caraccas, they took in less than a month's time, and carried to Tortuga; where the people of the whole island, encouraged by their success, especially seeing in two years the riches of the country so much increased, they augmented the number of pirates so fast, that in a little time there were, in that small island and port, above twenty ships of this sort of people. Hereupon the

Spaniards, not able to bear their robberies any longer, equipped two large men-of-war, both for the defence of their own coasts, and to cruise upon the enemies.

## CHAPTER V

How the pirates arm their vessels, and regulate their voyages.

BEFORE the pirates go to sea, they give notice to all concerned, of the day on which they are to embark; obliging each man to bring so many pounds of powder and ball as they think necessary. Being all come aboard, they consider where to get provisions, especially flesh, seeing they scarce eat anything else; and of this the most common sort is pork; the next food is tortoises, which they salt a little: sometimes they rob such or such hog-yards, where the Spaniards often have a thousand head of swine together. They come to these places in the night, and having beset the keeper's lodge, they force him to rise, and give them as many heads as they desire, threatening to kill him if he refuses, or makes any noise; and these menaces are oftentimes executed on the miserable swine-keepers, or any other person that endeavours to hinder their robberies.

Having got flesh sufficient for their voyage, they return to their ship: here they allow, twice a day, every one as much as he can eat, without weight or measure; nor does the steward of the vessel give any more flesh, or anything else, to the captain, than to the meanest mariner. The ship being well victualled, they deliberate whither they shall go to seek their desperate fortunes, and likewise agree upon certain articles, which are put in writing,

which every one is bound to observe; and all of them, or the chiefest part, do set their hands to it. Here they set down distinctly what sums of money each particular person ought to have for that voyage, the fund of all the payments being what is gotten by the whole expedition; for otherwise it is the same law among these people as with other pirates. No prey, no pay. First, therefore, they mention how much the captain is to have for his ship; next, the salary of the carpenter, or shipwright, who careened, mended, and rigged the vessel: this commonly amounts to one hundred or one hundred and fifty pieces of eight, according to the agreement. Afterwards, for provisions and victualling, they draw out of the same common stock about two hundred pieces of eight; also a salary for the surgeon, and his chest of medicaments, which usually is rated at two hundred or two hundred and fifty pieces of eight. Lastly, they agree what rate each one ought to have that is either wounded or maimed in his body, suffering the loss of any limb; as, for the loss of a right arm, six hundred pieces of eight, or six slaves; for the left arm, five hundred pieces of eight, or five slaves; for a right leg, five hundred pieces of eight, or five slaves; for the left leg, four hundred pieces of eight, or four slaves; for an eye, one hundred pieces of eight, or one slave; for a finger, the same as for an eye. All which sums are taken out of the common stock of what is gotten by their piracy, and a very exact and equal dividend is made of the remainder. They have also regard to qualities and places: thus the captain, or chief, is allotted five or six portions, to what the ordinary seamen have:

the master's mate only two, and other officers proportionately to their employ: after which, they draw equal parts from the highest to the lowest mariner, the boys not being omitted, who draw half a share; because when they take a better vessel than their own, it is in the boys' duty to fire their former vessel, and then retire to the prize.

They observe among themselves very good orders; for in the prizes which they take, it is severely prohibited, to every one, to take anything to themselves: hence all they take is equally divided, as hath been said before: yea, they take a solemn oath to each other, not to conceal the least thing they find among the prizes; and if any one is found false to the said oath, he is immediately turned out of the society. They are very civil and charitable to each other; so that if any one wants what another has, with great willingness they give it one to another. As soon as these pirates have taken a prize, they immediately set ashore the prisoners, detaining only some few, for their own help and service: whom, also, they release, after two or three years. They refresh themselves at one island or another, but especially at those on the south of Cuba; here they careen their vessels, while some hunt, and others cruise in canoes for prizes.

The inhabitants of New Spain and Campechy lade their best merchandize in ships of great bulk: the vessels from Campechy sail in the winter to Caraccas, Trinity isles, and that of Margarita, and return back again in the summer. The pirates knowing these seasons (being very diligent in their inquiries) always cruise

between the places above-mentioned; but in case they light on no considerable booty, they commonly undertake some more hazardous enterprises: one remarkable instance of which I shall here give you.

A certain pirate called Pierre François, or Peter Francis, waiting a long time at sea with his boat and twenty-six men, for the ships that were to return from Maracaibo to Campechy, and not being able to find any prey, at last he resolved to direct his course to Rancheiras, near the River de la Plata, in 12 deg. and a half north latitude. Here lies a rich bank of pearl, to the fishery whereof they yearly sent from Carthagena twelve vessels with a man-of-war for their defence. Every vessel has at least two negroes in it, who are very dextrous in diving to the depth of six fathoms, where they find good store of pearls. On this fleet, called the pearl-fleet, Pierre François resolved to venture, rather than go home empty; they then rid at anchor at the mouth of the River de la Hacha, the man-of-war scarce half a league distant from the small ships, and the wind very calm. Having spied them in this posture, he presently pulled down his sails, and rowed along the coast feigning to be a Spanish vessel coming from Maracaibo; but no sooner was he come to the pearl-bank, when suddenly he assaulted the vice-admiral of eight guns and sixty men, commanding them to surrender. The Spaniards made a good defence for some time, but at last were forced to submit.

Having thus taken the vice-admiral, he resolved to attempt the man-of-war, with which addition he hoped to master the rest of

the fleet: to this end he presently sunk his own boat, putting forth the Spanish colours, and weighed anchor with a little wind which then began to stir, having with threats and promises compelled most of the Spaniards to assist him: but so soon as the man-of-war perceived one of his fleet to sail, he did so too, fearing lest the mariners designed to run away with the riches they had on board. The pirate on this immediately gave over the enterprise, thinking themselves unable to encounter force to force: hereupon they endeavoured to get out of the river and gain the open seas, by making as much sail as they could; which the man-of-war perceiving, he presently gave them chase, but the pirates having laid on too much sail, and a gust of wind suddenly rising, their main-mast was brought by the board, which disabled them from escaping.

This unhappy event much encouraged those in the man-of-war, they gaining upon the pirates every moment, and at last overtook them; but finding they had twenty-two sound men, the rest being either killed or wounded, resolved to defend themselves as long as possible; this they performed very courageously for some time, till they were forced by the man-of-war, on condition that they should not be used as slaves to carry stones, or be employed in other labours for three or four years, as they served their negroes, but that they should be set safe ashore on free land. On these articles they yielded with all they had taken, which was worth, in pearls alone, above 100,000 pieces of eight, besides the vessel, provisions, goods, &c. All of

which would have made this a greater prize than he could desire, which he had certainly carried off, if his main-mast had not been lost, as we said before.

Another bold attempt like this, no less remarkable, I shall also give you. A certain pirate of Portugal, thence called Bartholomew Portugues, was cruising in a boat of thirty men and four small guns from Jamaica, upon the Cape de Corriente in Cuba, where he met a great ship from Maracaibo and Carthagea, bound for the Havannah, well provided with twenty great guns and seventy men, passengers and mariners; this ship he presently assaulted, which they on board as resolutely defended. The pirate escaping the first encounter, resolved to attack her more vigorously than before, seeing he had yet suffered no great damage: this he performed with so much resolution, that at last, after a long and dangerous fight, he became master of it. The Portuguese lost only ten men, and had four wounded; so that he had still remaining twenty fighting men, whereas the Spaniards had double the number. Having possessed themselves of the ship, the wind being contrary to return to Jamaica, they resolved to steer to Cape St. Anthony (which lies west of Cuba), there to repair and take in fresh water, of which they were then in great want.

Being very near the cape abovesaid, they unexpectedly met with three great ships coming from New Spain, and bound for the Havannah; by these not being able to escape, they were easily retaken, both ship and pirates, and all made prisoners, and

stripped of all the riches they had taken but just before. The cargo consisted in 120,000 weight of cocoa-nuts, the chief ingredient of chocolate, and 70,000 pieces of eight. Two days after this misfortune, there arose a great storm, which separated the ships from one another. The great vessel, where the pirates were, arrived at Campechy, where many considerable merchants came and saluted the captain; these presently knew the Portuguese pirate, being infamous for the many insolencies, robberies and murders he had committed on their coasts, which they kept fresh in their memory.

The next day after their arrival, the magistrates of the city sent to demand the prisoners from on board the ship, in order to punish them according to their deserts; but fearing the captain of the pirates should make his escape (as he had formerly done, being their prisoner once before) they judged it safer to leave him guarded on ship-board for the present, while they erected a gibbet to hang him on the next day, without any other process than to lead him from the ship to his punishment; the rumour of which was presently brought to Bartholomew Portugues, whereby he sought all possible means to escape that night: with this design he took two earthen jars, wherein the Spaniards carry wine from Spain to the West Indies, and stopped them very well, intending to use them for swimming, as those unskilled in that art do corks or empty bladders; having made this necessary preparation, he waited when all should be asleep; but not being able to escape his sentinel's vigilance, he stabbed him with a

knife he had secretly purchased, and then threw himself into the sea with the earthen jars before-mentioned, by the help of which, though he never learned to swim, he reached the shore, and immediately took to the woods, where he hid himself for three days, not daring to appear, eating no other food than wild herbs.

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