

Defoe Daniel

The King of Pirates



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*The King of Pirates / Being an Account of the Famous Enterprises of Captain
Avery, the Mock King of Madagascar:*

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**The King of Pirates / Being
an Account of the Famous
Enterprises of Captain Avery,
the Mock King of Madagascar**

THE PREFACE

ONE of the particular Advantages of the following Letters from Captain Avery, is, the Satisfaction they will give the Readers how much they have been impos'd upon in the former ridiculous and extravagant Accounts which have been put upon the World in what has been publish'd already.

It has been enough to the Writers of this Man's Life, as they call it, that they could put any Thing together, to make a kind of monstrous unheard of Story, as romantick as the Reports that have been spread about of him; and the more those Stories appear'd monstrous and incredible, the more suitable they seem'd to be to what the World would have been made to expect of Captain Avery.

There is always a great Deference between what Men say of

themselves, and what others say for them, when they come to write Historically of the Transactions of their Lives.

The Publisher of these Letters recommends this Performance to the Readers, to make their Judgment of the Difference between them and the extravagant Stories already told, and which is most likely to be genuine; and, as they verily believe these Letters to be the best and truest Account of Captain Avery's Piracies, that ever has or ever will come to the Knowledge of the World, they recommend them as such, and doubt not but they will answer for themselves in the Reading.

The Account given of Captain Avery's taking the Great Mogul's Daughter, ravishing and murdering her, and all the Ladies of her Retinue, is so differently related here, and so extravagantly related before, that it cannot but be a Satisfaction to the most unconcern'd Reader, to find such a horrible Piece of Villainy as the other was suppos'd to be, not to have been committed in the World.

On the contrary, we find here, that except plundering that Princess of her Jewels and Money to a prodigious Value, a Thing which, falling into the Hands of Freebooters, every one that had the Misfortune to fall into such Hands would expect: But, that excepting this, the Lady was used with all the Decency and Humanity, and, perhaps, with more than ever Women, falling among Pirates, had found before; especially considering that, by Report, she was a most beautiful and agreeable Person herself, as were also several of those about her.

The Booty taken with her, tho' infinitely great in itself, yet has

been so magnify'd beyond common Sense, that it makes all the rest that has been said of those Things ridiculous and absurd.

The like Absurdity in the former Relations of this Matter, is that of the making an Offer of I know not how many Millions to the late Queen, for Captain Avery's Pardon, with a Petition to the Queen, and her Majesty's negative Answer; all which are as much true as his being Master of so many Millions of Money, which he nor his Gang never had; and of his being proclaim'd King of Madagascar; marrying the Mogul's Daughter, and the like: And, by the Bye, it was but ill laid together of those who publish'd, that he first ravish'd her, then murder'd her, and then marry'd her; all which are very remarkable for the recommending the Thing to those that read it.

If these Stories are explain'd here, and duly expos'd, and the History of Captain Avery set in a fairer Light, the End is answer'd; and of this the Readers are to be the only Judges: But this may be said, without any Arrogance, that this Story, stripp'd of all the romantick, improbable, and impossible Parts of it, looks more like the History of Captain Avery, than any Thing yet publish'd ever has done; and, if it is not prov'd that the Captain wrote these Letters himself, the Publisher says, None but the Captain himself will ever be able to mend them.

THE King of PIRATES

YOU may be sure I receiv'd with Resentment enough the Account, that a most ridiculous Book, entitled, *My Life and Adventures*, had been publish'd in *England*, being fully assur'd nothing of Truth could be contain'd in such a Work; and tho' it may be true, that my extravagant Story may be the proper Foundation of a Romance, yet as no Man has a Title to publish it better than I have to expose and contradict it, I send you this by one of my particular Friends, who having an Opportunity of returning into *England*, has promis'd to convey it faithfully to you; by which, at least, two Things shall be made good to the World; first, that they shall be satisfy'd in the scandalous and unjust Manner in which others have already treated me, and it shall give, in the mean Time, a larger Account of what may at present be fit to be made publick, of my unhappy tho' successful Adventures.

I shall not trouble my Friends with any Thing of my Original and first Introduction into the World, I leave it to you to add from yourself what you think proper to be known on that Subject; only this I enjoin you to take Notice of, that the Account printed of me, with all the Particulars of my Marriage, my being defrauded, and leaving my Family and native Country on that Account, is a meer Fable and a made Story, to embellish, as the Writer of it perhaps suppos'd, the rest of his Story, or perhaps to fill up

the Book, that it might swell to a Magnitude which his barren Invention could not supply.

In the present Account, I have taken no Notice of my Birth, Infancy, Youth, or any of that Part; which, as it was the most useless Part of my Years to myself so 'tis the most useless to any one that shall read this Work to know, being altogether barren of any Thing remarkable in it self, or instructing to others: It is sufficient to me to let the World know, as above, that the former Accounts, made publick, are utterly false, and to begin my Account of myself at a Period which may be more useful and entertaining.

It may be true, that I may represent some Particulars of my Life, in this Tract, with Reserve, or Enlargement, such as may be sufficient to conceal any Thing in my present Circumstance that ought to be conceal'd and reserv'd, with Respect to my own Safety; and therefore, if on Pretence of Justice the busy World should look for me in one Part of the World when I am in another, search for my new Kingdom in *Madagascar*, and should not find it, or search for my Settlement on one Side of the Island, when it lies on another, they must not take this ill; for Self-preservation being the supreme Law of Nature, all Things of this Kind must submit to that.

In Order then to come immediately to my Story, I shall, without any Circumlocutions, give you Leave to tell the World, that being bred to the Sea from a Youth, none of those romantick Introductions publish'd had any Share in my Adventures, or were

any way the Cause of my taking the Courses I have since been embark'd in: But as in several Parts of my wandering Life I had seen something of the immense Wealth, which the Buccaneers, and other Adventurers, met with in their scouring about the World for Purchase, I had, for a long Time, meditated in my Thoughts to get possess'd of a good Ship for that Purpose, if I could, and to try my Fortune. I had been some Years in the Bay of *Campeachy*, and tho' with Patience I endur'd the Fatigue of that laborious Life, yet it was as visible to others as to myself, that I was not form'd by Nature for a Logwood-Cutter, any more than I was for a Foremast-man; and therefore Night and Day I apply'd myself to study how I should dismiss myself from that Drudgery, and get to be, first or last, Master of a good Ship, which was the utmost of my Ambition at that Time; resolving, in the mean Time, that when ever any such Thing should happen, I would try my Fortune in the Cruising Trade, but would be sure not to prey upon my own Countrymen.

It was many Years after this before I could bring my Purposes to pass; and I serv'd, first, in some of the Adventures of Captain *Sharp*, Captain *Sawkins*, and others, in their bold Adventures in the South Seas, where I got a very good Booty; was at the taking of *Puna*, where we were oblig'd to leave infinite Wealth behind us, for want of being able to bring it away; and after several Adventures in those Seas, was among that Party who fought their Way Sword in Hand thro' all the Detachments of the *Spaniards*, in the Journey over Land, cross the Isthmus of *Darien*, to the

North Seas; and when other of our Men gat away, some one Way, some another, I, with twelve more of our Men, by Help of a *Periagua*, gat into the Bay of *Campeachy*, where we fell very honestly to cutting of Logwood, not for Want, but to employ ourselves till we could make off.

Here three of our Men dy'd, and we that were left, shar'd their Money among us; and having stay'd here two Years, without seeing any Way of Escape that I dar'd to trust to, I at last, with two of our Men, who spoke *Spanish* perfectly well, made a desperate Attempt to travel over Land to L – having bury'd all our Money, (which was worth eight thousand Pieces of Eight a Man, tho' most of it in Gold) in a Pit in the Earth which we dug twelve Foot deep, and where it would have lyen still, for no Man knew where to look for it; but we had an Opportunity to come at it again some Years after.

We travell'd along the Sea-shore five Days together, the Weather exceeding hot, and did not doubt but we should so disguise ourselves as to be taken for *Spaniards*; but our better Fortune provided otherwise for us, for the sixth Day of our March we found a Canoe lying on the Shore with no one in her: We found, however, several Things in her, which told us plainly that she belong'd to some *Englishmen* who were on Shore; so we resolv'd to sit down by her and wait: By and by we heard the *Englishmen*, who were seven in Number, and were coming back to their Boat, having been up the Country to an *Ingenio*, where they had gotten great Quantities of Provision, and were

bringing it down to their Boat which they had left on the Shore, (with the Help of five *Indians*, of whom they had bought it) not thinking there was any People thereabouts: When they saw us, not knowing who we were, they were just going to fire at us; when I, perceiving it, held up a white Flag as high as I could reach it, which was, in short, only a Piece of an old Linnen Wastcoat which I had on, and pull'd it off for the Occasion; upon this, however, they forbore firing at us, and when they came nearer to us, they could easily see that we were their own Countrymen: They enquir'd of us what we came there for; we told them, we had travell'd from *Campeachy*, where being tir'd with the Hardships of our Fortune, and not getting any Vessel to carry us where we durst go, we were even desperate, and cared not what became of us; so that had not they came to us thus happily, we should have put our selves into the Hands of the *Spaniards* rather than have perish'd where we were.

They took us into their Boat, and afterwards carry'd us on Board their Ship; when we came there, we found they were a worse Sort of Wanderers than ourselves, for tho' we had been a Kind of Pyrates, known and declar'd Enemies to the *Spaniards*, yet it was to them only, and to no other; for we never offer'd to rob any of our other *European* Nations, either *Dutch* or *French*, much less *English*; but now we were listed in the Service of the Devil indeed, and, like him, were at War with all Mankind.

However, we not only were oblig'd to sort with them, while with them, but in a little Time the Novelty of the Crime wore

off, and we grew harden'd to it, like the rest: And in this Service I spent four Years more of my Time.

Our Captain in this Pirate Ship was nam'd *Nichols*, but we call'd him Captain *Redhand*; it seems it was a *Scots* Sailor gave him that Name, when he was not the Head of the Crew, because he was so bloody a Wretch, that he scarce ever was at the taking any Prize, but he had a Hand in some Butchery or other.

They were hard put to it for fresh Provisions, or they would not have sent thus up into the Country a single Canoe; and when I came on Board they were so straiten'd, that, by my Advice, they resolv'd to go to the Isle of *Cuba* to kill wild Beef, of which the South Side of the Island is so full: Accordingly we sail'd thither directly.

The Vessel carry'd sixteen Guns, but was fitted to carry twenty two, and there was on Board one hundred and sixty stout Fellows, as bold and as case-harden'd for the Work as ever I met with upon any Occasion whatever: We victual'd in this Place for eight Months, by our Calculation; but our Cook, who had the Management of the Salting and Pickling the Beef, order'd his Matters so, that had he been let alone he would have starv'd us all, and poison'd us too; for as we are oblig'd to hunt the black Cattle in the Island sometimes a great while before we can shoot them, it should be observ'd, that the Flesh of those that are heated before they are kill'd, is not fit to be pickled or salted up for Keeping.

But this Man happening to pickle up the Beef, without Regard to this particular Distinction, most of the Beef, so pickled, stunk

before we left the Place, so that we were oblig'd to throw it all away: The Men then said it was impossible to salt any Beef in those hot Countries, so as to preserve it, and would have had us given it over, and ha' gone to the Coast of *New England*, or *New York*, for Provisions; but I soon convinc'd them of the Mistake, and by only using the Caution, *viz.* not to salt up any Beef of those Cattle that had been hunted, we cur'd one hundred and forty Barrels of very good Beef, and such as lasted us a very great while.

I began to be of some Repute among them upon this Occasion, and *Redhand* took me into the Cabin with him to consult upon all Emergencies, and gave me the Name of Captain, though I had then no Command: By this Means I gave him an Account of all my Adventures in the South Seas, and what a prodigious Booty we got there with Captain *Goignet*, the *Frenchman*, and with Captain *Sharp*, and others; encouraging him to make an Attempt that Way, and proposing to him to go away to the *Brasils*, and so round by the Straits of *Magellan*, or *Cape Horn*.

However, in this he was more prudent than I, and told me, that not only the Strength but the Force of his Ship was too small, not but that he had Men enough, as he said very well, but he wanted more Guns, and a better Ship; for indeed the Ship we were in was but a weak crazy Boat for so long a Voyage: So he said he approv'd my Project very well, but that he thought we should try to take some more substantial Vessel for the Business: And says he, if we could but take a good stout Ship, fit to carry thirty Guns,

and a Sloop, or Brigantine, he would go with all his Heart.

This I could not but approve of; so we form'd the Scheme of the Design, and he call'd all his Men together, and propos'd it to them, and they all approv'd it with a general Consent; and I had the Honour of being the Contriver of the Voyage. From this Time we resolv'd, some how or other, to get a better Ship under us, and it was not long before an Opportunity presented to our Mind.

Being now upon the Coast of the Island of *Cuba*, we stood away West, coasting the Island, and so went away for *Florida*, where we cruis'd among the Islands, and in the Wake of the Gulph; but nothing presented a great while; at length we spy'd a Sail, which prov'd an *English* homeward bound Ship from *Jamaica*: We immediately chac'd her, and came up with her; she was a stout Ship, and the Captain defended her very well; and had she not been a comber'd deep Ship, being full loaded, so that they could scarce come at their Guns, we should have had our Hands full of her. But when they found what we were, and that, being full of Men, we were resolv'd to be on Board them, and that we had hoisted the black Flag, a Signal that we would give them no Quarter, they began to sink in their Spirits, and soon after cry'd Quarter, offering to yield: *Redhand* would have given them no Quarter, but, according to his usual Practice, would have thrown the Men all into the Sea; but I prevail'd with him to give them Quarter, and good Usage too; and so they yielded; and a very rich Prize it was, only that we knew not what to do with the Cargo.

When we came to consider more seriously the Circumstances we were in by taking this Ship, and what we should do with her, we found, that she was not only deep loaden, but was a very heavy Sailer, and that, in short, she was not such a Ship as we wanted; so, upon long Debate, we resolv'd to take out of her all the Rum, the Indigo, and the Money we could come at, with about twenty Casks of Sugar, and twelve of her Guns, with all the Ammunition, small Arms, Bullets, &c. and let her go; which was accordingly done, to the great Joy of the Captain that commanded her: However, we took in her about six thousand Pounds Sterling in Pieces of Eight.

But the next Prize we met, suited us better on all Accounts, being a Ship from *Kingsale* in *Ireland*, loaden with Beef, and Butter, and Beer, for *Barbadoes*; never was Ship more welcome to Men in our Circumstances; this was the very Thing we wanted: We saw the Ship early in the Morning, at about five Leagues Distance, and we was three Days in Chace of her; she stood from us, as if she would have run away for the *Cape de Verd* Islands, and two or three Times we thought she sail'd so well she would have got away from us, but we had always the good Luck to get Sight of her in the Morning: She was about 260 Tun, an *English* Frigat-built Ship, and had 12 Guns on Board, but could carry 20. The Commander was a Quaker, but yet had he been equal to us in Force, it appear'd by his Countenance he would not have been afraid of his Flesh, or have baulk'd using the Carnal Weapon of Offence, *viz.* the Cannon Ball.

We soon made ourselves Master of this Ship when once we came up with him, and he was every Thing that we wanted; so we began to shift our Guns into her, and shifted about 60 Tun of her Butter and Beef into our own Frigate; this made the *Irish* Vessel be a clear Ship, lighter in the Water, and have more Room on Board for Fight, if Occasion offer'd.

When we had the old Quaking Skipper on Board, we ask'd him whether he would go along with us; he gave us no Answer at first; but when we ask'd him again, he return'd, that he did not know whether it might be safe for him to answer the Question: We told him, he should either go or stay, as he pleas'd; Why then, says he, I had rather ye will give me Leave to decline it.

We gave him Leave, and accordingly set him on Shore afterwards at *Nevis*, with ten of his Men; the rest went along with us as Volunteers, except the Carpenter and his Mate, and the Surgeon, those we took by Force: We were now supply'd as well as Heart could wish, had a large Ship in our Possession, with Provisions enough for a little Fleet rather than for a single Ship. So with this Purchase we went away for the *Leeward Islands*, and fain we would have met with some of the *New York* or *New England* Ships, which generally come loaden with Peas, Flower, Pork, &c. But it was a long while before any Thing of that Kind presented. We had promis'd the *Irish* Captain to set him on Shore, with his Company, at *Nevis*, but we were not willing till we had done our Business in those Seas, because of giving the Alarm among the Islands; so we went away for *St. Domingo*, and

making that Island our Rendezvous, we cruis'd to the Eastward, in Hopes of some Purchase; it was not long before we spy'd a Sail, which prov'd to be a *Burmoodas* Sloop, but bound from *Virginia* or *Maryland*, with Flower, Tobacco, and some Malt; the last a Thing which in particular we knew not what to do with. However, the Flower and Tobacco was very welcome, and the Sloop no less welcome than the rest; for she was a very large Vessel, and carry'd near 60 Tun, and when not so deep loaden, prov'd an excellent Sailer. Soon after this we met with another Sloop, but she was bound from *Barbadoes* to *New England*, with Rum, Sugar, and Molosses: Nothing disturb'd us in taking this Vessel, but that being willing enough to let her go; (for as to the Sugar and Molosses, we had neither Use for them, or Room for them) but to have let her go, had been to give the Alarm to all the Coast of *North America*, and then what we wanted would never come in our Way. Our Captain, justly call'd *Redhand*, or *Bloodyhand*, was presently for dispatching them, that they might tell no Tales; and, indeed, the Necessity of the Method had very near prevail'd; nor did I much interpose here, I know not why, but some of the other Men put him in as good a Way; and that was, to bring the Sloop to an Anchor under the Lee of *St. Domingo*, and take away all her Sails, that she should not stir till we gave her Leave.

We met with no less than five Prizes more here in about 20 Days Cruise, but none of them for our Turn; one of them, indeed, was a Vessel bound to *St. Christopher's* with *Madera* Wine: We

borrow'd about 20 Pipes of the Wine, and let her go. Another was a *New England* built Ship, of about 150 Tun, bound also Home with Sugar and Molosses, which was good for nothing to us; however, we gat near 1000 *l.* on Board her in Pieces of Eight, and taking away her Sails, as before, brought her to an Anchor under the Lee of the Sloop: At last we met with what we wanted, and this was another Ship of about 100 Tun, from *New England*, bound to *Barbadoes*; she had on Board 150 Barrels of Flower, about 350 Barrels of Pease, and 10 Tun of Pork barrell'd up and pickel'd, besides some live Hogs, and some Horses, and six Tun of Beer.

We were now sufficiently provided for; in all those Prizes we got also about 56 Men, who, by Choice and Volunteer, agree'd to go along with us, including the Carpenters and Surgeons, who we oblig'd always to go; so that we were now above 200 Men, two Ships, and the *Burmoodas* Sloop; and giving the other Sloop, and the *New England* homeward bound Ship their Sails again, we let them go; and as to the Malt which we took in the *Burmoodas* Sloop, we gave it the last *New England* Master, who was going to *Barbadoes*.

We gat in all those Ships, besides the Provisions above-mention'd, about 200 Musquets and Pistols, good Store of Cutlasses, about 20 Tun of Iron Shot and Musquet Ball, and 33 Barrels of good Powder, which was all very suitable Things to our Occasions.

We were fully satisfy'd, as we said to one another, now, and

concluded that we would stand away to the Windward, as well as we could, towards the Coast of *Africa*, that we might come in the Wind's Way for the Coast of *Brasil*; but our Frigate (I mean that we were first shipp'd in) was yet out upon the Cruise, and not come in; so we came to an Anchor to wait for her, when, behold, the next Morning she came in with full Sail, and a Prize in Tow: She had, it seems, been farther West than her Orders, but had met with a *Spanish* Prize, whither bound, or from whence, I remember we did not enquire, but we found in her, besides Merchandize, which we had no Occasion for, 65000 Pieces of Eight in Silver, some Gold, and two Boxes of Pearl of a good Value; five *Dutch*, or rather *Flemish*, Seamen that were on Board her, were willing to go with us; and as to the rest of the Cargo, we let her go, only finding four of her Guns were Brass, we took them into our Ship, with seven great Jars of Powder, and some Cannon-Shot, and let her go, using the *Spaniards* very civilly.

This was a Piece of meer good Fortune to us, and was so encouraging as nothing could be more, for it set us up, as we may say; for now we thought we could never fail of good Fortune, and we resolv'd, one and all, directly to the South Seas.

It was about the Middle of *August* 1690 that we set forward, and steering E. by S. and E. S. E. for about fifteen Days, with the Winds at N. N. W. variable, we came quickly into the Trade Winds, with a good Offing, to go clear of all the Islands; and so we steer'd directly for *Cape St. Augustin* in the *Brasils*, which we made the 22nd of *September*.

We cruis'd some Time upon the Coast, about the Bay of *All Saints*, and put in once or twice for fresh Water, especially at the Island of *St. John's*, where we got good Store of Fish, and some Hogs, which, for fresh Provisions, was a great Relief to us: But we gat no Purchase here; for whether it was that their *European* Ships were just come in, or just gone out, we know not, or whether they suspected what we were, and so kept close within their Ports, but in thirteen Days that we ply'd off and on about *Fernambouque*, and about fourteen Days more that we spent in coasting along the *Brasil* Shore to the South, we met not one Ship, neither saw a Sail, except of their Fishing-Boats or small Coasters, who kept close under Shore.

We cross'd the Line here about the latter End of *September*, and found the Air exceeding hot and unwholsome, the Sun being in the *Zenith*, and the Weather very wet and rainy; so we resolv'd to stand away South, without looking for any more Purchase on that Side.

Accordingly we kept on to the South, having tolerable good Weather, and keeping the Shore all the Way in View till we came the Length of *St. Julien*, in the Latitude of 48 Degrees, 22 Minutes South; here we put in again, being the Beginning of *November*, and took in fresh Water, and spent about ten Days, refreshing ourselves, and fitting our Tackle; all which Time we liv'd upon Penguins and Seals, of which we kill'd an innumerable Number; and when we prepar'd to go, we salted up as many Penguins as we found would serve our whole Crew, to eat them

twice a Week as long as they would keep.

Here we consulted together about going thro' the Straits of *Magellan*; but I put them quite out of Conceit of making that troublesom and fatieguing Adventure, the Straits being so hazardous, and so many Winds requir'd to pass them; and having assur'd them, that in our Return with *Bat Sharp*, we went away to the Latitude of 55 Degrees 30 Minutes, and then steering due East, came open with the North Seas in five Days Run, they all agreed to go that Way.

On the 20th of November we weigh'd from Port *Julien*, and having a fair Wind at N. E. by E. led it away merrily, till we came into the Latitude of 54, when the Wind veering more Northerly, and then to the N. W. blowing hard, we were driven into 55 Degrees and half, but lying as near as we could to the Wind, we made some Westward Way withal: The 3d of *December* the Wind came up South, and S. E. by S. being now just as it were at the Beginning of the Summer Solstice in that Country.

With this Wind, which blew a fresh Gale, we stood away N. N. W. and soon found ourselves in open Sea, to the West of *America*; upon which we haul'd away N. by E. and N. N. E. and then N. E. when on the 20th of *December* we made the Land, being the Coast of *Chili*, in the Latitude of 41 Degrees, about the Height of *Baldivia*; and we stood out from hence till we made the Isle of *St. Juan Fernando*, where we came to an Anchor, and went on Shore to get fresh Water; also some of our Men went a hunting for Goats, of which we kill'd enough to feed us all with

fresh Meat for all the while we stay'd here, which was 22 Days.
[*Jan.* 11.]

During this Stay we sent the Sloop out to Cruise, but she came back without seeing any Vessel; after which we order'd her out again more to the North, but she was scarce gone a League, when she made a Signal that she saw a Sail, and that we should come out to help them; accordingly the Frigat put to Sea after them, but making no Signal for us to follow, we lay still, and work'd hard at cleaning our Ship, shifting some of the Rigging, and the like.

We heard no more of them in three Days, which made us repent sorely that we had not gone all three together; but the third Day they came back, tho' without any Prize, as we thought, but gave us an Account that they had chac'd a great Ship and a Bark all Night, and the next Day; that they took the Bark the Evening before, but found little in her of Value; that the great Ship ran on Shore among some Rocks, where they durst not go in after her, but that manning out their Boats, they got on Shore so soon, that the Men belonging to her durst not land; that then they threaten'd to burn the Ship as she lay, and burn them all in her, if they did not come on Shore and surrender: They offer'd to surrender, giving them their Liberty, which our Men would not promise at first; but after some Parly, and arguing on both Sides, our Men agreed thus far, that they should remain Prisoners for so long as we were in those Seas, but that as soon as we came to the Height of *Panama*, or if we resolv'd to return sooner, then they should be set at Liberty; and to these hard Conditions they yielded.

Our Men found in the Ship 6 Brass Guns, 200 Sacks of Meal, some Fruit, and the Value of 160000 Pieces of Eight in Gold of *Chili*, as good as any in the World: It was a glittering Sight, and enough to dazzle the Eyes of those that look'd on it, to see such a Quantity of Gold laid all of a Heap together, and we began to embrace one another in Congratulation of our good Fortune.

We brought the Prisoners all to the Island *Fernando*, where we used them very well, built little Houses for them, gave them Bread, and Meat, and every Thing they wanted; and gave them Powder and Ball to kill Goats with, which they were fully satisfy'd with, and kill'd a great many for us too.

We continu'd to Cruise [*Feb. 2*] hereabout, but without finding any other Prize for near three Weeks more; so we resolv'd to go up as high as *Puna*, the Place where I had been so lucky before; and we assur'd our Prisoners, that in about two Months we would return, and relieve them; but they chose rather to be on Board us, so we took them all in again, and kept on with an easy Sail, at a proper Distance from Land, that we might not be known, and the Alarm given; for as to the Ship which we had taken, and which was stranded among the Rocks, as we had taken all the Men out of her, the People on the Shore, when they should find her, could think no other than that she was driven on Shore by a Storm, and that all the People were drown'd, or all escap'd and gone; and there was no Doubt but that the Ship would beat to Pieces in a very few Days.

We kept, I say, at a Distance from the Shore, to prevent giving

the Alarm; but it was a needless Caution, for the Country was all alarm'd on another Account, *viz.* about an 130 bold Buccaneers had made their Way over Land, not at the Isthmus of *Darien*, as usual, but from *Granada*, on the Lake of *Nicaragua* to the North of *Panama*, by which, tho' the Way was longer, and the Country not so practicable as at the ordinary Passage, yet they were unmolested, for they surpriz'd the Country; and whereas the *Spaniards*, looking for them at the old Passage, had drawn Entrenchments, planted Guns, and posted Men at the Passages of the Mountains, to intercept them and cut them off, here they met with no *Spaniards*, nor any other Obstruction in their Way, but coming to the South Sea had Time, undiscover'd, to build themselves Canoes and Periaguas, and did a great deal of Mischief upon the Shore, having been follow'd, among the rest, by 80 Men more, commanded by one *Guilotte*, a *Frenchman*, an old Buccaneer; so that they were now 210 Men; and they were not long at Sea before they took two *Spanish* Barks going from *Guatimala* to *Panama*, loaden with Meal, Coco, and other Provisions; so that now they were a Fleet of two Barks, with several Canoes, and Periaguas, but no Guns, nor any more Ammunition than every one carry'd at first at their Backs.

However, this Troop of Desperadoes had alarm'd all the Coast, and Expresses both by Sea and Land were dispatch'd, to warn the Towns on the Coast to be upon their Guard, all the way from *Panama* to *Lima*; but as they were represented to be only such Freebooters as I have said, Ships of Strength did not

desist their Voyages, as they found Occasion, as we shall observe presently: We were now gotten into the Latitude of 10, 11, and 12 Degrees and a Half; but, in our overmuch Caution, had kept out so far to Sea, that we miss'd every Thing which would otherwise have fallen into our Hands; but we were better inform'd quickly, as you shall hear.

Early in the Morning, one of our Men being on the Misen-top, cry'd, A Sail, a Sail; it prov'd to be a small Vessel standing just after us; and as we understood afterwards, did so, believing that we were some of the King's Ships looking after the Buccaneers. As we understood she was a-Stern of us, we shorten'd Sail, and hung out the *Spanish* Colours, separating ourselves, to make him suppose we were cruising for the Buccaneers, and did not look for him; however, when we saw him come forward, but stretching in a little towards the Shore, we took Care to be so much to Starboard that he could not escape us that Way; and when he was a little nearer, the Sloop plainly chac'd him, and in a little Time came up with him, and took him: We had little Goods in the Vessel, their chief Loading being Meal and Corn for *Panama*, but the Master happen'd to have 6000 Pieces of Eight in his Cabin, which was good Booty.

But that which was better than all this to us was, that the Master gave us an Account of two Ships which were behind, and were under Sail for *Lima* or *Panama*; the one having the Revenues of the Kingdom of *Chili*, and the other having a great Quantity of Silver, going from *Puna* to *Lima*, to be forwarded

from thence to *Panama*, and that they kept together, being Ships of Force, to protect one another; how they did it we soon saw the Effects of.

Upon this Intelligence we were very joyful, and assur'd the Master, that if we found it so, we would give him his Vessel again, and all his Goods, except his Money, as for That, we told him, such People as we never return'd it any Body: However, the Man's Intelligence prov'd good, for the very next Day, as we were standing South-West, our *Spanish* Colours being out, as above, we spy'd one of the Ships, and soon after the other; we found they had discover'd us also, and that being doubtful what to make of us, they tack'd and stood Eastward to get nearer the Land; we did the like, and as we found there was no letting them go that Way but that we should be sure to lose them, we soon let them know that we were resolv'd to speak with them.

The biggest Ship, which was three Leagues a-Stern of the other, crowded in for the Shore with all the Sail, she could make, and it was easy for us to see that she would escape us; for as she was a great deal farther in with the Land than the other when we first gave Chace, so in about three Hours we saw the Land plain a-Head of us, and that the great Ship would get into Port before we could reach her.

Upon this we stretch'd a-Head with all the Sail we could make, and the Sloop, which crowded also very hard, and out-went us, engag'd the small Ship at least an Hour before we could come up: But she could make little of it, for the *Spanish* Ship having 12

Guns and 6 Patereroes, would have been too many for the Sloop if we had not come up: However, at length, our biggest Ship came up also, and, running up under her Quarter, gave her our whole Broadside; at which she struck immediately, and the *Spaniards* cry'd, *Quarter*, and *Miserecordia*; Upon this, our Sloop's Men enter'd her presently, and secur'd her.

In the Beginning oft his Action, it seems, our *Redhand* Captain was so provok'd at losing the greater Prize, which, as he thought, had all the Money on Board, that he swore he would not spare one of the Dogs, (so he call'd the *Spaniards* in the other Ship) but he was prevented; and it was very happy for the *Spaniards*, that the first Shot the Ship made towards us, just as we were running up to pour in our Broadside, I say, the first Shot took Captain *Redhand* full on the Breast, and shot his Head and one Shoulder off, so that he never spoke more, nor did I find that any one Man in the Ship shew'd the least Concern for him; so certain it is, that Cruelty never recommends any Man among *Englishmen*; no, tho' they have no Share in the suffering under it; but one said, D – n him, let him go, he was a butcherly Dog; another said, D – n him, he was a merciless Son of a B – ch; another said, he was a barbarous Dog, and the like.

But to return to the Prize, being now as certain of the smaller Prize as that we had miss'd the great one, we began to examine what we had got; and it is not easy to give an exact Account of the prodigious Variety of Things we found: In the first Place, were 116 Chests of Pieces of Eight in Specie, 72 Bars of Silver, 15

Bags of wrought Plate, which a Fryer that was on Board would have perswaded us, for the Sake of the Blessed Virgin, to have return'd, being, as he said, consecrated Plate to the Honour of the holy Church, the Virgin *Mary*

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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