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PADERBORN

**Pirates own book, or authentic narratives of the lives,  
exploits, and executions of the most celebrated sea  
robbers**

**ELLS, CHARLES**

**New York [u.a.], 1842**

Trial and Execution of De Soto.

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understand you, man; speak Spanish like others, and I'll listen to you." When the dirk that belonged to Mr. Robertson, the trunk and clothes taken from Mr. Gibson, and the pocket book containing the ill-fated captain's hand writing were placed before him, and proved to have been found in his room, and when the maid servant of the tavern proved that she found the dirk under his pillow every morning on arranging his bed; and when he was confronted with his own black slave, between two wax lights, the countenance of the villain appeared in its true nature, not depressed nor sorrowful, but vivid and ferocious; and when the patient and dignified governor, Sir George Don, passed the just sentence of the law upon him, he looked daggers at his heart, and assumed a horrid silence, more eloquent than words.

The criminal persisted up to the day before his execution in asserting his innocence, and inveighing against the injustice of his trial, but the certainty of his fate, and the awful voice of religion, at length subdued him. He made an unreserved confession of his guilt, and became truly penitent; gave up to the keeper the blade of a razor which he had secreted between the soles of his shoes for the acknowledged purpose of adding suicide to his crimes, and seemed to wish for the moment that was to send him before his Creator.

I witnessed his execution, and I believe there never was a more contrite man than he appeared to be; yet there were no drivelling fears upon him—he walked firmly at the tail of the fatal cart, gazing sometimes at his coffin, sometimes at the crucifix which he held in his hand. The symbol of divinity he frequently pressed to his lips, repeated the prayers spoken in his ear by the attendant clergyman, and seemed regardless of every thing but the world to come. The gallows was erected beside the water, and fronting the neutral ground. He mounted the cart as firmly as he had walked behind it, and held up his face to Heaven and the beating rain, calm, resigned, but unshaken; and finding the halter too high for his neck, he boldly stepped upon his coffin, and placed his head in the noose, then watching the first turn of the wheels, he mur-

mured "*adios todos,*"\* and leaned forward to facilitate his fall.

The black slave of the pirate stood upon the battery trembling before his dying master to behold the awful termination of a series of events, the recital of which to his African countrymen, when he shall return to his home, will give them no doubt, a dreadful picture of European civilization. The black boy was acquitted at Cadiz, but the men who had fled to the Carraccas, as well as those arrested after the wreck, were convicted, executed, their limbs severed, and hung on tenter hooks, as a warning to all pirates.

\* "Farewell, all."

