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**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

Mr. Dalton`s Narrative.

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were anchored off the point of a small promontory, on which the rajah has an establishment and bazaar. The largest of these proas belonged to Raga, who received by the fleet of proas, in which I came, his regular supplies of arms and ammunition from Singapore. Here nestle the principal pirates, and Raga holds his head quarters; his grand depot was a few miles farther up. Rajah Agi Bota himself generally resides some distance up a small river which runs eastward of the point; near his habitation stands the principal bazaar, which would be a great curiosity for an European to visit if he could only manage to return, which very few have. The Raga gave me a pressing invitation to spend a couple of days at his country house, but all the Bugis' Nacodahs strongly dissuaded me from such an attempt. I soon discovered the cause of their apprehension; they were jealous of Agi Botta, well knowing he would plunder me, and considered every article taken by him was so much lost to the Sultan of Coti who naturally would expect the people to reserve me for his own particular plucking. When the fact was known of an European having arrived in the Pergotten river, this amiable prince and friend of Europeans, impatient to seize his prey, came immediately to the point from his country house, and sending for the Nacodah of the proa, ordered him to land me and all my goods instantly. An invitation now came for me to go on shore and amuse myself with shooting, and look at some rare birds of beautiful plumage which the rajah would give me if I would accept of them; but knowing what were his intentions, and being well aware that I should be supported by all the Bugis' proas from Coti, I feigned sickness, and requested that the birds might be sent on board. Upon this Agi Bota, who could no longer restrain himself, sent off two boats of armed men, who robbed me of many articles, and would certainly have forced me on shore, or murdered me in the proa had not a signal been made to the Bugis' nacodahs, who immediately came with their people, and with spears and krisses, drove the rajah's people overboard. The nacodahs, nine in number, now went on shore, when a scene of contention took place showing clearly the character of this chief. The Bugis from Coti explained, that with regard to me it was

necessary to be particularly circumspect, as I was not only well known at Singapore, but the authorities in that settlement knew that I was on board the Sultan's proa, and they themselves were responsible for my safety. To this circumstance alone I owe my life on several occasions, as in the event of any thing happening to me, every nacodah was apprehensive of his proa being seized on his return to Singapore; I was therefore more peculiarly cared for by this class of men, and they are powerful. The rajah answered the nacodahs by saying, I might be disposed of as many others had been, and no further notice taken of the circumstance; he himself would write to Singapore that I had been taken by an alligator, or bitten by a snake whilst out shooting; and as for what property I might have in the proa he would divide it with the Sultan of Coti. The Bugis, however, refused to listen to any terms, knowing the Sultan of Coti would call him to an account for the property, and the authorities of Singapore for my life. Our proa, with others, therefore dropped about four miles down the river, where we took in fresh water. Here we remained six days, every argument being in vain to entice me on shore. At length the Bugis' nacodahs came to the determination to sail without passes, which brought the rajah to terms. The proas returned to the point, and I was given to understand I might go on shore in safety. I did so, and was introduced to the rajah whom I found under a shed, with about 150 of his people; they were busy gambling, and had the appearance of what they really are, a ferocious set of banditti. Agi Bota is a good looking man, about forty years of age, of no education whatever; he divides his time between gaming, opium and cockfighting; that is in the interval of his more serious and profitable employment, piracy and rapine. He asked me to produce what money I had about me; on seeing only ten rupees, he remarked that it was not worth while to win so small a sum, but that if I would fight cocks with him he would lend me as much money as I wanted, and added it was beneath his dignity to fight under fifty reals a battle. On my saying it was contrary to an Englishman's religion to bet wagers, he dismissed me; immediately after the two rajahs produced their cocks and commenced fight-

ing for one rupee a side. I was now obliged to give the old Baudarre five rupees to take some care of me, as whilst walking about, the people not only thrust their hands into my pockets, but pulled the buttons from my clothes. Whilst sauntering behind the rajah's campong I caught sight of an European woman, who on perceiving herself observed, instantly ran into one of the houses, no doubt dreading the consequences of being recognized. There are now in the house of Agi Bota two European women, up the country there are others, besides several men. The Bugis, inimical to the rajah, made no secret of the fact; I had heard of it on board the proa, and some person in the bazaar confirmed the statement. On my arrival, strict orders had been given to the inhabitants to put all European articles out of sight. One of my servants going into the bazaar, brought me such accounts as induced me to visit it. In one house were the following articles: four Bibles, one in English, one in Dutch, and two in the Portuguese languages; many articles of wearing apparel, such as jackets and trowsers, with the buttons altered to suit the natives; pieces of shirts tagged to other parts of dress; several broken instruments, such as quadrants, spy glasses (two,) binnacles, with pieces of ship's sails, bolts and hoops; a considerable variety of gunner's and carpenter's tools, stores, &c. In another shop were two pelisses of faded lilac colour; these were of modern cut and fashionably made. On enquiring how they became possessed of these articles, I was told they were some wrecks of European vessels on which no people were found, whilst others made no scruple of averring that they were formerly the property of people who had died in the country. All the goods in the bazaar belonged to the rajah, and were sold on his account; large quantities were said to be in his house up the river; but on all hands it was admitted Raga and his followers had by far the largest part of what was taken. A Mandoor, or head of one of the campongs, showed me some women's stockings, several of which were marked with the letters S. W.; also two chemises, one with the letters S. W.; two flannel petticoats, a miniature portrait frame (the picture was in the rajah's house,) with many articles of dress of both sexes. In consequence of

the strict orders given on the subject I could see no more ; indeed there were both difficulty and danger attending these inquiries. I particularly wanted to obtain the miniature picture, and offered the Mandoor fifty rupees if he could procure it ; he laughed at me, and pointing significantly to his kris, drew one hand across my throat, and then across his own, giving me to understand such would be the result to us both on such an application to the rajah. It is the universal custom of the pirates, on this coast, to sell the people for slaves immediately on their arrival, the rajah taking for himself a few of the most useful, and receiving a percentage upon the purchase money of the remainder, with a moiety of the vessel and every article on board. European vessels are taken up the river, where they are immediately broken up. The situation of European prisoners is indeed dreadful in a climate like this, where even the labor of natives is intolerable ; they are compelled to bear all the drudgery, and allowed a bare sufficiency of rice and salt to eat.

It is utterly impossible for Europeans who have seen these pirates at such places as Singapore and Batavia, to form any conception of their true character ; there they are under immediate control, and every part of their behaviour is a tissue of falsehood and deception. They constantly carry about with them a smooth tongue, cringing demeanor, a complying disposition, which always asserts, and never contradicts, a countenance which appears to anticipate the very wish of the Europeans, and which so generally imposes upon his understanding, that he at once concludes them to be the best and gentlest of human beings ; but let the European meet them in any of their own campongs, and a very different character they will appear. The character and treacherous proceeding narrated above, and the manner of cutting off vessels and butchering their crews, apply equally to all the pirates of the East India Islands, by which many hundred European and American vessels have been surprised and their crews butchered."

On the 7th of February, 1831, the ship *Friendship*, Capt. Endicott, of Salem (Mass.) was captured by the Malays while lying at Qualla Battoo, on the coast of Suma-