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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

Captain Lincoln taken by the Pirates.

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Mexico. I thought it not prudent to resist them, should they be pirates, with a crew of seven men, and only five muskets; accordingly ordered the arms and ammunition to be immediately stowed away in as secret a place as possible, and suffer her to speak us, hoping and believing that a republican flag indicated both honor and friendship from those who wore it, and which we might expect even from Spaniards. But how great was my astonishment, when the schooner having approached very near us, hailed in English, and ordered me to heave my boat out immediately and come on board of her with my papers.—Accordingly my boat was hove out, but filled before I could get into her.—I was then ordered to tack ship and lay by for the pirates' boat to board me; which was done by Bolidar, their first lieutenant, with six or eight Spaniards armed with as many of the before mentioned weapons as they could well sling about their bodies. They drove me into the boat, and two of them rowed me to their privateer, (as they called their vessel), where I shook hands with their commander, Captain Jonnia, a Spaniard, who before looking at my papers, ordered Bolidar, his lieutenant, to follow the Mexican in, back of the Key they had left, which was done. At 6 o'clock, P. M., the Exertion was anchored in eleven feet water, near this vessel, and an island, which they called Twelve League Key, (called by the chart Key Largo), about thirty or thirty-five leagues from Trinidad. After this strange conduct they began examining my papers by a Scotchman who went by the name of Nickola, their sailing master.—He spoke good English, had a countenance rather pleasing, although his beard and mustachios had a frightful appearance—his face, apparently full of anxiety, indicated something in my favor; he gave me my papers, saying "take good care of them, for I am afraid you have fallen into bad hands." The pirates' boat was then sent to the Exertion with more men and arms; a part of them left on board her; the rest returning with three of my crew to their vessel; viz. Thomas Young, Thomas Goodall, and George Reed—they treated them with something to drink, and offered them equal shares with themselves, and some money, if they would enlist, but they could not prevail on them. I then requested permission to

go on board my vessel which was granted, and further requested Nickola should go with me, but was refused by the captain, who vociferated in a harsh manner, "No, No, No," accompanied with a heavy stamp upon the deck. When I got on board, I was invited below by Bolidar, where I found they had emptied the case of liquors, and broken a cheese to pieces and crumbled it on the table and cabin floor; the pirates, elated with their prize, (as they called it), had drank so much as to make them desperately abusive. I was permitted to lie down in my berth; but, reader, if you have ever been awakened by a gang of armed desperadoes, who have taken possession of your habitation in the midnight hour, you can imagine my feelings.—Sleep was a stranger to me, and anxiety was my guest. Bolidar, however, pretended friendship, and flattered me with the prospect of being soon set at liberty. But I found him, as I suspected, a consummate hypocrite; indeed, his very looks indicated it. He was a stout and well built man, of a dark, swarthy complexion, with keen, ferocious eyes, huge whiskers, and beard under his chin and on his lips, four or five inches long; he was a Portuguese by birth, but had become a naturalized Frenchman—had a wife, if not children, (as I was told) in France, and was well known there as commander of a first rate privateer. His appearance was truly terrific; he could talk some English, and had a most lion-like voice.

Tuesday, 17th.—Early this morning the captain of the pirates came on board the *Exertion*; took a look at the cabin stores, and cargo in the state rooms, and then ordered me back with him to his vessel, where he, with his crew, held a consultation for some time respecting the cargo. After which, the interpreter, Nickola, told me that "the captain had, or pretended to have, a commission under General Traspelascus, commander-in-chief of the republic of Mexico, authorizing him to take all cargoes whatever of provisions, bound to any royalist Spanish port—that my cargo being bound to an enemy's port, must be condemned; but that the vessel should be given up and be put into a fair channel for Trinidad, where I was bound." I requested him to examine the papers thoroughly, and perhaps he would be convinced to the contrary, and told him my cargo