



UNIVERSITÄTS-  
BIBLIOTHEK  
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**

Captain Lincoln`s Journal, while a Prisoner.

---

[urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-61163](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-61163)

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

was all American property taken in at Boston, and consigned to an American gentleman, agent at Trinidad. But the captain would not take the trouble, but ordered both vessels under way immediately, and commenced beating up amongst the Keys through most of the day, the wind being very light. They now sent their boats on board the Exertion for stores, and commenced plundering her of bread, butter, lard, onions, potatoes, fish, beans, &c., took up some sugar box shooks that were on deck, and found the barrels of apples; selected the best of them and threw the rest overboard. They inquired for spirits, wine, cider, &c. and were told "they had already taken all that was on board." But not satisfied they proceeded to search the state rooms and fore-castle, ripped up the floor of the latter and found some boxes of bottled cider, which they carried to their vessel, gave three cheers, in an exulting manner to me, and then began drinking it with such freedom, that a violent quarrel arose between officers and men, which came very near ending in bloodshed. I was accused of falsehood, for saying they had got all the liquors that were on board, and I thought they had; the truth was, I never had any bill of lading of the cider, and consequently had no recollection of its being on board; yet it served them as an excuse for being insolent. In the evening peace was restored and they sung songs. I was suffered to go below for the night, and they placed a guard over me, stationed at the companion way.

Wednesday, 19th, commenced with moderate easterly winds, beating towards the north-east, the pirate's boats frequently going on board the Exertion for potatoes, fish, beans, butter, &c. which were used with great waste and extravagance. They gave me food and drink, but of bad quality, more particularly the victuals, which was wretchedly cooked. The place assigned me to eat was covered with dirt and vermin. It appeared that their great object was to hurt my feelings with threats and observations, and to make my situation as unpleasant as circumstances would admit. We came to anchor near a Key, called by them Brigantine, where myself and mate were permitted to go on shore, but were guarded by several armed pirates. I soon returned to the Mexican and my mate to the Exertion, with

George Reed, one of my crew ; the other two being kept on board the Mexican. In the course of this day I had considerable conversation with Nickola, who appeared well disposed towards me. He lamented most deeply his own situation, for he was one of those men, whose early good impressions were not entirely effaced, although confederated with guilt. He told me "those who had taken me were no better than pirates, and their end would be the halter ; but," he added, with peculiar emotion, "I will never be hung as a pirate," showing me a bottle of laudanum which he had found in my medicine chest, saying, "If we are taken, that shall cheat the hangman, before we are condemned." I endeavored to get it from him, but did not succeed. I then asked him how he came to be in such company, as he appeared to be dissatisfied. He stated, "that he was at New Orleans last summer, out of employment, and became acquainted with one Captain August Orgamar, a Frenchman, who had bought a small schooner of about fifteen tons, and was going down to the bay of Mexico to get a commission under General Traspelascus, in order to go a privateering under the patriot flag. Capt. Orgamar made him liberal offers respecting shares, and promised him a sailing master's berth, which he accepted and embarked on board the schooner, without sufficiently reflecting on the danger of such an undertaking. Soon after she sailed from Mexico, where they got a commission, and the vessel was called Mexican. They made up a complement of twenty men, and after rendering the general some little service, in transporting his troops to a place called \_\_\_\_\_ proceeded on a cruise ; took some small prizes off Campeachy ; afterwards came on the south coast of Cuba, where they took other small prizes, and the one which we were now on board of. By this time the crew were increased to about forty, nearly one half Spaniards, the others Frenchmen and Portuguese. Several of them had sailed out of ports in the United States with American protections ; but, I confidently believe, none are natives, especially of the northern states. I was careful in examining the men, being desirous of knowing if any of my countrymen were among this wretched crew ; but am satisfied there were none, and my Scotch friend concurred in

the opinion. And now, with a new vessel, which was the prize of these plunderers, they sailed up Manganeil bay; previously, however, they fell in with an American schooner, from which they bought four barrels of beef, and paid in tobacco. At the Bay was an English brig belonging to Jamaica, owned by Mr. John Louden of that place. On board of this vessel the Spanish part of the crew commenced their depredations as pirates, although Captain Orgamar and Nickola protested against it, and refused any participation; but they persisted, and like so many ferocious blood-hounds, boarded the brig, plundered the cabin, stores, furniture, captain's trunk, &c., took a hogshead of rum, one twelve pound carronade, some rigging and sails. One of them plundered the chest of a sailor, who made some resistance, so that the Spaniard took his cutlass, and beat and wounded him without mercy. Nickola asked him "why he did it?" the fellow answered, "I will let you know," and took up the cook's axe and gave him a cut on the head, which nearly deprived him of life. Then they ordered Captain Orgamar to leave his vessel, allowing him his trunk and turned him ashore, to seek for himself. Nickola begged them to dismiss him with his captain, but no, no, was the answer; for they had no complete navigator but him. After Captain Orgamar was gone, they put in his stead the present brave (or as I should call him cowardly) Captain Jonnia, who headed them in plundering the before mentioned brig, and made Bolidar their first lieutenant, and then proceeded down among those Keys or Islands, where I was captured. This is the amount of what my friend Nickola told me of their history.

Saturday, 22d.—Both vessels under way standing to the eastward, they ran the Exertion aground on a bar, but after throwing overboard most of her deck load of shooks, she floated off; a pilot was sent to her, and she was run into a narrow creek between two keys, where they moored her head and stern along side of the mangrove trees, set down her yards and topmasts, and covered her mast heads and shrouds with bushes to prevent her being seen by vessels which might pass that way. I was then suffered to go on board my own vessel, and found her in a very filthy condition; sails torn, rigging cut to pieces, and every thing in

the cabin in waste and confusion. The swarms of mosquitoes and sand-flies made it impossible to get any sleep or rest. The pirate's large boat was armed and manned under Bolidar, and sent off with letters to a merchant (as they called him) by the name of Dominico, residing in a town called Principe, on the main island of Cuba. I was told by one of them, who could speak English, that Principe was a very large and populous town, situated at the head of St. Maria, which was about twenty miles north-east from where we lay, and the Keys lying around us were called Cotton Keys.—The captain pressed into his service Francis de Suze, one of my crew, saying that he was one of his countrymen. Francis was very reluctant in going, and said to me, with tears in his eyes, "I shall do nothing but what I am obliged to do, and will not aid in the least to hurt you or the vessel; I am very sorry to leave you." He was immediately put on duty and Thomas Goodsall sent back to the Exertion.

Sunday, 23d.—Early this morning a large number of the pirates came on board of the Exertion, threw out the long boat, broke open the hatches, and took out considerable of the cargo, in search of rum, gin, &c., still telling me "I had some and they would find it," uttering the most awful profaneness. In the afternoon their boat returned with a perough, having on board the captain, his first lieutenant and seven men of a patriot or piratical vessel that was chased ashore at Cape Cruz by a Spanish armed brig. These seven men made their escape in said boat, and after four days, found our pirates and joined them; the remainder of the crew being killed or taken prisoners.

Monday, 24th.—Their boat was manned and sent to the before-mentioned town.—I was informed by a line from Nickola, that the pirates had a man on board, a native of Principe, who, in the garb of a sailor, was a partner with Dominico, but I could not get sight of him. This lets us a little into the plans by which this atrocious system of piracy has been carried on. Merchants having partners on board of these pirates! thus pirates at sea and robbers on land are associated to destroy the peaceful trader. The willingness exhibited by the seven above-mentioned men, to join our gang of pirates, seems to look like a general un-

derstanding among them ; and from there being merchants on shore so base as to encourage the plunder and vend the goods, I am persuaded there has been a systematic confederacy on the part of these unprincipled desperadoes, under cover of the patriot flag ; and those on land are no better than those on the sea. If the governments to whom they belong know of the atrocities committed (and I have but little doubt they do) they deserve the execration of all mankind.

Thursday, 27th.—A gang of the pirates came and stripped our masts of the green bushes, saying, “she appeared more like a sail than trees”—took one barrel of bread and one of potatoes, using about one of each every day. I understood they were waiting for boats to take the cargo ; for the principal merchant had gone to Trinidad.

Sunday, 30th.—The beginning of trouble ! This day, which peculiarly reminds Christians of the high duties of compassion and benevolence, was never observed by these pirates. This, of course, we might expect, as they did not often know when the day came, and if they knew it, it was spent in gambling. The old saying among seamen, “no Sunday off soundings,” was not thought of ; and even this poor plea was not theirs, for they were on soundings and often at anchor.—Early this morning, the merchant, as they called him, came with a large boat for the cargo. I was immediately ordered into the boat with my crew, not allowed any breakfast, and carried about three miles to a small island out of sight of the Exertion, and left there by the side of a little pond of thick, muddy water, which proved to be very brackish, with nothing to eat but a few biscuits. One of the boat’s men told us the merchant was afraid of being recognised, and when he had gone the boat would return for us ; but we had great reason to apprehend they would deceive us, and therefore passed the day in the utmost anxiety. At night, however, the boats came and took us again on board the Exertion ; when, to our surprise and astonishment, we found they had broken open the trunks and chests, and taken all our wearing apparel, not even leaving a shirt or pair of pantaloons, nor sparing a small miniature of my wife which was in my trunk. The little money I and my mate had, with some belonging to

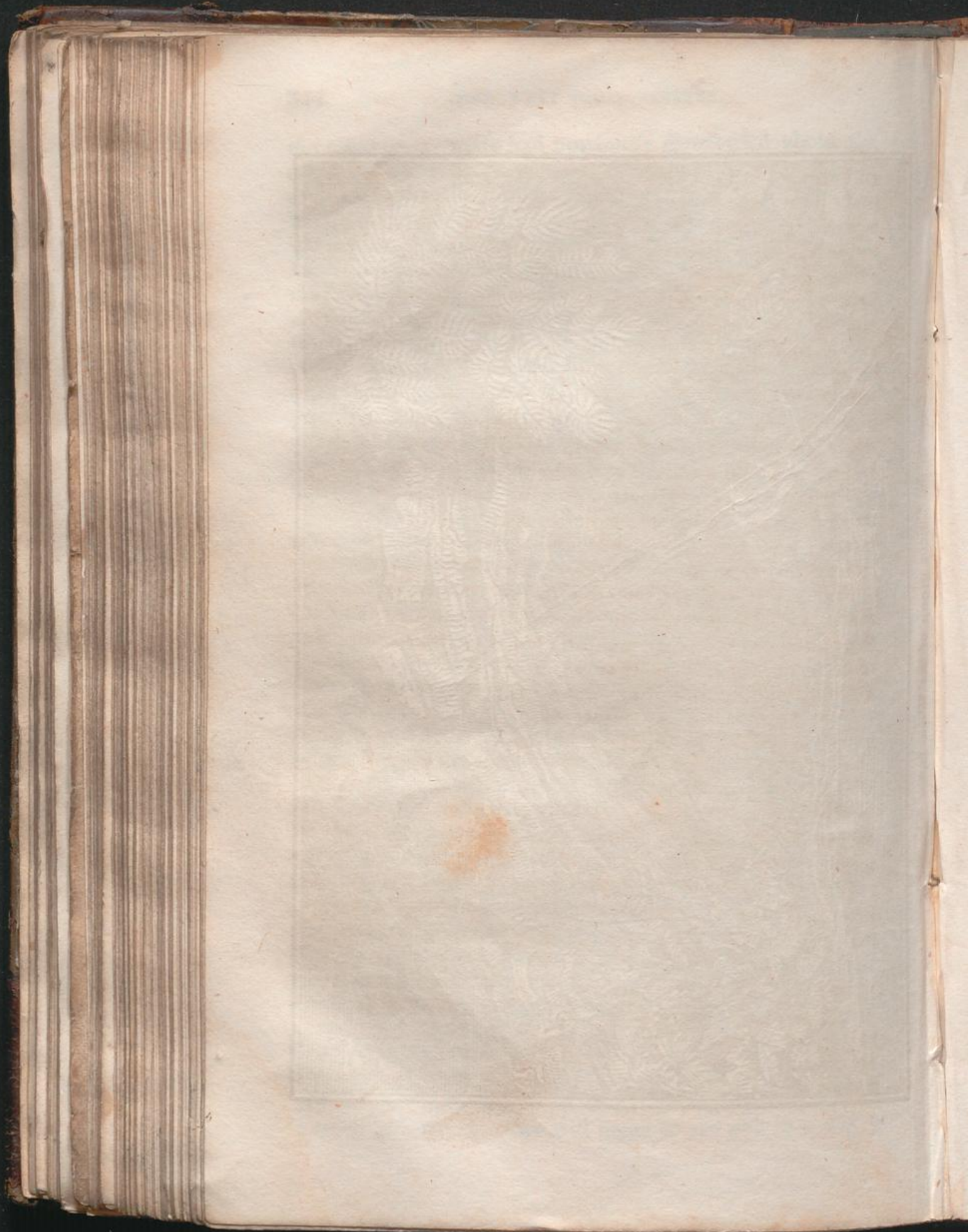
the owners, my mate had previously distributed about the cabin in three or four parcels, while I was on board the pirate, for we dare not keep it about us; one parcel in a butter pot they did not discover.—Amidst the hurry with which I was obliged to go to the before-mentioned island, I fortunately snatched my vessel's papers, and hid them in my bosom, which the reader will find was a happy circumstance for me. My writing desk, with papers, accounts, &c., all Mr. Lord's letters (the gentleman to whom my cargo was consigned) and several others were taken and maliciously destroyed. My medicine chest, which I so much wanted, was kept for their own use. What their motive could be to take my papers I could not imagine, except they had hopes of finding bills of lading for some Spaniards, to clear them from piracy. Mr. Bracket had some notes and papers of consequence to him, which shared the same fate. My quadrant, charts, books and bedding were not yet taken, but I found it impossible to hide them, and they were soon gone from my sight.

Tuesday, January 1st, 1822—A sad new-year's day to me. Before breakfast orders came for me to cut down the Exertion's railing and bulwarks on one side, for their vessel to heave out by, and clean her bottom. On my hesitating a little they observed with anger, "very well, captain, suppose you no do it quick, we do it for you." Directly afterwards another boat full of armed men came along side; they jumped on deck with swords drawn, and ordered all of us into her immediately; I stepped below, in hopes of getting something which would be of service to us; but the captain halloed, "Go into the boat directly or I will fire upon you." Thus compelled to obey, we were carried, together with four Spanish prisoners, to a small, low island or key of sand in the shape of a half moon, and partly covered with mangrove trees; which was about one mile from and in sight of my vessel. There they left nine of us, with a little bread, flour, fish, lard, a little coffee and molasses; two or three kegs of water, which was brackish; an old sail for a covering, and a pot and some other articles no way fit to cook in. Leaving us these, which were much less than they appear in the enumeration, they pushed off, saying, "we will come to see you in a day or



A Cave in the Caricos group of the West India Islands.





two." Selecting the best place, we spread the old sail for an awning; but no place was free from flies, moschetoës, snakes, the venomous skinned scorpion, and the more venomous santipee. Sometimes they were found crawling inside of our pantaloons, but fortunately no injury was received. This afternoon the pirates hove their vessel out by the Exertion and cleaned one side, using her paints, oil, &c. for that purpose. To see my vessel in that situation and to think of our prospects was a source of the deepest distress. At night we retired to our tent; but having nothing but the cold damp ground for a bed, and the heavy dew of night penetrating the old canvass—the situation of the island being fifty miles from the usual track of friendly vessels, and one hundred and thirty-five from Trinidad—seeing my owner's property so unjustly and wantonly destroyed—considering my condition, the hands at whose mercy I was, and deprived of all hopes, rendered sleep or rest a stranger to me.

Friday, 4th.—Commenced with light winds and hot sun, saw a boat coming from the Exertion, apparently loaded; she passed between two small Keys to northward, supposed to be bound for Cuba. At sunset a boat came and inquired if we wanted anything, but instead of adding to our provisions, took away our molasses, and pushed off. We found one of the Exertion's water casks, and several pieces of plank, which we carefully laid up, in hopes of getting enough to make a raft.

Saturday, 5th.—Pirates again in sight, coming from the eastward; they beat up along side their prize, and commenced loading. In the afternoon Nickola came to us, bringing with him two more prisoners, which they had taken in a small sail boat coming from Trinidad to Manganail, one a Frenchman, the other a Scotchman, with two Spaniards, who remained on board the pirate, and who afterwards joined them. The back of one of these poor fellows was extremely sore, having just suffered a cruel beating from Bolidar, with the broad side of a cutlass. It appeared, that when the officer asked him "where their money was, and how much," he answered, "he was not certain but believed they had only two ounces of gold"—Bolidar furiously swore he said "ten," and not finding any

more, gave him the beating. Nickola now related to me a singular fact; which was, that the Spanish part of the crew were determined to shoot him; that they tied him to the mast, and a man was appointed for the purpose; but Lion, a Frenchman, his particular friend, stepped up and told them, if they shot him they must shoot several more; some of the Spaniards sided with him, and he was released. Nickola told me, the reason for such treatment was, that he continually objected to their conduct towards me, and their opinion if he should escape, they would be discovered, as he declared he would take no prize money. While with us he gave me a letter written in great haste, which contains some particulars respecting the cargo;—as follows:—

*January 4th, 1822.*

SIR,—We arrived here this morning, and before we came to anchor, had five canoes alongside ready to take your cargo, part of which we had in; and as I heard you express a wish to know what they took out of her, to this moment, you may depend upon this account of Jamieson for quality and quantity; if I have the same opportunity you will have an account of the whole. The villain who bought your cargo is from the town of Principe, his name is Domingo, as to that it is all that I can learn; they have taken your charts aboard the schooner Mexican, and I suppose mean to keep them, as the other captain has agreed to act the same infamous part in the tragedy of his life. Your clothes are here on board, but do not let me flatter you that you will get them back; it may be so, and it may not. Perhaps in your old age, when you recline with ease in a corner of your cottage, you will have the goodness to drop a tear of pleasure to the memory of him, whose highest ambition should have been to subscribe himself, though devoted to the gallows, your friend,

Excuse haste.

NICKOLA MONACRE.

P. S. Your answer in writing when I come again.

Sunday, 6th.—The pirates were under way at sunrise, with a full load of the Exertion's cargo, going to Principe again to sell a second freight, which was done readily for cash. I afterwards heard that the flour only fetched five

dollars per barrel, when it was worth at Trinidad thirteen; so that the villain who bought my cargo at Principe, made very large profits by it.

Tuesday, 8th.—Early this morning the pirates in sight again, with fore top sail and top gallant sail set; beat up along side of the Exertion and commenced loading; having, as I supposed, sold and discharged her last freight among some of the inhabitants of Cuba. They appeared to load in great haste; and the song, "O he oh," which echoed from one vessel to the other, was distinctly heard by us. How wounding was this to me! How different was this sound from what it would have been, had I been permitted to pass unmolested by these lawless plunderers, and been favored with a safe arrival at the port of my destination, where my cargo would have found an excellent sale. Then would the "O he oh," on its discharging, have been a delightful sound to me. In the afternoon she sailed with the perough in tow, both with a full load, having chairs, which was part of the cargo, slung at her quarters.

Monday, 14th.—They again hove in sight, and beat up as usual, along-side their prize. While passing our solitary island, they laughed at our misery, which was almost insupportable—looking upon us as though we had committed some heinous crime, and they had not sufficiently punished us; they hallooed to us, crying out "Captain, Captain," accompanied with obscene motions and words, with which I shall not blacken these pages—yet I heard no check upon such conduct, nor could I expect it among such a gang, who have no idea of subordination on board, except when in chase of vessels, and even then but very little. My resentment was excited at such a malicious outrage,, and I felt a disposition to revenge myself, should fortune ever favor me with an opportunity. It was beyond human nature not to feel and express some indignation at such treatment.—Soon after, Bolidar, with five men, well armed, came to us; he having a blunderbuss, cutlass, a long knife and pair of pistols—but for what purpose did he come? He took me by the hand, saying, "Captain, me speak with you, walk this way." I obeyed, and when at some distance from my fellow prisoners, (his men following) he said, "the captain send me for your wash." I

pretended not to understand what he meant, and replied, "I have no clothes, nor any soap to wash with—you have taken them all," for I had kept my watch about me, hoping they would not discover it. He demanded it again as before; and was answered, "I have nothing to wash;" this raised his anger, and lifting his blunderbuss, he roared out, "what the d—l you call him that make clock? give it me." I considered it imprudent to contend any longer, and submitted to his unlawful demand. As he was going off, he gave me a small bundle, in which was a pair of linen drawers, sent to me by Nickola, and also the Rev. Mr. Brooks' "Family Prayer Book." This gave me great satisfaction. Soon after, he returned with his captain, who had one arm slung up, yet with as many implements of war, as his diminutive wicked self could conveniently carry; he told me (through an interpreter who was his prisoner,) "that on his cruize he had fallen in with two Spanish privateers, and beat them off; but had three of his men killed, and himself wounded in the arm"—Bolidar turned to me and said, "it is a d—n lie"—which words proved to be correct, for his arm was not wounded, and when I saw him again, which was soon afterwards, he had forgotten to sling it up. He further told me, "after to-morrow you shall go with your vessel, and we will accompany you towards Trinidad." This gave me some new hopes, and why I could not tell. They then left us without rendering any assistance.—This night we got some rest.

Tuesday, 15th. The words "go after tomorrow," were used among our Spanish fellow prisoners, as though that happy tomorrow would never come—in what manner it came will soon be noticed.

Friday, 18th commenced with brighter prospects of liberty than ever. The pirates were employed in setting up our devoted schooner's shrouds, stays, &c. My condition now reminded me of the hungry man, chained in one corner of a room, while at another part was a table loaded with delicious food and fruits, the smell and sight of which he was continually to experience, but, alas! his chains were never to be loosed that he might go and partake—at almost the same moment they were thus employed, the axe was applied with the greatest dexterity to both her masts

and I saw them fall over the side! Here fell my hopes—I looked at my condition, and then thought of home.—Our Spanish fellow prisoners were so disappointed and alarmed that they recommended hiding ourselves, if possible, among the mangrove trees, believing, as they said, we should now certainly be put to death; or, what was worse, compelled to serve on board the Mexican as pirates. Little else it is true, seemed left for us; however, we kept a bright look out for them during the day, and at night “an anchor watch” as we called it, determined if we discovered their boats coming towards us, to adopt the plan of hiding, although starvation stared us in the face—yet preferred that to instant death. This night was passed in sufficient anxiety—I took the first watch.

Saturday, 19th.—The pirate’s largest boat came for us—it being day-light, and supposing they could see us, determined to stand our ground and wait the result. They ordered us all into the boat, but left every thing else; they rowed towards the Exertion—I noticed a dejection of spirits in one of the pirates, and inquired of him where they were going to carry us? He shook his head and replied, “I do not know.” I now had some hopes of visiting my vessel again—but the pirates made sail, ran down, took us in tow and stood out of the harbor. Bolidar afterwards took me, my mate and two of my men on board and gave us some coffee. On examination I found they had several additional light sails, made of the Exertion’s. Almost every man, a pair of canvass trousers; and my colors cut up and made into belts to carry their money about them. My jolly boat was on deck, and I was informed, all my rigging was disposed of. Several of the pirates had on some of my clothes, and the captain one of my best shirts, a cleaner one, than I had ever seen him have on before.—He kept at a good distance from me, and forbid my friend Nickola’s speaking to me.—I saw from the companion way in the captain’s cabin my quadrant, spy glass and other things which belonged to us, and observed by the compass, that the course steered was about west by south,—distance nearly twenty miles, which brought them up with a cluster of islands called by some “Cayman Keys.” Here they anchored and caught some fish, (one of which was named

*guard fish*) of which we had a taste. I observed that my friend Mr. Bracket was somewhat dejected, and asked him in a low voice, what his opinion was with respect to our fate? He answered, "I cannot tell you, but it appears to me the worst is to come." I told him that I hoped not, but thought they would give us our small boat and liberate the prisoners. But mercy even in this shape was not left for us. Soon after, saw the captain and officers whispering for some time in private conference. When over, their boat was manned under the command of Bolidar, and went to one of those Islands or Keys before mentioned. On their return, another conference took place—whether it was a jury upon our lives we could not tell. I did not think conscience could be entirely extinguished in the human breast, or that men could become fiends. In the afternoon, while we knew not the doom which had been fixed for us, the captain was engaged with several of his men in gambling, in hopes to get back some of the five hundred dollars, they said, he lost but a few nights before; which had made him unusually fractious. A little before sunset he ordered all the prisoners into the large boat, with a supply of provisions and water, and to be put on shore. While we were getting into her, one of my fellow prisoners, a Spaniard, attempted with tears in his eyes to speak to the captain, but was refused, with the answer—"I'll have nothing to say to any prisoner, go into the boat." In the mean time Nickola said to me, "My friend, I will give you your book," (being Mr. Colman's Sermons,) "it is the only thing of yours that is in my possession; I dare not attempt any thing more." But the captain forbid his giving it to me, and I stepped into the boat—at that moment Nickola said in a low voice, "never mind, I may see you again before I die." The small boat was well armed and manned, and both set off together for the island, where they had agreed to leave us to perish! The scene to us was a funereal scene. There were no arms in the prisoners boat, and, of course, all attempts to relieve ourselves would have been throwing our lives away, as Bolidar was near us, well armed. We were rowed about two miles north-easterly from the pirates, to a small low island, lonely and desolate. We arrived about sunset; and for the support of us eleven prisoners, they



only left a ten gallon keg of water, and perhaps a few quarts, in another small vessel, which was very poor; part of a barrel of flour, a small keg of lard, one ham and some salt fish; a small kettle and an old broken pot; an old sail for a covering, and a small matrass and blanket, which was thrown out as the boats hastened away. One of the prisoners happened to have a little coffee in his pocket, and these comprehended all our means of sustaining life, and for what length of time we knew not. We now felt the need of water, and our supply was comparatively nothing. A man may live nearly twice as long without food, as without water. Look at us now, my friends, left benighted on a little spot of sand in the midst of the ocean, far from the usual track of vessels, and every appearance of a violent thunder tempest, and a boisterous night. Judge of my feelings, and the circumstances which our band of sufferers now witnessed. Perhaps you can and have pitied us. I assure you, we were very wretched; and to paint the scene, is not within my power. When the boats were moving from the shore, on recovering myself a little, I asked Bolidar, "If he was going to leave us so?"—he answered, "no, only two days—we go for water and wood, then come back, take you." I requested him to give us bread and other stores, for they had plenty in the boat, and at least one hundred barrels of flour in the Mexican. "No, no, suppose to-morrow morning me come, me give you bread," and hurried off to the vessel. This was the last time I saw him. We then turned our attention upon finding a spot most convenient for our comfort, and soon discovered a little roof supported by stakes driven into the sand; it was thatched with leaves of the cocoa-nut tree, considerable part of which was torn or blown off. After spreading the old sail over this roof, we placed our little stock of provisions under it. Soon after came on a heavy shower of rain which penetrated the canvass, and made it nearly as uncomfortable inside, as it would have been out. We were not prepared to catch water, having nothing to put it in. Our next object was to get fire, and after gathering some of the driest fuel to be found, and having a small piece of cotton wick-yarn, with flint and steel, we kindled a fire, which was never afterwards suffered to be

extinguished. The night was very dark, but we found a piece of old rope, which when well lighted served for a candle. On examining the ground under the roof, we found perhaps thousands of creeping insects, scorpions, lizards, crickets, &c. After scraping them out as well as we could, the most of us having nothing but the damp earth for a bed, laid ourselves down in hopes of some rest; but it being so wet, gave many of us severe colds, and one of the Spaniards was quite sick for several days.

Sunday, 20th.—As soon as day-light came on, we proceeded to take a view of our little island, and found it to measure only one acre, of coarse, white sand; about two feet, and in some spots perhaps three feet above the surface of the ocean. On the highest part were growing some bushes and small mangroves, (the dry part of which was our fuel) and the wild castor oil beans. We were greatly disappointed in not finding the latter suitable food; likewise some of the prickly pear bushes, which gave us only a few pears about the size of our small button pear; the outside has thorns, which if applied to the fingers or lips, will remain there, and cause a severe smarting similar to the nettle; the inside a spongy substance, full of juice and seeds, which are red and a little tartish—had they been there in abundance, we should not have suffered so much for water—but alas! even this substitute was not for us. On the northerly side of the island was a hollow, where the tide penetrated the sand, leaving stagnant water. We presumed, in hurricanes the island was nearly overflowed. According to the best calculations I could make, we were about thirty-five miles from any part of Cuba, one hundred from Trinidad and forty from the usual track of American vessels, or others which might pass that way. No vessel of any considerable size, can safely pass among these Keys or “Queen’s Gardens,” as the Spaniards call them) being a large number extending from Cape Cruz to Trinidad, one hundred and fifty miles distance; and many more than the charts have laid down, most of them very low and some covered at high water, which makes it very dangerous for navigators without a skilful pilot. After taking this view of our condition, which was very gloomy, we began to suspect we were left on this desolate island by those mer-

ciless plunderers to perish. Of this I am now fully convinced; still we looked anxiously for the pirate's boat to come according to promise with more water and provisions, but looked in vain. We saw them soon after get under way with all sail set and run directly from us until out of our sight, and *we never saw them again!* One may partially imagine our feelings, but they cannot be put into words. Before they were entirely out of sight of us, we raised the white blanket upon a pole, waving it in the air, in hopes, that at two miles distance they would see it and be moved to pity. But pity in such monsters was not to be found. It was not their interest to save us from the lingering death, which we now saw before us. We tried to compose ourselves, trusting that God, who had witnessed our sufferings, would yet make use of some one, as the instrument of his mercy towards us. Our next care, now, was to try for water. We dug several holes in the sand and found it, but quite too salt for use. The tide penetrates probably through the island. We now came on short allowance for water. Having no means of securing what we had by lock and key, some one in the night would slyly drink, and it was soon gone. The next was to bake some bread, which we did by mixing flour with salt water and frying it in lard, allowing ourselves eight quite small pancakes to begin with. The ham was reserved for some more important occasion, and the salt fish was lost for want of fresh water. The remainder of this day was passed in the most serious conversation and reflection. At night, I read prayers from the "Prayer Book," before mentioned, which I most carefully concealed while last on board the pirates. This plan was pursued morning and evening, during our stay there. Then retired for rest and sleep, but realized little of either.

Monday, 21st.—In the morning we walked round the beach, in expectation of finding something useful. On our way picked up a paddle about three feet long, very similar to the Indian canoe paddle, except the handle, which was like that of a shovel, the top part being split off; we laid it by for the present. We likewise found some konchs and roasted them; they were a pretty good shell fish, though rather tough. We discovered at low

water, a bar or spit of sand extending north-easterly from us, about three miles distant, to a cluster of Keys, which were covered with mangrove trees, perhaps as high as our quince tree. My friend Mr. Bracket and George attempted to wade across, being at that time of tide only up to their armpits; but were pursued by a shark, and returned without success. The tide rises about four feet.

Tuesday, 22d.—We found several pieces of the palmetto or cabbage tree, and some pieces of boards, put them together in the form of a raft, and endeavored to cross, but that proved ineffectual. Being disappointed, we set down to reflect upon other means of relief, intending to do all in our power for safety while our strength continued. While setting here, the sun was so powerful and oppressive, reflecting its rays upon the sea, which was then calm, and the white sand which dazzled the eye, was so painful, that we retired under the awning; there the moschetoës and flies were so numerous, that good rest could not be found. We were, however, a little cheered, when, in scraping out the top of the ground to clear out, I may say, thousands of crickets and bugs, we found a hatchet, which was to us peculiarly serviceable. At night the strong north-easterly wind, which prevails there at all seasons, was so cold as to make it equally uncomfortable with the day. Thus day after day, our sufferings and apprehensions multiplying, we were very generally alarmed.

Thursday, 24th.—This morning, after taking a little coffee, made of the water which we thought least salt, and two or three of the little cakes, we felt somewhat refreshed, and concluded to make another visit to those Keys, in hopes of finding something more, which might make a raft for us to escape the pirates, and avoid perishing by thirst. Accordingly seven of us set off, waded across the bar and searched all the Keys thereabouts. On one we found a number of sugar-box shooks, two lashing plank and some pieces of old spars, which were a part of the Exertion's deck load, that was thrown overboard when she grounded on the bar, spoken of in the first part of the narrative. It seems they had drifted fifteen miles, and had accidentally lodged on these very Keys within our reach. Had the pirates known this, they would undoubtedly have placed us

in another direction. They no doubt thought that they could not place us on a worse place. The wind at this time was blowing so strong on shore, as to prevent rafting our stuff round to our island, and we were obliged to haul it upon the beach for the present; then dug for water in the highest place, but found it as salt as ever, and then returned to our habitation. But hunger and thirst began to prey upon us, and our comforts were as few as our hopes.

Friday, 25th.—Again passed over to those Keys to windward in order to raft our stuff to our island, it being most convenient for building. But the surf on the beach was so very rough, that we were again compelled to postpone it. Our courage, however, did not fail where there was the slightest hopes of life. Returning without it, we found on our way an old top timber of some vessel; it had several spikes in it, which we afterwards found very serviceable. In the hollow of an old tree, we found two guarnas of small size, one male, the other female. Only one was caught. After taking off the skin, we judged it weighed a pound and a half. With some flour and lard, (the only things we had except salt water,) it made us a fine little mess. We thought it a rare dish, though a small one for eleven half starved persons. At the same time a small vessel hove in sight; we made a signal to her with the blanket tied to a pole and placed it on the highest tree—some took off their white clothes and waved them in the air, hoping they would come to us; should they be pirates, they could do no more than kill us, and perhaps would give us some water, for which we began to suffer most excessively; but, notwithstanding all our efforts, she took no notice of us.

Saturday, 26th.—This day commenced with moderate weather and smooth sea; at low tide found some cockles; boiled and eat them, but they were very painful to the stomach. David Warren had a fit of strangling, with swelling of the bowels; but soon recovered, and said, "something like salt rose in his throat and choked him." Most of us then set off for the Keys, where the plank and shooks were put together in a raft, which we with pieces of boards paddled over to our island; when we consulted the best plan, either to build a raft large enough for us all to go on, or a boat; but the shooks having three or four nails

in each, and having a piece of large reed or bamboo, previously found, of which we made pins, we concluded to make a boat.

Sunday, 27th—Commenced our labor, for which I know we need offer no apology. We took the two planks, which were about fourteen feet long, and two and a half wide, and fixed them together for the bottom of the boat; then with moulds made of palmetto bark, cut timber and knees from mangrove trees which spread so much as to make the boat four feet wide at the top, placed them exactly the distance apart of an Havana sugar box.—Her stern was square and the bows tapered to a peak, making her form resemble a flat-iron. We proceeded thus far and returned to rest for the night—but Mr. Bracket was too unwell to get much sleep.

Monday, 28—Went on with the work as fast as possible. Some of the Spaniards had long knives about them, which proved very useful in fitting timbers, and a gimblet of mine, accidentally found on board the pirates, enabled us to use the wooden pins. And now our spirits began to revive, though *water, water*, was continually in our minds. We now feared the pirates might possibly come, find out our plan and put us to death, (although before we had wished to see them, being so much in want of water.) Our labor was extremely burdensome, and the Spaniards considerably peevish—but they would often say to me “never mind captain, by and by, Americana or Spanyol catch them, me go and see ’um hung.” We quitted work for the day, cooked some cakes but found it necessary to reduce the quantity again, however small before. We found some herbs on a windward Key, which the Spaniards called Spanish tea.—This when well boiled we found somewhat palatable, although the water was very salt. This herb resembles pennyroyal in look and taste, though not so pungent. In the evening when we were setting round the fire to keep off the moschetoës, I observed David Warren’s eyes shone like glass. The mate said to him—“David I think you will die before morning—I think you are struck with death now.” I thought so too, and told him, “I thought it most likely we should all die here soon; but as some one of us might survive to

carry the tidings to our friends, if you have any thing to say respecting your family, now is the time."—He then said, "I have a mother in Saco where I belong—she is a second time a widow—to-morrow if you can spare a scrap of paper and pencil I will write something." But no to-morrow came to him.—In the course of the night he had another spell of strangling, and soon after expired, without much pain and without a groan. He was about twenty-six years old.—How solemn was this scene to us! Here we beheld the ravages of death commenced upon us. More than one of us considered death a happy release. For myself I thought of my wife and children; and wished to live if God should so order it, though extreme thirst, hunger and exhaustion had well nigh prostrated my fondest hopes.

Tuesday, 29th.—Part of us recommenced labor on the boat, while myself and Mr. Bracket went and selected the highest clear spot of sand on the northern side of the island, where we dug Warren's grave, and boxed it up with shooks, thinking it would be the most suitable spot for the rest of us—whose turn would come next, we knew not. At about ten o'clock, A. M. conveyed the corpse to the grave, followed by us survivors—a scene, whose awful solemnity can never be painted. We stood around the grave, and there I read the funeral prayer from the Rev. Mr. Brooks's Family Prayer Book; and committed the body to the earth; covered it with some pieces of board and sand, and returned to our labor. One of the Spaniards, an old man, named Manuel, who was partial to me, and I to him, made a cross and placed it at the head of the grave saying, "Jesus Christ hath him now." Although I did not believe in any mysterious influence of this cross, yet I was perfectly willing it should stand there. The middle part of the day being very warm, our mouths parched with thirst, and our spirits so depressed, that we made but little progress during the remainder of this day, but in the evening were employed in picking oakum out of the bolt rope taken from the old sail.

Wednesday, 30th.—Returned to labor on the boat with as much vigor as our weak and debilitated state would admit, but it was a day of trial to us all; for the Spaniards

and we Americans could not well understand each other's plans, and they being naturally petulant, would not work, nor listen with any patience for Joseph, our English fellow prisoner, to explain our views—they would sometimes undo what they had done, and in a few minutes replace it again; however before night we began to caulk her seams, by means of pieces of hard mangrove, made in form of a caulking-iron, and had the satisfaction of seeing her in a form something like a boat.

Thursday, 31st.—Went on with the work, some at caulking, others at battening the seams with strips of canvas, and pieces of pine nailed over, to keep the oakum in. Having found a suitable pole for a mast, the rest went about making a sail from the one we had used for a covering, also fitting oars of short pieces of boards, in form of a paddle, tied on a pole, we having a piece of fishing line brought by one of the prisoners. Thus, at three P. M. the boat was completed and put afloat.—We had all this time confidently hoped, that she would be sufficiently large and strong to carry us all—we made a trial and were disappointed! This was indeed a severe trial, and the emotions it called up were not easy to be suppressed. She proved leaky, for we had no carpenter's yard, or smith's shop to go to.—And now the question was, "who should go, and how many?" I found it necessary for six; four to row, one to steer and one to bale. Three of the Spaniards and the Frenchman claimed the right, as being best acquainted with the nearest inhabitants; likewise, they had when taken, two boats left at St. Maria, (about forty miles distant,) which they were confident of finding. They promised to return within two or three days for the rest of us—I thought it best to consent—Mr. Bracket it was agreed should go in my stead, because my papers must accompany me as a necessary protection, and my men apprehended danger if they were lost. Joseph Baxter (I think was his name) they wished should go, because he could speak both languages—leaving Manuel, George, Thomas and myself, to wait their return. Having thus made all arrangements, and putting up a keg of the least salt water, with a few pancakes of salt fish, they set off a little before sunset with our best wishes and prayers for



their safety and return to our relief.—To launch off into the wide ocean, with strength almost exhausted, and in such a frail boat as this, you will say was very hazardous, and in truth it was; but what else was left to us?—Their intention was to touch at the Key where the Exertion was, and if no boat was to be found there, to proceed to St. Maria, and if none there, to go to Trinidad and send us relief.—But alas! it was the last time I ever saw them!—Our suffering this day was most acute.

Tuesday, 5th.—About ten o'clock, A. M. discovered a boat drifting by on the southeast side of the island about a mile distant. I deemed it a providential thing to us, and urged Thomas and George trying the raft for her. They reluctantly consented and set off, but it was nearly three P. M. when they came up with her.—it was the same boat we had built! Where then was my friend Bracket and those who went with him? Every appearance was unfavorable.—I hoped that a good Providence had yet preserved him.—The two men who went for the boat, found it full of water, without oars, paddle, or sail; being in this condition, and about three miles to the leeward, the men found it impossible to tow her up, so left her, and were until eleven o'clock at night getting back with the raft. They were so exhausted, that had it not been nearly calm, they could never have returned.

Wednesday, 6th.—This morning was indeed the most gloomy I had ever experienced.—There appeared hardly a ray of hope that my friend Bracket could return, seeing the boat was lost. Our provisions nearly gone; our mouths parched extremely with thirst; our strength wasted; our spirits broken, and our hopes imprisoned within the circumference of this desolate island in the midst of an unfrequented ocean; all these things gave to the scene around us the hue of death. In the midst of this dreadful despondence, a sail hove in sight bearing the white flag! Our hopes were raised, of course—but no sooner raised than darkened, by hearing a gun fired. Here then was another gang of pirates. She soon, however, came near enough to anchor, and her boat pushed off towards us with three men in her.—Thinking it now no worse to die by sword than famine, I walked down immediately

to meet them. I knew them not.—A moment before the boat touched the ground, a man leaped from her bows and caught me in his arms! *It was Nickola!*—saying, “Do you now believe Nickola is your friend? yes, said he, *Jamieson* will yet prove himself so.”—No words can express my emotions at this moment. This was a friend indeed. The reason of my not recognizing them before, was that they had cut off their beards and whiskers. Turning to my fellow-sufferers, Nickola asked—“Are these all that are left of you? where are the others?”—At this moment seeing David’s grave—“are they dead then? ah I suspected it, I know what you were put here for.” As soon as I could recover myself, I gave him an account of Mr. Bracket and the others.—“How unfortunate,” he said, “they must be lost, or some pirates have taken them.”—“But,” he continued, “we have no time to lose; you had better embark immediately with us, and go where you please, we are at your service.” The other two in the boat were Frenchmen, one named Lyon, the other Parrikete. They affectionately embraced each of us; then holding to my mouth the nose of a teakettle, filled with wine, said “Drink plenty, no hurt you.” I drank as much as I judged prudent. They then gave it to my fellow sufferers—I experienced almost immediate relief, not feeling it in my head; they had also brought in the boat for us, a dish of salt beef and potatoes, of which we took a little. Then sent the boat on board for the other two men, being five in all; who came ashore, and rejoiced enough was I to see among them Thomas Young, one of my crew, who was detained on board the Mexican, but had escaped through Nickola’s means; the other a Frenchman, named John Cadedt. I now thought again and again, with troubled emotion, of my dear friend Bracket’s fate. I took the last piece of paper I had, and wrote with pencil a few lines, informing him (should he come there.) that “I and the rest were safe; that I was not mistaken in the friend in whom I had placed so much confidence, that he had accomplished my highest expectations; and that I should go immediately to Trinidad, and requested him to go there also, and apply to Mr. Isaac W. Lord, my consignee, for assistance.” I put the paper into a

junk bottle, previously found on the beach, put in a stopper, and left it, together with what little flour remained, a keg of water brought from Nickola's vessel, and a few other things which I thought might be of service to him. We then repaired with our friends on board, where we were kindly treated. She was a sloop from Jamaica, of about twelve tons, with a cargo of rum and wine, bound to Trinidad. I asked "which way they intended to go?" They said "to Jamaica if agreeable to me." As I preferred Trinidad, I told them, "if they would give me the Exertion's boat which was along-side (beside their own) some water and provisions, we would take chance in her,"—"for perhaps," said I, "you will fare better at Jamaica, than at Trinidad." After a few minutes consultation, they said "you are too much exhausted to row the distance of one hundred miles, therefore we will go and carry you—we consider ourselves at your service." I expressed a wish to take a look at the Exertion, possibly we might hear something of Mr. Bracket. Nickola said "very well," so got under way, and run for her, having a light westerly wind. He then related to me the manner of their desertion from the pirates; as nearly as I can recollect his own words, he said, "A few days since, the pirates took four small vessels, I believe Spaniards; they having but two officers for the two first, the third fell to me as prize master, and having an understanding with the three Frenchmen and Thomas, selected them for my crew, and went on board with orders to follow the Mexican; which I obeyed. The fourth, the pirates took out all but one man and bade him also follow their vessel. Now our schooner leaked so bad, that we left her and in her stead agreed to take this little sloop (which we are now in) together with the one man. The night being very dark we all agreed to desert the pirates—altered our course and touched at St. Maria, where we landed the one man—saw no boats there, could hear nothing from you, and agreed one and all at the risk of our lives to come and liberate you if you were alive; knowing, as we did, that you were put on this Key to perish. On our way we boarded the Exertion, thinking possibly you might have been there. On board her we found a sail and paddle. We took one of the pirate's

boats which they had left along-side of her, which proves how we came by two boats. My friend, the circumstance I am now about to relate, will somewhat astonish you. When the pirate's boat with Bolidar was sent to the before mentioned Key, on the 19th of January, it was their intention to leave you prisoners there, where was nothing but salt water and mangroves, and no possibility of escape. This was the plan of Baltizar, their abandoned pilot; but Bolidar's heart failed him, and he objected to it; then, after a conference, Captain Jonnia ordered you to be put on the little island from whence we have now taken you. But after this was done, that night the French and Portuguese part of the Mexican's crew protested against it; so that Captain Jonnia to satisfy them, sent his large boat to take you and your fellow prisoners back again, taking care to select his confidential Spaniards for this errand. And you will believe me they set off from the Mexican, and after spending about as much time as would really have taken them to come to you, they returned, and reported they had been to your island, and landed, and that none of you were there, somebody having taken you off! This, all my companions here know to be true.—I knew it was impossible you could have been liberated, and therefore we determined among ourselves, that should an opportunity occur we would come and save your lives, as we now have." He then expressed, as he hitherto had done, (and I believe with sincerity,) his disgust with the bad company which he had been in, and looked forward with anxiety to the day when he might return to his native country. I advised him to get on board an Amerian vessel, whenever an opportunity offered, and come to the United States; and on his arrival direct a letter to me; repeating my earnest desire to make some return for the disinterested friendship which he had shown toward me. With the Frenchman I had but little conversation, being unacquainted with the language.

Here ended Nickola's account. "And now," said the Frenchmen, "our hearts be easy." Nickola observed he had left all and found us. I gave them my warmest tribute of gratitude, saying I looked upon them under God as the preservers of our lives, and promised them all the

assistance which my situation might enable me to afford.—  
This brings me to,

Thursday evening, 7th, when, at eleven o'clock, we anchored at the creek's mouth, near the Exertion. I was anxious to board her; accordingly took with me Nickola, Thomas, George and two others, well armed, each with a musket and cutlass. I jumped on her deck, saw a fire in the camboose, but no person there: I called aloud Mr. Bracket's name several times, saying "it is Captain Lincoln, don't be afraid, but show yourself;" but no answer was given. She had no masts, spars, rigging, furniture, provisions or any thing left, except her bowsprit, and a few barrels of salt provisions of her cargo. Her ceiling had holes cut in it, no doubt in their foolish search for money. I left her with peculiar emotions, such as I hope never again to experience; and returned to the little sloop where we remained till—

Friday, 8th—When I had a disposition to visit the island on which we were first imprisoned.—Found nothing there—saw a boat among the mangroves, near the Exertion. Returned, and got under way immediately for Trinidad. In the night while under full sail, run aground on a sunken Key, having rocks above the water, resembling old stumps of trees; we, however, soon got off and anchored. Most of those Keys have similar rocks about them, which navigators must carefully guard against.

Monday, 11th—Got under way—saw a brig at anchor about five miles below the mouth of the harbor; we hoped to avoid her speaking us; but when we opened in sight of her, discovered a boat making towards us, with a number of armed men in her. This alarmed my friends, and as we did not see the brig's ensign hoisted, they declared the boat was a pirate, and looking through the spy-glass, they knew some of them to be the Mexican's men! This state of things was quite alarming. They said, "we will not be taken alive by them." Immediately the boat fired a musket; the ball passed through our mainsail. My friends insisted on beating them off: I endeavored to dissuade them, believing, as I did, that the brig was a Spanish man-of-war, who had sent her boat to ascertain who we were. I thought we had better heave to. Immedi-

ately another shot came. Then they insisted on fighting, and said "if I would not help them, I was no friend." I reluctantly acquiesced, and handed up the guns—commenced firing upon them and they upon us. We received several shot through the sails, but no one was hurt on either side. Our two boats had been cast adrift to make us go the faster, and we gained upon them—continued firing until they turned from us, and went for our boats, which they took in tow for the brig. Soon after this, it became calm: then I saw that the brig had us in her power.—She manned and armed two more boats for us. We now concluded, since we had scarcely any ammunition, to surrender; and were towed down along-side the brig on board, and were asked by the captain, who could speak English, "what for you fire on the boat?" I told him "we thought her a pirate, and did not like to be taken by them again, having already suffered too much;" showing my papers. He said, "Captain Americana, never mind, go and take some dinner—which are your men?" I pointed them out to him, and he ordered them the liberty of the decks; but my friend Nickola and his three associates were immediately put in irons. They were, however, afterwards taken out of irons and examined; and I understood the Frenchmen agreed to enlist, as they judged it the surest way to better their condition. Whether Nickola enlisted, I do not know, but think that he did, as I understood that offer was made to him: I however endeavored to explain more distinctly to the captain, the benevolent efforts of these four men by whom my life had been saved, and used every argument in my power to procure their discharge. I also applied to the governor, and exerted myself with peculiar interest, dictated as I trust with heartfelt gratitude—and I ardently hope ere this, that Nickola is on his way to this country, where I may have an opportunity of convincing him that such an act of benevolence will not go unrewarded. Previous to my leaving Trinidad, I made all the arrangements in my power with my influential friends, and doubt not, that their laudable efforts will be accomplished.—the sloop's cargo was then taken on board the brig; after which the captain requested a certificate that I was politely treated by him, saying that his