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

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The French Expedition against Algiers.

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were held; the oldest and most experienced mariners were invited by the minister at war to assist in his deliberations; and an expedition was finally determined on in the month of February, 1830, to consist of about thirty-seven thousand men, a number which it was calculated would not only be sufficient to overcome all opposition which might be encountered, but to enable the French to reduce the kingdom to a province, and retain it in subjection for any length of time that might be considered advisable. No sooner was this decision promulgated, than all the necessary preparations were commenced with the utmost diligence. It was now February, and the expedition was to embark by the end of April, so that no time could be lost. The arsenals, the naval and military workshops, were all in full employment. Field and breaching batteries were mounted on a new principle lately adopted; gabions, earth-bags, *chevaux-de-frise*, and projectiles were made in the greatest abundance; maps, notes, and all the information that could be procured respecting Barbary were transmitted to the war office, where their contents were compared and digested, and a plan of operations was drawn out. The commissariat were busied in collecting provisions, waggons, and fitting out an efficient hospital train; a deputy-commissary was despatched to reconnoitre the coasts of Spain and the Balearic Islands, to ascertain what resources could be drawn from them, and negotiate with the king for leave to establish military hospitals at Port Mahon. Eighteen regiments of the line, three squadrons of cavalry, and different corps of artillery and engineers were ordered to hold themselves in readiness; four hundred transports were assembled, and chartered by government in the port of Marseilles, while the vessels of war, which were to form the convoy, were appointed their rendezvous in the neighborhood of Toulon. After some hesitation as to who should command this important expedition, the Count de Bourmont, then minister at war, thought fit to appoint himself; and his *etat-major* was soon complete, Desprez acting as chief, and Tholozé as second in command. Maubert de Neuilly was chosen provost-marshal, De Bartillat (who afterwards wrote an entertaining account of the expedition) quarter-master general, and De Carné commis-

sary-general to the forces. In addition to these, there were about twenty aid-de-camps, orderlies, and young men of rank attached to the staff, together with a Spanish general, an English colonel, a Russian colonel and lieutenant, and two Saxon officers, deputed by their respective governments. There were also a section of engineer-geographers, whose business was to survey and map the country as it was conquered, "and," says M. Rozet, who was himself employed in the service we have just mentioned, and to whose excellent work, written in that capacity, we are so much indebted, "twenty-four interpreters, the half of whom knew neither French nor Arabic, were attached to the different corps of the army, in order to facilitate their intercourse with the inhabitants." As the minister had determined on risking his own reputation on the expedition, the supplies were all, of course, of the completest kind, and in the greatest abundance. Provisions for three months were ordered; an equal quantity was to be forwarded as soon as the army had landed in Africa; and, amongst the other materials furnished we observe, in looking over the returns, thirty wooden legs, and two hundred crutches, for the relief of the unfortunate heroes, a boring apparatus to sink pumps, if water should run short, and a balloon, with two æronauts, to reconnoitre the enemy's position, in case, as was represented to be their wont, they should entrench themselves under the shelter of hedges and brushwood.

The French effected a landing at Sidy-el-Ferruch, a small promontory, about five leagues to the west of Algiers, and half a league to the east of the river Massaffran, where it discharges itself into the bay. On the 14th of June they all landed without opposition.

After a continued series of engagements and skirmishes the army got within cannon shot of Algiers, where they broke ground and began entrenching, and the French works being completed, the heavy breaching cannon were all mounted; and at day-break on the 4th of July, General Lahitte, having assured himself by personal inspection that all was ready, ordered the signal rocket to be thrown, and at the same moment the whole French batteries opened their fire within point blank distance, and with a report

which shook the whole of Algiers, and brought the garrison, who were little expecting so speedy an attack, running to their posts. The artillery was admirably served, and from one battery which enfiladed the fort, the balls were seen to sweep away at once an entire row of Algerine cannoneers from their guns. The Turks displayed the most undaunted courage; they answered shot for shot, supplied with fresh men the places of such as were slain, stopped up with woolsacks the breeches made by the balls, replaced the cannon which the French fire had dismounted, and never relaxed their exertions for a moment. But the nature of their works was ill-calculated to withstand the scientific accuracy with which the besiegers made their attack. Every ball now told—the tower in the centre was completely riddled by shots and shells; the bursting of these latter had disabled great numbers of the garrison. By seven o'clock the besieged had begun to retire from the most damaged part of their works; by half-past eight the whole outer line of defence was abandoned, and by nine the fire of the fort was extinct. The Turkish general, finding opposition hopeless, had sent to the Dey for commands; and in reply was ordered to retreat with his whole remaining force to the Cassaubah, and leave three negroes to blow up the fort. The tranquillity with which they performed this fatal task deserves record. The French, finding the enemy's fire to fail, directed all theirs towards effecting a practicable breach. The fort seemed to be abandoned;—two red flags floated still on its outside line of defence, and a third on the angle towards the city. Three negroes were seen calmly walking on the ramparts, and from time to time looking over, as if to examine what progress the breach was making. One of them, struck by a cannon-ball, fell, and the others, as if to revenge his death, ran to a cannon, pointed it, and fired three shots. At the third, the gun turned over, and they were unable to replace it. They tried another, and as they were in the act of raising it, a shot swept the legs from under one of them. The remaining negro gazed for a moment on his comrade, drew him a little back, left him, and once more examined the breach. He then snatched one of the flags, and retired to the interior of the tower; in a few minutes

he re-appeared, took a second and descended. The French continued to cannonade, and the breach appeared almost practicable, when suddenly they were astounded by a terrific explosion, which shook the whole ground as with an earthquake; an immense column of smoke, mixed with streaks of flame, burst from the centre of the fortress, masses of solid masonry were hurled into the air to an amazing height, while cannon, stones, timbers, projectiles, and dead bodies, were scattered in every direction—the negro had done his duty—the fort was blown up.

In half an hour the French sappers and miners were at work repairing the smoking ruins, their advanced guards had effected a reconnoissance along the side of the hill towards the fort Bab-azoonah, and their engineers had broken ground for new works within seven hundred yards of the Cassaubah. But these preparations were unnecessary; the Dey had resigned all further intention of resistance, and at two o'clock a flag of truce was announced, which proved to be Sidy Mustapha, the Dey's private secretary, charged with offers of paying the whole expense of the campaign, relinquishing all his demands on France, and making any further reparation that the French general might require, on condition that the troops should not enter Algiers. These proposals met with an instant negative:—Bourmont felt that Algiers was in his power, and declared that he would grant no other terms than an assurance of life to the Dey and inhabitants, adding that if the gates were not opened he should recommence his fire. Scarcely had Mustapha gone, than two other deputies appeared, sent by the townsmen to plead in their behalf. They were a Turk called Omar, and a Moor named Boudherba, who having lived for some time at Marseilles, spoke French perfectly. They received nearly the same answer as Mustapha; but they proved themselves better diplomatists, for they spoke so much to the general of the danger there would be in refusing the Janissaries all terms, and the probability that if thus driven to despair they might make a murderous resistance, and afterwards destroy all the wealth and blow up all the forts before surrendering, that Bourmont, yielding to their representations, became less stern in his demands; and Mustapha having returned