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THE HISTORY OF PIRACY

By the Same Author

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“Full of wit, humour, beauty, landscapes,
birds, beasts and men . . . he amuses and
delights all the time.”—*Sir John Squire.*



CAPT. AVERY AND HIS CREW TAKING ONE OF THE GREAT MOGUL'S SHIPS

THE HISTORY OF PIRACY

BY

PHILIP GOSSE

*Author of "The Pirates' Who's Who"
"Memoirs of a Camp-Follower"*

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAPS

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To

IRENE GOSSE

FOREWORD

To write a complete history of piracy from its earliest days would be an impossible undertaking. It would begin to resemble a maritime history of the world. What the following pages attempt to do is to show what conditions, geographical and social, preceded the rise of piracy, to trace its periodical rises and declines, its forms and fortunes, to depict the more outstanding members of the profession and finally to show how national organisation, backed by the steamship and the telegraph, brought it to an end.

The material required for such a record as that contained in this book compels the author to cast his net far and wide and in many of the by-waters of history and literature. There have been but two or three books written which have attempted to deal with the subject as a whole, and these contained many gaps which could only be filled by research into all sorts of unlikely sources. Who for example would have thought to find important pirate material in a life of St. Vincent de Paul, the "patron saint of practical philanthropists?"

Even so it has been found impossible in certain periods to acquire that amount and quality of detail without which no book can be more than a synopsis, and it is for this reason that the chapter on Classical Piracy has, with some reluctance, been reduced to an appendix. The outline exists, the detail that gives life is unfortunately lost for ever.

One great difficulty which confronts the pirate historian is the diffidence shown by his heroes in recording their own deeds. The successful pirate, unlike the successful man in almost any other profession, did not crave notoriety, for obvious reasons, and it is doubtful whether even the most indefatigable of journalists, had they existed in their modern form, could have overcome this modesty. The pirate who escaped the gallows preferred retirement into obscurity with his fortune,

and very few were ever induced, either by the need for money or the craving for renown, to write an autobiography.

Another difficulty has been to decide who was or was not a pirate. Usually this point is easily settled, but there are borderline cases which defy definition. Webster defines a pirate as "a robber on the high seas, one who by open violence takes the property of another on the high seas, especially one who makes it his business to cruise for robbery or plunder; a freebooter on the seas; also one who steals in a harbour." By this definition it is hard to determine for instance whether Francis Drake was a pirate or no. A sixteenth century Spaniard would have answered with a vigorous affirmative, and even the most patriotic Englishman must admit that the early voyages of the Elizabethan hero to America were simple piracy, though in most of his voyages Drake held openly or by implication a commission from the Crown. Yet so did other notorious seamen who called themselves privateers, even if their commission bore the seals of States which had not yet been born or which did not know of the holders' existence. In general privateers of this sort must be excluded from the strict category of pirates save when they exceeded the terms of their very liberal commissions.

It is impossible to acknowledge all of the help and suggestions I have received in the writing of this book. My thanks are due to Mr. Oskar Lundberg of Upsala who brought to my notice several Norse pirates; to Mr. L. C. Vrijman of The Hague, a profound student of the subject, who allowed me full use of much material relating to the Dutch pirates and buccaneers which was new to me; to Mr. Basil Lubbock for permission to reprint parts of the hitherto unpublished Journal of Edward Barlow describing the activities of Captain Kidd in the Red Sea and Indian Ocean; and to Commander John Creswell, R.N., for the labour he took in tracking out the "Voyage of Captain Bartholomew Sharp in the Pacific" from the original journal of Captain John Cox, one of Sharp's companions — this is the first reliable map showing the wanderings of the buccaneers on what is perhaps the most exciting of all such voyages.

I wish also to thank Mr. G. E. Manwaring and other members of the staff of the London Library who have rendered me invaluable help; Miss Olivia Hawkshaw for translating several Norwegian and Swedish books; Mr. Frank Maggs for his untiring search for rare or out-of-the-way books and manuscripts concerned with piracy; the editor of *The Times* for permission to reprint certain valuable extracts; and Messrs. Dulau & Company for permission to use material out of "The Pirates' Who's Who."

Last but far from least I must acknowledge my great indebtedness to Mr. Milton Waldman for reading the manuscript and making many valuable suggestions and corrections.

P. G.

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THE HISTORY OF PIRACY

THE HISTORY OF PIRACY

BOOK I

THE BARBARY CORSAIRS

CHAPTER I

PIRATES IN GENERAL

PIRACY, like murder, is one of the earliest of recorded human activities. The references to it coincide with the earliest references to travel and trade; it may be assumed that very shortly after men began the transport of goods from one point to another various enterprising individuals arose who saw profit in intercepting these goods on the way.

Trade follows the flag, and robbery whether by land or sea follows trade. "As surely as spiders abound where there are nooks and crannies," wrote Captain the Hon. Henry Keppel, the great hunter of Oriental pirates in the nineteenth century, "so have pirates sprung up wherever there is a nest of islands offering creeks and shallows, headlands, rocks and reefs—facilities in short for lurking, for surprise, for attack, for escape."

In all the seas of the world and in all times piracy has passed through certain well-defined cycles. First a few individuals from amongst the inhabitants of the poorer coastal lands would band together in isolated groups owning one or but a very few vessels apiece and attack only the weakest of merchantmen. They possessed the status of outlaws whom every law abiding man was willing and eager to kill at sight. Next would come the period of organisation, when the big pirates either swallowed up the little pirates or drove them out of business. These great organisations moved on such a scale that no group of trading ships, even the most heavily armed, was safe from their attack. Of this sort was the era of the Barbary corsairs, of Morgan and his buccaneers, of the wild West Country sea-

men early in Elizabeth's reign — pirates against whom competition was hopeless and authority powerless.

Then came the stage when the pirate organisation, having virtually reached the status of an independent state, was in a position to make a mutually useful alliance with another state against its enemies. What had been piracy then for a time became war, and in that war the vessels of both sides were pirates to the other and subject to the same treatment. In these times rose such men as the terrible Kheyr-ed-din, better known as Barbarossa, who carried the Crescent into the strongest ports of the Mediterranean and counted a victory over the Imperial fleet of Spain as all in the day's work; the sailor geniuses of Cornwall and Devon who, during one short and dazzling era, wrote the annals of piracy in poetry instead of prose; and Lemarck's Sea Beggars and Condé's Rochellois, who made war on Church and State in the name of liberty and the Reformation.

In the end the victory of one side would as a rule break up the naval organisation of the other, as Don John of Austria raked and burned the fleets of Islam in the narrows of Lepanto. The component parts of the defeated side would be again reduced to the position of outlaw bands, until the victorious power was strong enough to send them scurrying back once more to the status of furtive footpads of the sea whence they had arisen.

Piracy at its greatest moments becomes a major part of history itself but even in its lesser phases there is a fascination that is peculiarly its own, apart even from the spell that crime can exercise on the imagination. For it is crime of a very special sort, demanding of its followers much more than boldness, cunning or skill in the use of arms.

The master pirate had to be able to handle his ship (in the beginning often an unseaworthy one until he could steal a better) in tempests and in fights, make his way disabled to sheltering harbours, control his unruly ruffians through disease and discontent, employ the arts of the diplomat to provide himself with a safe market on shore for his stolen wares. Men like these are rare, and few of the respectable professions can show

more masterful personalities than those to be met at the top of the pirate tree. Apart even from the semi-legal adventurers like Drake, Morgan and Barbarossa the pirates' Hall of Fame contains many a remarkable hero who in life was quite properly regarded as a criminal beyond hope of salvation.

They were a queer lot — in their oddities perhaps even more than in their abilities lies the secret of their fascination. As far as salvation goes it is astounding to find how many of them carried through their most desperate acts in the belief that they were laying by a credit for the after life. It was regard for his soul that inspired Captain Roberts, who always wore in action "a rich damask waistcoat and breeches, a gold chain round his neck with a large diamond cross dangling from it," to enforce a strict temperance on board his ship and a due respect for the sanctity of womanhood. It was this same concern for his soul that urged Captain Daniel to steal a priest for the celebration of Mass on board his vessel and to shoot one of the crew for making an obscene remark in the course of it. And probably no more fervent Utopian has ever existed than Captain Misson, who founded, fifty years before the French Revolution, amidst torrents of exalted oratory, a pirate republic dedicated to Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. The captive whose conscience refused to allow his escape from the owner to whom he had been sold because it would be cheating a man who had paid good money for him, the Quaker shipmaster who declined to use force against the Barbary corsairs and in the end prevailed against them nevertheless, are perhaps nearer in spirit to such pirates than were Blackbeard and Kidd.

The history of piracy is therefore not a mere grim chronicle of the triumph of law; it is more than a series of romantic yarns about gold, fighting and adventure. It has its amusing side as well, strange lore, ludicrous happenings, the bizarre in human nature. We follow Captain Bartholomew Sharp in the most amazing of all pirate voyages and listen to one of his captives, a Spanish gentleman, whiling away the monotony of the quarter deck with stories of how a priest went ashore in Peru while ten thousand Indians stood gazing at him, and before them all laid his Cross gently on the backs of two roaring

lions who "instantly fell down and worshipped it," whereupon two tigers followed them and did the same. We share the terrors of Ludolph of Cucham, who in 1350 wrote a catalogue of the dangers which might be experienced at sea from "sea monsters" and especially the sea swine, an animal which will rise up near the ship and beg — "if the sailors give it bread it departs but if it will not depart it may be terrified and put to flight by the sight of a man's angry and terrible face." If the sailor is frightened he must not show it: "he must look at it boldly and severely and must not let it see he is afraid, otherwise it will not depart but will bite and tear his ship." And though one must be distressed at the stories of Christian sufferings in captivity, one can also delight in the opportunity which the experience gave good St. Vincent de Paul of studying the alchemy which stood him in such good stead afterwards, and sympathise with the complaint of "Sir" Jeffery Hudson, Charles I's pugnacious dwarf, that hard labour in captivity had increased his height from one foot six to three foot six.

Nor is there humour lacking in a notable pirate kidnapping which occurred in the Ægean Sea in 78 B.C., an event which, had it turned out a trifle differently, might have changed the whole history of the world.

In that year a certain young Roman gentleman of exalted family connections, having been banished from Italy by the dictator Sulla because of his adherence to the dictator's exiled rival Marius, was travelling by sea to Rhodes. Being a young man full of ambition and having nothing else to do while Rome was forbidden him, he had decided to improve his time by perfecting himself in an art in which his masters had told him he was deficient: elocution. To this end he had entered himself at the school of Apollonius Molo, the famous teacher of oratory.

While the ship was sailing past the island of Pharmacusa, off the rocky coast of Caria, several long low craft were suddenly seen coming out towards her. The merchantman was a slow sailer and with the breeze dropping any hope of escape from the pirate boats, propelled by the long sweeps and strong

arms of slaves, was out of the question. Dropping her little auxiliary sail she waited for the sharp-beaked craft to slip alongside and in a short while her decks were crowded with swarthy ruffians.

Looking round at the groups of frightened passengers the pirate chief was at once struck by a young aristocrat, exquisitely dressed in the latest fashion of Rome, who sat reading, surrounded by his attendants and slaves. Striding up to him the pirate demanded who he might be, but the young man, after one disdainful glance, turned back to his book. The infuriated pirate then turned to one of the young man's companions, his physician Cinna, who informed him of the captive's name, which was Caius Julius Cæsar.

The question of ransom was at once opened. The pirate wanted to know how much Cæsar was willing to pay to gain his own freedom and that of his servants. As the Roman did not even take the trouble to answer, the captain turned to his second-in-command and asked him what he considered the party worth. This expert looked them over and gave it as his opinion that ten talents would be a reasonable sum.

The captain, irritated at the young aristocrat's superior airs, snapped, "Then I'll double it ! — twenty talents is my price."

At this Cæsar spoke for the first time. With a lift of his eyebrows he remarked, "Twenty ? If you knew your business you'd realize I'm worth at least fifty."

The pirate chief was staggered. It was something quite out of his experience to find a prisoner who considered himself so important that he would volunteer to pay nearly twelve thousand instead of three thousand pounds in ransom. However he took the extraordinary young exquisite at his word and bundled him off into the boats with the other captives, to wait in the pirates' stronghold for the return of the messengers sent to collect the ransom.

Cæsar and his party were installed in some huts in a village occupied by the pirates. The young Roman occupied himself principally with daily physical exercise, running, jumping and throwing large stones, at times in competition with his captors. In his less strenuous hours he wrote poems or com-

posed orations. In the evenings he would often join the pirates round their fire and experiment on them with his verses or his oratory. It is recorded that the pirates entertained an extremely low opinion of these compositions and said so with indelicate candour — either their taste in such matters was low or else Cæsar's verse, now lost, did not attain the literary standard of his maturer prose.

It was a strange life for the spoiled dandy whom Sulla had described as "the boy in petticoats." He sounds like a character in an Oscar Wilde essay who very successfully rose to the demands of life amongst Albanian brigands. All the witnesses agree that under his precious affectations he was utterly fearless. Not only, like a true Roman patrician, did he despise his captors for their uncouth manners and want of education but bluntly charged them with these deficiencies to their faces. And he thoroughly enjoyed himself in telling them what would happen to the whole gang if they ever fell into his hands in the future, solemnly promising that he would crucify the lot. The pirates, more amused at his effeminacy than angry at his threats, held him in a kind of condescending respect and thought the promise of a general crucifixion an excellent joke. Once at night when, according to their custom, they were sitting round their fire far into the night, drinking and indulging in various unmusical noises, their perplexing captive sent a servant in to the captain to desire him to keep his men quiet as they disturbed his sleep. The request was honoured: the chief told his crew to pipe down.

At last after thirty-eight days the messengers returned to say that the ransom of fifty talents had been deposited with the legate Valerius Torquatus, and Cæsar with his companions were put on board a ship and sent to Miletus. It had taken an unexpectedly long time to collect so large a sum of money, because after Sulla had banished Cæsar he had confiscated all his property and that of his wife Cornelia. In the circumstances it might have been better for the young man to have diminished his self importance somewhat.

On his arrival at Miletus the ransom was paid over to the

pirates, who at once departed, and Cæsar went on shore to carry out the plan he had determined upon. From Valerius he borrowed four war galleys and five hundred soldiers, and at once set out for Pharmacusa. Arriving there late the same evening he found the whole pirate crew, as he had expected, celebrating their luck in an orgy of eating and drinking. Taken completely by surprise they were unable to resist and surrendered, only a few managing to escape. Cæsar captured some three hundred and fifty of them and had the satisfaction of getting back his fifty talents intact. Putting his late hosts on board his galleys, he had all the pirate ships sunk in deep water and then set sail for Pergamum, where Junius, the Prætor of the province of Asia Minor, had his headquarters.

Arrived at Pergamum Cæsar clapped his prisoners into a well-guarded fortress and went to interview the Prætor. He found that official, who was the only authority with power to inflict capital punishment, away on duty. Following and overtaking him Cæsar explained briefly to the Prætor what had happened; he had in safe custody at Pergamum the whole pirate gang with their booty, and asked for a letter to be given him authorising the deputy governor at Pergamum to execute the pirates or at least their chiefs.

But Junius did not take kindly to the idea. He disliked this imperative young man who rushed in to upset so unexpectedly the tranquillity of the prætorian round and took it so easily for granted that he had but to order and the Governor-General of all Asia Minor would instantly obey. There were other considerations as well. The system whereby his merchants paid tribute to the pirates for immunity had the sanctity of an old custom which worked, on the whole, not too badly. If Junius did as Cæsar wanted, the pirates' successors, being strangers, would most likely prove even more extortionate than Cæsar's captives. It was, in addition, an understood thing that officials like the Prætor, stationed far from Rome on the outposts of the Empire, were there not only to serve the state but to turn a profitable penny against the day when they should retire to

civil life at home. The pirate gang was rich and might reasonably be expected to make a proper acknowledgment to the Governor if he exercised his prerogative of clemency and turned them loose.

However it would have taken too long a time to explain these complicated affairs of state to a young man, one for whom, moreover, Junius entertained such a strong dislike that amiable conversation was difficult. He promised Cæsar to go into the whole matter after his return to Pergamum and later inform him of his decision.

Cæsar quite understood. He bowed himself out of the Prætor's presence and by forced rides achieved the return journey to Pergamum in a day. Without more ado, on his own authority (probably the new situation in Rome was unknown to the provincials) he ordered the pirates to be executed in the prison, reserving the thirty principals for the fate he had promised them. When they were led before him in irons he reminded them of that promise, but added that out of gratitude for the friendliness they had shown him he would grant them a last favour: before being crucified each of them should have his throat cut first.

Thereupon Cæsar resumed his journey to Rhodes and in due time enrolled himself in Apollonius Molo's excellent school of oratory.

Of course it would be absurd to pretend that all pirates were either heroic or good humoured, or that their practical extinction has not been to the benefit of mankind. Their virtues are more easily appreciated when they are dead than while they are alive, and most of them, all but the greatest, were small blackguards who preferred attacking women to men and cheating to fighting. Sixteen hundred years after Cæsar's ransom, another illustrious captive who fell into their hands received such brutal treatment that the world was nearly robbed of one of its greatest literary geniuses, Miguel de Cervantes. Countless thousands of other less conspicuous folk were sent to rot in the galleys, or had their throats cut for a few sheep or a few pence. But pirates were men after all

(though, as will appear, they were sometimes women) and like men in general exhibit an infinite variety of what we call human nature. The history of pirates may be a history of bad men, but it is a history of men nevertheless.

CHAPTER II

THE BARBAROSSAS

THE first great era of modern piracy originated at some vague time in the Middle Ages, reached its climax in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and was only effectively halted by concerted international effort about a hundred years ago. Its centre was the Western Mediterranean, its agents the inhabitants of the Barbary coast, which extended from the frontiers of Egypt to the Pillars of Hercules. The name "Barbary" was derived from the tribal name of Berbers.

The practice of piracy dwindled after the fall of Rome and became a comparatively unimportant factor in the life of the Mediterranean peoples for the fundamental reason that during nearly a thousand years there was very little maritime trade to prey upon. Presently, when the Crusades, followed by Venetian and Genoese enterprise, began to revive the ancient glories of the Eastern commerce, the familiar temptation was renewed, and dusky men in turbans and long robes flitted in oared boats from coast to island in the path of the gorgeous high-decked galleys of the princely Italian cities. The threat of the outlaws was not yet very formidable: no great power had yet risen to protect them, and the combined vigilance of the Mediterranean states was for several centuries able to keep them in check. If it had been otherwise one wonders how long the Renaissance would have been postponed, or even whether it would have flowered at all. The Turks had not yet taken Constantinople and spread their dominion over North Africa. Venice, Genoa, France and Moorish Spain were strong enough in conjunction with the Knights Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem, heirs of the Crusades and hereditary enemies of Mahomet, to protect their ships against the isolated bands of the "skimmers of the sea."

The most determined of the early efforts to suppress the Barbary corsairs occurred in 1390 when the Genoese, aroused by a sequence of losses at sea, raised "a great number of lords, knights and gentlemen of France and England" and set out to attack them in their lair at Metredia on the Tunisian coast.

The English contingent was commanded by Henry of Lancaster, afterwards King Henry IV. The brunt of the landing was borne by his longbowmen, whose vigorous fire, as at Crécy and Poitiers, broke the enemy's resistance along the shore and drove him into his fortress. The invaders then settled down to carry out one of the long and tedious sieges which are characteristic of mediæval warfare. The Christian forces, lacking in efficient artillery and inadequate in number for an assault, sat down to wait outside the city. But disease wasted them even more quickly than hunger decimated the defenders; after two months a peace was patched up and the Europeans sailed for home. Though the pirates had not been exterminated they were for some time, as usual after these punitive expeditions, intimidated into more restrained operations.

But in 1492, that year of years in modern history, the situation changed abruptly. Spain under Ferdinand and Isabella wrested control of the Iberian Peninsula from the Moors and sent them scurrying back across the Straits of Gibraltar after over seven hundred years of residence in Europe. The effect on the social and political life of North Africa was of course instant and profound. Into a country barely able to support a few poor tradesmen, farmers and merchants, were suddenly thrown several hundred thousand proud, civilised and warlike people with no available employment, a large measure of ambition and a passionate itch for revenge.

It was revenge for their wrongs at least as much as the desire to compensate themselves for their lost property that incited the Moors into an unrelenting hostility against Spain which ultimately became part of a Holy War between their co-religionists and Western Christendom. At the very beginning the exiles possessed certain advantages in their raids on the rapidly expanding commerce of the infant Spanish Empire. They knew the language, they were familiar with Spanish

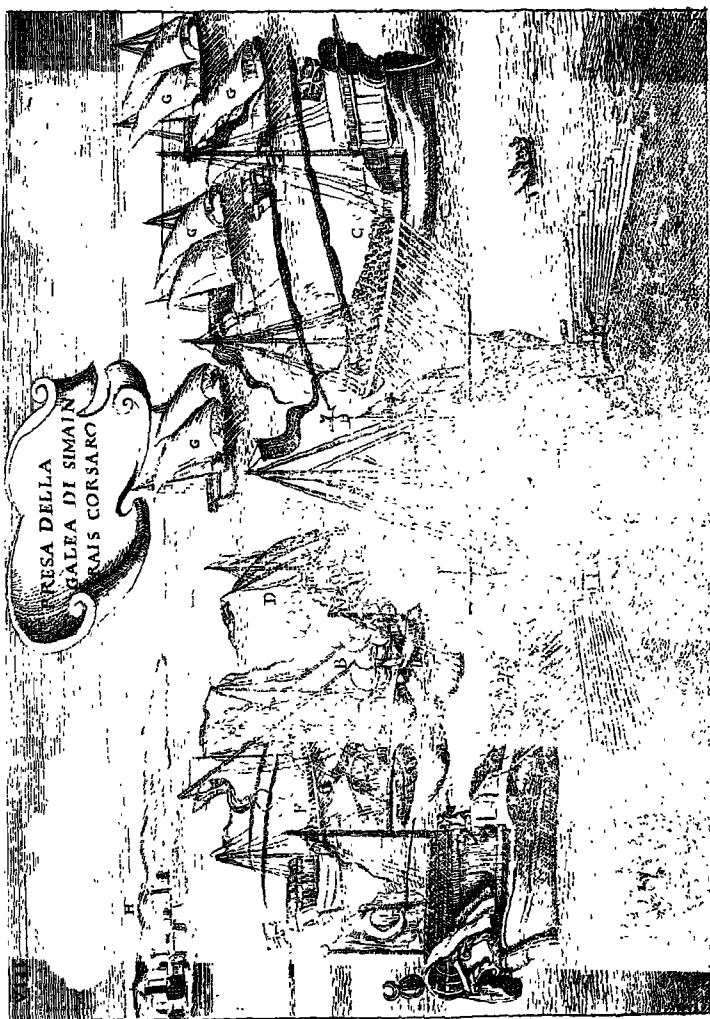
trading habits, they possessed unlimited sources of information in the persons of their compatriots left behind in Spain. Instead of an ally of the powers policing the Mediterranean they were now an enemy, and the federation was by that much weakened while the enemy became at a stroke immeasurably stronger.

At the date of their expulsion the sea was an unfamiliar medium to the Moslems, and navigation an art they had yet to learn. A large proportion of them felt a superstitious horror of deep water, much in the manner of most of the ancient Greeks. There is a story that after the conquest of Egypt by the Arabs, the great Caliph Omar wrote to his general in command to ask what the sea, of which he had heard so much, was like. The military man in reply described it as "a huge beast which silly folk ride like worms on logs." The Caliph thereupon at once issued a general order that no Moslem should venture a voyage on this dangerous element without express permission.

The whole character of Mediterranean piracy changed almost in a night after the expulsion. The new race of corsairs built bigger and faster vessels, supplementing oar with sail. They developed the organisation aboard ship, augmenting the captives available for the galleys with the fruits of raids on their neighbours in the interior, and putting only trained fighting men into the boarding parties. Appreciating the fact that piracy was a branch of business as well as of navigation they perfected a comprehensive system whereby, through payment of percentages (usually ten per cent of the booty) to the native rulers along the coast, they ensured protection for themselves and an outlet for their captures: the sheik, in consideration of his interest, undertook to protect his associates from their enemies and to provide an open market for their wares at the termination of each voyage.

In 1504 occurred the first raid on the grand scale under the new dispensation, one that stirred Christendom into almost as deep an alarm as the advance of the Turk up the valley of the Danube.

Pope Julius II had despatched two of his biggest war galleys,



heavily armed, to carry a consignment of valuables from Genoa to Civita Vecchia. The leading vessel, several miles ahead and out of sight of the other, was passing the island of Elba when she sighted a galliot, but suspecting nothing continued slowly and steadily on her course. The captain, Paolo Victor, had in fact no reason to anticipate the presence of pirates in his vicinity. The Barbary corsairs had not appeared in these waters for many years and in any event were accustomed to attack only smaller vessels. But suddenly the galliot drew alongside and the Italian saw that her deck was a mass of moving turbans. Without a hail, even before the galley had time to stand to, a shower of arrows and shot was poured on to her crowded decks and a moment later the Moors were swarming over her sides, led by a thickset figure with a fiery beard. In a few moments the great galley was a prisoner and the surviving members of the crew were being pushed and prodded like cattle into the hold.

The red-bearded captain then put into execution the second part of his programme, which was no less than the seizure of the second Papal galley. Some of his officers objected to the second venture, as too dangerous in the circumstances: the task of holding the prize already won seemed sufficient without attempting another. Their chief silenced them with an imperious gesture; he had already devised a plan whereby the first victory was to serve the second. He ordered the prisoners to be stripped of their clothes, which were then assumed by his own men, whom he distributed in conspicuous positions on board the galley, taking in tow his own galliot to make it appear to the newcomers as if the Papal ship had taken a prize.

The simple ruse was effective. The two vessels drew together, the crew of the second crowded to the side to find out what had been going on; another hail of arrows and shot, a boarding party, and in a few minutes the Christian sailors were chained to the oars of their own ship in place of the released Moorish slaves. Within two hours of the original encounter the galliot and her victims were headed for Tunis.

This was the first appearance of Arouj, the earlier of the two brothers Barbarossa, on a stage where he and his family

were to be the most distinguished actors for a long generation. He was the son of a Greek Christian potter by the name of Jacob who had settled in Mitylene after its conquest by the Turk. While still a youth Arouj had voluntarily turned Mohammedan, enlisted on board a Turkish pirate vessel and soon obtained command in the Ægean. In person "he was not very tall of stature but extremely well set and robust. His hair and beard were perfectly red; his eyes sparkling and live, his nose aquiline or Roman and his complexion between brown and fair."

It was not, however, as a Turkish vassal that Arouj turned up so unexpectedly in the Western Mediterranean, but as an independent rover. Barely had he been let loose in the Ægean when he persuaded his crew to repudiate their allegiance to the Grand Porte and join him in a career which would enable them to dispense with both vexatious authority and profit-grabbing capitalists in Constantinople.

However some sort of backing was necessary, a port in a storm and an accessible market, if not capital. Arouj sailed for Tunis and concluded a suitable arrangement with the local Bey, who undertook to supply these requirements in return for twenty per cent of the plunder, later reduced to ten after the freebooters were strong enough to dictate their own terms.

Arouj's sensational exploits, culminating in the capture of the Papal galleys, attracted to him all the adventurers of the southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean as well as a large number of renegades from the different countries. His appeal was as strong as that of Drake to the youth of Devon and Cornwall in the second half of the same century. Imitators also sprang up and soon the Mediterranean was infested from end to end with companies of freebooters from the Barbary ports. The insurance rates became prohibitive and business in certain lines was all but strangled. Ferdinand of Spain, now the acknowledged leader of Christendom and, as head of the greatest maritime power in the world, the worst sufferer, shouldered the responsibility of repressing the former masters and present enemies of Spain. At the head of a strong fleet he blockaded the coast and within two years, 1509-1510, re-

duced Oran, Bougie and Algiers, at that time the three principal strongholds of the corsairs. On the conclusion of peace the Algerians undertook to pay the Catholic King a yearly tribute as an earnest of future good behaviour, a guarantee which Ferdinand reinforced with a powerful fortress he constructed on the island of Peñon opposite their harbour.

While Ferdinand lived the pirates were held in some sort of check, and two attempts to retake Bougie, in 1512 and 1515, were beaten off; in the former action Arouj lost an arm, shattered by a shot from an arquebus. But after the death of the Spanish king in 1516, the Algerians revolted and invited Salim-ed-Teumi, an Arab from Blidah, to become their ruler. Salim accepted and shortly afterwards instituted a blockade of the fort of Peñon.

Finding his own resources insufficient Salim sent an embassy to Arouj, who had two years before taken Jijil from the Genoese, to come to his assistance. Arouj accepted and at once marched to Algiers at the head of five thousand men, while his brother, the terrible Kheyr-ed-din, who was soon to succeed and surpass him, followed with the fleet. On his arrival Arouj, perhaps impressed with the difficulties of a divided sovereignty, strangled Salim with his own hand and became master of the place, nominally as the vassal of the Sultan of Turkey.

The tiny Spanish garrison at Peñon still held on and against it the pirate chief could make no headway. On the other hand Spain could not manage to relieve it. An armada sent in 1517 by the Regent, Cardinal Ximenes, under the command of Don Diego de Vera, was defeated, seven thousand Spanish veterans being routed by the Moors, and the fleet wrecked by a storm. It was not until 1529 that the fortress fell.

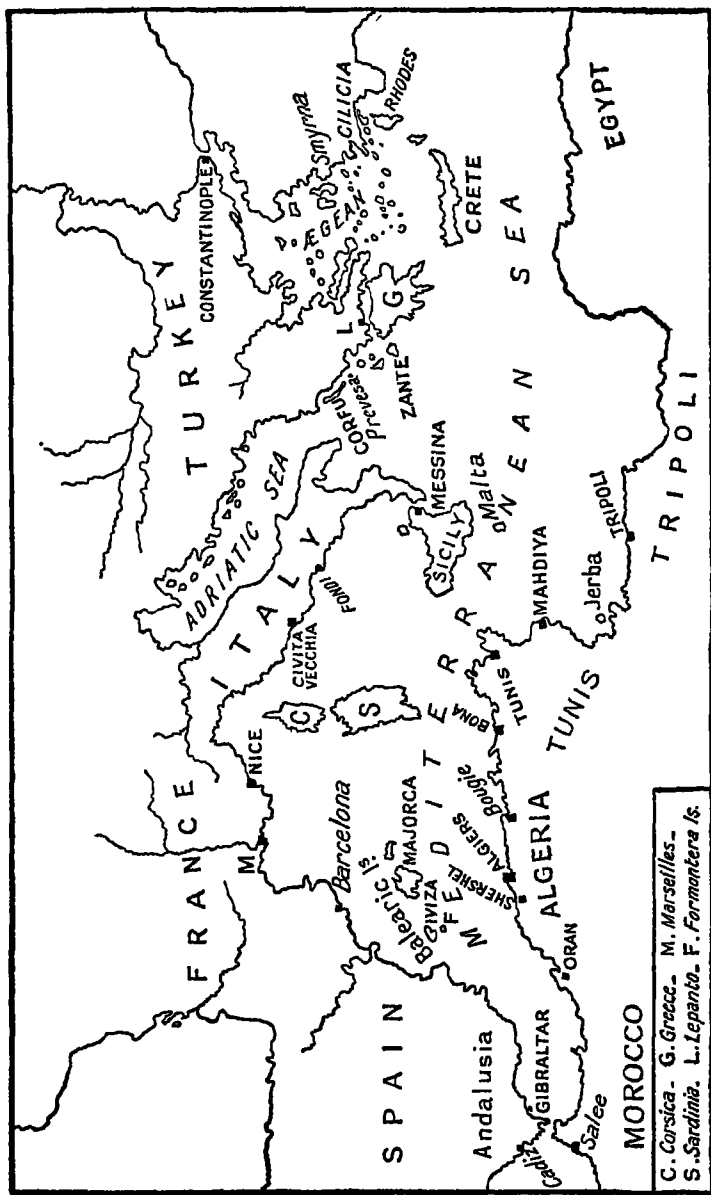
Meantime Arouj Barbarossa was consolidating his position. Shortly all of what is now Algeria was included in his kingdom and he began to overflow into the neighbouring provinces of Tunis and Tilimsan. The Algerians soon found his rule even stricter than his predecessor's and in 1518 again revolted, calling in the Spaniards to help them. The Emperor Charles V, alarmed at the growing power of the corsair chief, was only

too willing and sent a force of ten thousand picked veterans to overwhelm him. Arouj was surprised at Tilimsan while at the head of a force numbering only fifteen hundred. Seizing his treasure he made a bolt for Algiers, the Spaniards, under the Marquis of Comares, Governor of Oran, in close pursuit. The chase grew too hot — Arouj, hoping to distract his enemy, scattered gold and jewels behind him, like Atalanta's suitor, in the hope of causing a distraction. The implacable Spaniard looked and pushed on, catching the Moslems as they were crossing the Rio Salado. Arouj himself got safely across, but seeing that his rearguard was caught, without hesitation recrossed the river and threw himself into the fight. Practically the whole of the fleeing army was killed and with it the one-armed commander with the fiery red beard.

It is as rare for genius to repeat itself in pirate families as in those devoted to the more sedentary arts. Arouj was a genius in his line, the first of a mighty Islamic breed. But his younger brother, baptised Khizr, known to Mohammedans as Kheyr-ed-din, and to Christians after his brother's death as Barbarossa also, was an even greater than he. With Arouj's daring and warlike ability he combined a statesmanlike prudence which raised him beyond the rank of bandit chief to the highest posts in Islam.

It may be interpolated here that the repetition of Mohammedan names is unavoidable. The reason for the repeated use of Barbarossa is obvious. But often a man is known by no other name than his familiar title. Thus all the corsair chiefs were termed *Reis*, which means merely captain; no less than three outstanding figures during the following century bore the name of Murad; hence Murad Reis is as likely to appear in the annals of the Barbary pirates as Captain Jones in the roster of the Royal Navy.

In appearance Kheyr-ed-din was even more striking than his brother. "His stature was advantageous, his Mien portly and majestick; well proportioned and robust; very hairy with a beard extremely Bushy; his Brows and Eyelashes remarkably long and thick; before his Hair turned grey and hoary it was a bright Auburn. . ."



MEDITERRANEAN SEA—ANCIENT PIRACY AND BARBARY CORSAIRS

Kheyr-ed-din's first step after inheriting his brother's name and estates was to send an embassy to Constantinople to make formal offer to the Grand Seignior of his new province of Algiers and to declare himself the humble vassal of the Ottoman Empire. The Sultan, having just acquired Egypt, was delighted to add this important territory to his new dominion, and in accepting the offer appointed Kheyr-ed-din Beglerbeg or Governor-General of Algiers. The harassed corsair thus secured himself the support of one of the most powerful rulers on earth, while retaining sufficient independence owing to his distance from Constantinople to do more or less as he pleased. The first substantial advantage he acquired was a force of two thousand janissaries from the bodyguard of his new suzerain.

The new viceroy proceeded to organise his territory by a system of alliances with his neighbours and the conquest of those who were of most immediate importance to him. One by one the coast towns so painfully won by Ferdinand were retrieved from the Spaniards until at length only the fortress of Peñon, at the mouth of the Algiers harbour, remained in his enemies' hands. In the meantime he routed one Spanish force after another, bent on the reconquest of their possessions, in 1519 driving off Admiral Don Hugo de Moncada, who with a fleet of fifty men of war and a veteran army had tried to take Algiers.

Having made himself so early in his reign the master of all the coast for many miles to the east and west of Algiers, Kheyr-ed-din with a reconstituted navy resumed his brother's aggression against Christian shipping and Christian towns. He was now no longer a solitary leader but the head of a group of fleets, having gathered round him the most formidable collection of master pirates yet known in the world: Dragut, a Mohammedan from Rhodes; Sinan, the "Jew of Smyrna," who was suspected of black magic because he could take a reading of a position at sea by means of the crossbow; and Aydin, the renegade Christian, known to the Spaniards as "Drub-devil" but to both French and Turks as "Drub-Spaniard."

Each spring as the weather became settled these gentlemen

set out from Algiers and swarmed over the western Mediterranean, their favourite hunting grounds being the fairways off the coast of Spain and the Balearic Islands, although occasionally they would even venture through the Straits of Gibraltar to intercept a Spanish treasure ship returning from the Americas to Cadiz.

The practice became so settled that it grew monotonous unless varied by some particularly spectacular raid or even more spectacular collision with an avenging Spanish flotilla. In 1529 Drub-devil started out on one of the routine expeditions to the Balearic Islands. After the usual captures, including several ships and a host of slaves, news reached him that at Oliva, a small port on the Valencia coast, there were many "Moriscos," Moorish slaves who were willing to pay handsomely for an opportunity of escape from Spain.

Arriving off Oliva that night Drub-devil embarked two hundred families of Moriscos and sailed away to the island of Formentara. Scarcely had the corsair disappeared when General Portundo, with eight Spanish galleys, appeared off the coast, heard the news and started off in pursuit in the direction of the Balearics. Drub-devil, finding his ships unworkable by reason of the crowd of refugees on board, landed them on Formentara and prepared for the unequal contest.

The Spanish ships drew close, but to the amazement of the Algerians passed by without firing a shot. The Spanish commander had paused to negotiate for a reward of ten thousand ducats from the owners of the Moriscos if he returned them intact, and was afraid of drowning them if he launched a broadside of his heavy artillery against their present custodians. The corsairs, construing his hesitation as cowardice, thereupon took the offensive and "rowing with the utmost fury they swooped upon them like eagles and had surrounded the eight galleys before the amazed Spaniards knew what they were about." In a short time General Portundo was dead, seven galleys had surrendered and the other was scurrying for safety to Iviza, a few miles away.

The corsairs then reembarked the two hundred families, who had been anxiously watching the battle from the shore, and

after freeing several hundred Mussulman slaves from the rowing benches of the captured galleys and replacing them with the crews, rowed back to a triumphant reception in Algiers.

In the same year Kheyr-ed-din finally reduced the troublesome fortress on the island of Peñon. Time and again the Algerian ruler had flung his growing resources against this stronghold without success. Its possession was almost vital: owing to its situation no ship could enter or leave the harbour without permission of the Spaniards; consequently, all the corsair ships had to be beached outside, an undertaking involving great difficulty.

The attack this time was launched with unprecedented violence and determination. After a heavy bombardment which continued uninterrupted for sixteen days and nights, a storming party of twelve hundred advanced and overwhelmed the remnant of the defenders, all of whom were compelled to surrender. The courageous governor of the castle, Don Martin de Vargas, was, in spite of his wounds, bastinadoed to death in the presence of the arch-pirate. The latter then had the fort razed and began the construction of the great mole which still shelters the harbour of Algiers, an enormous task which took the toil of thousands of Christian slaves two years to finish.

The disaster for Spain was not yet complete. Fourteen days after the fall of Peñon nine transports loaded with troops and ammunition for the reinforcement of the garrison appeared. Dumbfounded by the disappearance of the fort the squadron was cautiously reconnoitring when out darted the pirates in their long-oared galliots and seized the whole convoy, out of which they obtained twenty-seven hundred prisoners and great stores of ammunition, guns and provisions.

Barbarossa himself, though ordinarily at the centre of his great and growing web, occasionally took to sea. In 1534, having constructed a fleet of sixty-one galleys after his own design, he sallied forth to attack Christianity in its very centre. Sailing direct through the Straits of Messina he appeared before Reggio ere the inhabitants were aware of his presence and carried away all the ships in the harbour as well as hundreds



RE-APPEARANCE OF THE LOWLY LADY JULIA DE GONZAGA

of Christian slaves. The very next day he stormed and destroyed the castle of St. Lucida, taking eight hundred prisoners, and then cruised north, plundering and raiding indiscriminately.

Stories that he heard on his progress of the lovely Julia Gonzaga, Duchess of Trajetto and Countess of Fondi, next tempted him to an exploit of a somewhat different character. The young widow was the most famous beauty in Italy; no fewer than two hundred and eight Italian poets had written verses in her honour and the device emblazoned on her shield was the Flower of Love. It occurred to the corsair that she would make an excellent token of his devotion to his new lord, Suleyman the Magnificent.

The lady was at Fondi. Thither the pirate travelled, swiftly and by night. But the fame of his presence preceded him and the lady had just time to leap from her bed and gallop off on horseback dressed in the flimsiest of night garments and accompanied by one male attendant. She managed to escape, and afterwards condemned the attendant to death because, she alleged, he had been unduly familiar during that desperate nocturnal ride. Kheyr-ed-din, annoyed at the escape of his sultan's fair prize, gave over the town of Fondi to a terrible four hours' punishment at the hands of his men.

The real object of his cruise had not yet been disclosed. While the courts of Europe continued to hear of his plunderings and burnings along both shores of Italy and of the great shiploads of spoils he was despatching regularly to Constantinople, he suddenly turned south, dashed swiftly across the Mediterranean, entered the harbour of Tunis, bombarded the city and in a single day captured it. Hassan the Sultan, Spain's protégé, fled, and with him departed the balance of power from the inland ocean. Not only was Spain's foothold in North Africa nearly broken, but her tenure of Sicily threatened by the isolation of the island from both east and west.

This was not to be endured. Charles V promptly assembled a huge fleet, numbering more than six hundred vessels, at Barcelona under the command of Andrea Doria, greatest of all Spanish admirals though by birth a Genoese. In May 1535

the fleet departed for Tunis. The army on board consisted of Italians and Germans as well as Spaniards; on the way the expedition was joined by a squadron of "the Religion," Knights of the Order of St. John, from Malta. Like most of these voyages of chastisement the racial composition of the forces resembled the musters of the Crusades.

After a short intensive bombardment a breach was made in the walls of the Goletta, the fortress guarding the entrance to the harbour of Tunis, and the Chevalier Cossier led the Knights of St. John through the breach and planted the banner of the Order within the fortress. After fierce hand to hand fighting, during which Sinan the Jew led three desperate counter attacks, the Moors were at last driven out.

Barbarossa placed himself at the head of an army of ten thousand and advanced to meet the Christian army in its march on the city. But his troops broke and ran, and Kheyr-ed-din with his two generals Sinan and Drub-devil fled to Bona, a port some miles away, where the corsair commander had with his usual foresight stationed his fleet.

In the meantime thousands of Christian slaves broke out of the citadel and joined their rescuers in sacking and plundering the city. For three days the Emperor gave the town over to a carnival of murder and looting, until finally the Christian soldiers and the Christian slaves turned on one another and fought over the spoils. Even the Catholic chroniclers speak with shame of the affair, for the victims were not pirates in any sense but the innocent inhabitants of Tunis, who a year before had been the friends of Spain and accepted Kheyr-ed-din's authority under compulsion.

The Emperor then made a treaty with the deposed Sultan, whereby he continued to hold the Goletta and to receive an annual tribute, with the promise that all piracy should cease. By August Charles had left Tunis, assigning to Doria the task of catching Kheyr-ed-din dead or alive. The Emperor returned home the hero of Europe, the crusader and knight errant who had vanquished the scourge of Christendom; and countless presses and studios worked overtime to immortalize him and his exploit.

But even while the poets sang and the painters painted, Barbarossa was on his way again. On his arrival at Bona he had at once collected his twenty-seven galliots and as soon as they were ready stood out for Minorca.

In three days he arrived off Port Mahon, his squadron flying Spanish colours. The islanders, who had already heard rumours of the Emperor's success at Tunis, thought that the ships were part of the returning armada and prepared to receive them in triumph. Guns from the fort fired a salute of welcome — the answer to their blank charge was a well-directed rain of ball and arrow. The city and the wharf, where lay a great Portuguese ship with a rich cargo, were swept clean, and Barbarossa sailed for Constantinople to offer Suleyman six thousand captives as a mitigation of his offence in losing Tunis. The Sultan was graciously pleased to accept the explanation in this form and appointed the Beglerbeg of Algiers High-Admiral of all the Ottoman fleets.

The following two years saw both Doria and Barbarossa at sea, each inflicting great damage but without making contact with each other. In 1537 the Spanish admiral defeated an Ottoman force and carried twelve Turkish galleys off to Messina. The Algerian retaliated by laying waste the Apulian coast. While so engaged he learnt that Venice had joined the Holy War against Islam. He thereupon sailed to Corfu, then a Venetian possession, and landed twenty-five thousand men and thirty cannon within three miles of the castle. Four days later he was reinforced by twenty-five warships. The largest gun in the world was brought into action for the first time, a fifty pounder which fired nineteen times in three days, a thing to marvel at. The monster's accuracy was not worthy of its size, however, as she only planted her mark five times on the fortress in the course of a month's siege. The resistance proved too strong and on September 17th Suleyman called off the attack with the remark that a thousand such castles were not worth the life of one of his brave men. Kheyr-ed-din protested but obeyed, and finished the season with a dash up the Adriatic, killing and burning as he went, and retreating with thousands of captives, amongst whom were some of the noblest of

the Venetian families. The inventory of his spoils includes four hundred thousand pieces of gold, a thousand girls and fifteen hundred boys. As a present for his Imperial master he sent two hundred boys dressed in scarlet, each bearing a gold and silver bowl, two hundred more with rolls of fine cloth, and thirty to offer the Sultan thirty well stuffed purses.

In the summer of 1538 he was off again when word reached him that the enemy was cruising in the Adriatic. Doria's fleet, now augmented from the navies of Venice and the Pope, was the most formidable ever sent out in pursuit of the corsairs. Kheyr-ed-din, sweeping his eye over his own hundred and fifty ships of the line, decided to risk action. Abandoning a profitable cruise in the neighbourhood of Crete, he moved off for the Ionian Sea. He located the enemy in the Bay of Preveza on the Albanian coast.

The two greatest sea powers, the two greatest sea fighters, were at last face to face. With Doria were eighty Venetian, thirty-six Papal and thirty Spanish galleys, totalling with fifty sailing galleons nearly two hundred ships of war, carrying some sixty thousand men and two thousand five hundred guns. Kheyr-ed-din had under him the cream of Islam's sea forces and the incomparable lieutenants he himself had trained, Dragut, Sinan and Murad, the last of whom was to succeed him as the thorn in the side of Christendom after another battle had been fought with another result thirty-three years later in the near-by Gulf of Lepanto.

It was on September 25th that the two fleets came in sight of each other. Neither commander wanted to begin the fight but to manœuvre, waiting for the wind and to see what the other would do. Doria appears to have lost his old dash. Though outnumbering the enemy he clung to the harbour until he had lost his original advantage. His timidity may have been due to age or, as some have hinted, the hatred of the old Genoese for his city's ancient enemy Venice, on whose behalf he was largely fighting. Not until the 28th, when every external advantage favoured the Turks, did he lead his fleet out of harbour. A terrific running battle ensued in which the Christians were beaten and as the wind rose to a gale they

fled, leaving numbers of their countrymen in the enemy's hands. The flag of Suleyman the Magnificent now floated supreme over all the waters of the Mediterranean.

It was three years before Christian Europe had sufficiently recovered itself to attempt revenge. This time it was determined to root out the pirates from their central lair, Algiers, and Doria was again entrusted with the command. With him were the old allies, although nearly every Christian country was to some extent represented by volunteers. The English contingent contained Sir Henry Knevet, the ambassador of Henry VIII to the Spanish court, and "his familiar friend Sir Thomas Challoner, by birth a Londoner, by study a Cantabrigian, by Education a courtier and by religion a devout and true Catholic," who was one day to succeed Knevet as minister to the same court from the Protestant daughter of Henry VIII. Amongst the Spaniards was Cortez, the disgraced conqueror of Mexico, of whom Morgan * rather incredibly reports that "he lost out of a napkin tied round his middle two most precious vessels made out of entire emeralds valued at three hundred thousand ducats."

Barbarossa himself was not in Algiers at the time; he returned to it but once after his appointment as High Admiral of the Turkish fleet. His deputy was a Sardinian renegade, Hassan, who had been kidnapped by pirates from his native island while still a small boy and sold to a master who "took a singular liking to him on account of his promising aspect and uncommon vivacity and soon caused him to be castrated."

The armada, consisting of five hundred ships manned by twelve thousand sailors (a far larger expedition than that which sailed under Medina Sidonia to punish England in 1588 for somewhat similar offences) sailed for Algiers on the 19th October 1541. Doria objected to a venture so late in the season, when storms were to be expected in Northern Africa. Charles overruled him: it may be that Preveza had diminished the Emperor's confidence in his admiral, or that he considered the lateness of the season would ensure the presence of the corsair navy at Algiers. In any event Charles was so confident

* "History of Algiers," 1731.

of the invincibility of his armada that he even took some Spanish ladies with him to witness the victory and applaud the victors. The Emperor himself sailed in Doria's flagship, and the land forces were under the command of the Duke of Alva, the greatest soldier of the sixteenth century.

Doria's forebodings were soon realised. On arrival at Algiers a gale rose which prevented any communication with the shore for three days, and even after it subsided the landing of the troops was dangerous and difficult, most of the soldiers having to wade up to their necks in the sea.

Once on shore the Spanish army had no trouble in advancing on and surrounding the city, for Hassan had but few reliable troops. A sharp bombardment of the walls from the heavy cannon began and the Spanish infantry was drawn up ready to rush the breach and storm the citadel. The victory seemed as good as won when suddenly another gale arose accompanied by a tropical cloudburst. The Spaniards had been in such a hurry to take Algiers that they had not even waited for their tents or stores to be landed and were without adequate clothing. All that night they stood knee deep in mud, stung by the rain and frozen by the cold wind. Daylight found them a hungry, shivering, dispirited rabble, unable even to fire a shot since their powder was wet.

Suddenly the Turks made a sortie and flung themselves on the Christians, who began to waver and would have broken into panic which could only have resulted in a massacre had not the Knights of Malta with cool courage covered the retreat.

In the meantime the gale had increased and many ships were driven on shore and wrecked. Doria stood out to sea with the rest of his fleet; after the storm had subsided sufficiently he brought it back into the Bay of Temendefust and with great difficulty the exhausted troops were reembarked. So crowded was the depleted fleet that all the horses had to be thrown overboard to make room for the men.

On November 2nd the fleet at last got away, just as another violent storm broke which scattered it. Several Spanish vessels were wrecked on the Algerian coast and their crews made captives. The rest beat against the storm for three weeks be-

fore the remnant of the once splendid armada reached haven in Spain.

It had been an overwhelming disaster. Three hundred officers and eight thousand soldiers had died of wounds or drowning. The slave-barracks, the bagnios, of Algiers were so overstocked with slaves that it was commonly said that a Christian was scarcely fair exchange for an onion. Not even glory was saved out of the wreck, except perhaps to the company of the Knights of Malta; the spot where they made their gallant stand is to this day known to the Algerians as the "Grave of the Knights." The defeat at Algiers was the severest blow that Spanish chivalry sustained before 1588; but from the former at least it was temporarily to recover.

An event which shortly took place moved the suppression of the pirates even further into the future than the successive Turkish victories at Preveza and Algiers. Francis I, King of France, called in the Moslems to help him to a favourable settlement of his disputes with the Emperor Charles, an alliance which many of his own subjects decried as impious. During the two centuries when the corsair terror was at its highest it was Christian differences that enabled it to wax. The resources of Western Europe, the growth of its national power, the quality of its armies and navies, would probably at any time have enabled it to keep the Mediterranean reasonably clear had this desirable end not been constantly frustrated by the dissensions amongst the Christian nations themselves. Had Western Europe set out with one purpose, under one great leader, as did the Romans in 67 B.C., they would have achieved what Rome did under Pompey. Louis XIV's mot, uttered in the next century, that if there had not been any Algiers he would have had to create one, indicates, though to a lesser extent, the policy of the sixteenth. The Turks not only recruited many if not most of their greatest corsairs, like the two Barbarossas, Sinan and later Murad Reis, from amongst Christian peoples, but the latter were constantly giving them encouragement by these alliances against their own kind.

In 1543 Francis concluded his first alliance with Suleyman, and Kheyr-ed-din was despatched to Marseilles. On the way

he collected a few prizes but was apparently meaning to attend strictly to his commission when the Governor of Reggio in the Straits of Messina imprudently fired one shot at the fleet "as if in defiance, which so exasperated the choleric Captain Pasha that though he had no such design he immediately landed twelve thousand troops and battered the town so much in earnest that he soon got entrance." *

As usual Kheyr-ed-din took quantities of captives but this time he too was taken captive. Amongst his prisoners was the daughter of the Governor, a charming girl of eighteen, with whom the great corsair so fell in love that in spite of his age, which tradition puts at ninety years, he married her and gave her her parents' freedom as a wedding present.

The early days of the honeymoon were spent at Civita Vecchia, the town at which long ago the two Papal galleys from Genoa had never arrived, and where the bride now had her first experience of a large-scale, pirate raid.

Kheyr-ed-din then proceeded to his triumphant reception at Marseilles. The French admiral's flag, the banner of Our Lady, was lowered in Barbarossa's honour and the Crescent run up in its place, a spectacle which the Marseillais must have witnessed with no great feeling of pride.

The ceremonies over, the corsair found time hanging heavy on his hands and sailed over to Nice, then in the Dukedom of Savoy, where he passed an unprofitable few days owing to the sturdy defence put up by Paolo Simeoni, a Knight of Malta who had once been Kheyr-ed-din's captive. He then took up his station off Toulon, where he and his merry men proved to be most expensive and unsatisfactory guests to their French allies. Amongst the hundreds of galley slaves in his ships were many Frenchmen, whom his allies begged him to release. He not only declined, although they were dying like flies of a plague, but replaced the dead by raids on the neighbouring French villages. When the poor wretches died he would not allow them Christian burial nor even allow the bells of the churches in the city to be rung to summon the devout to Mass; to him these chimes were "the devil's musical instru-

* Morgan: "History of Algiers."

ment." The cost of feeding and paying his crew he transferred entirely to the French exchequer. Occasionally he sent out a squadron to annoy the King of Spain, according to the terms of his commission. Otherwise he remained at Toulon "lazily engaged in emptying the coffers of the French King."

At length the French could stand the strain no longer; the stay was costing too much. But the going was by no means inexpensive, for Barbarossa collected a large sum for himself and the wages of his men up to their reentry into the Bosphorus, as well as procuring the freedom of four hundred Moham-medan galley slaves, before quitting Toulon for home.

This was his last voyage. He spent his few remaining years in building a magnificent mosque as well as a stately sepulchre for himself, which he required in July of 1546.

A great many legends sprang up about him after his death, amongst them that "his corpse was found four or five times out of the ground lying by the said sepulchre after he had been there inhumed: nor could they possibly make him lie quiet in his grave, till a Greek wizard counselled them to bury a black dog together with the body which done he lay still and gave them no further trouble." For many years after his death no Turkish ship left the Golden Horn without a prayer and a salute to the tomb of the greatest of Turkish seamen and the mightiest of Mediterranean pirates. He survived in Islam as the hero of a living epic.

CHAPTER III

THE SUCCESSORS OF BARBAROSSA

THE immediate successors of the mighty brothers were their lieutenants, picked by them and trained in their school. None of these followers equalled their masters, none of them possessed Kheyr-ed-din's imagination or his capacity for wide-spread administration; but as a group they were equally daring, more ferocious and inflicted even greater harm on European commerce.

The first of these was Dragut, who was born in Anatolia in Asia Minor, opposite to the island of Rhodes. He was one of the few leaders in the Turkish navy to be born a Moham-medan. His parents were peasants but "this obscure and toilsome Life ill agreeing with young Dragut's sprightly and aspiring Genius, he run away to sea at the age of twelve, enlisted aboard a Turkish warship and soon won for himself the reputation of being a good Pilot and a most excellent Gunner." Before long he became the owner of a galliot, in which he cruised the waters of the Levant with great success.

It was not long before the news of his exploits reached the ears of Kheyr-ed-din who, quick to appreciate talent, invited Dragut to Algiers, gave him the command of twelve galleys and sent him off to seek his own and the Beglerbeg's fortunes. Thereafter he "passed not one summer without ravaging the coasts of Naples and Sicily nor durst any Christian vessels attempt to pass between Spain and Italy for if they offered it he infallibly snapped them up and when he missed his prey at sea he made himself amends by making descents along the coasts plundering villages and towns and driving away multitudes of inhabitants into captivity." *

At length his successes had grown so intolerable to Charles

* Morgan.

V that in 1540 the Emperor sent out a special order to Doria, then engaged in the general pirate hunt as described above, to "hunt him out and endeavour by all possible means to purge the seas of so insufferable a nuisance." The admiral passed on the order to his favourite nephew, Giannettino Doria, who set out in pursuit of Dragut, and surprised him ashore on the island of Corsica while he and his crew were employed in haggling over the division of some plunder.

For once the pirate was caught napping and after a fierce but hopelessly one-sided fight was compelled to surrender. Young Doria made his uncle a present of the captive, and Dragut spent the next four years chained to the oars of his own galley.

He obtained his release during the period of the French alliance, while his master was drifting at anchor in the Bay of Toulon. Jean de la Valette, who afterwards became Grand Master of the Knights of Malta, was on a visit to Andrea Doria and noticed the famous corsair amongst the galley slaves. La Valette himself had once pulled a captive's oar in one of Barbarossa's ships and knew by sight this most distinguished of Barbarossa's lieutenants. He could appreciate the degradation of the other's position through experience; moreover he was a kindly and courteous man, a chevalier of the old school.

"Signior Dragut," he greeted the captive, "Usanza de guerra — it's the custom of war." "Y mutanza de fortuna," replied the corsair chief, "the luck's changed."

The Christian undertook to act as mediary between Doria and Kheyr-ed-din, and in the end Dragut was ransomed for three thousand crowns, a bargain which the whole of Christendom as well as the Spanish admiral lived to regret. These bargains were not uncommon, even in the worst fury against the Barbary excesses. In part they were due to greed, since a rich man with friends was more profitable alive than dead, in part to the fear of reprisals by the other side. Even in the next century, when the corsairs were by no interpretation anything but outlaws, and the nations of the West were trying to forge an effective organisation for their suppression, policy required a recognition of the system of ransom.

Dragut's return to command coincided with Kheyr-ed-din's retirement to Constantinople. He was put in charge of all Barbarossa's ships in the Western Mediterranean and soon earned for himself, in the words of an admiring Turkish historian, the title of "the drawn sword of Islam." There seemed to be nothing that his reckless daring would not venture. He seized a Maltese galley in which he found seventy thousand ducats intended for the repair of the fortification of Tripoli which then belonged to "the Religion" — very few of the corsairs ever cared to attack openly the gallant company of St. John. When he decided that Algiers was no longer convenient as a base, and was looking round for another more suitable, he pounced on the island of Jerba, off the coast of Tunis and opposite the island of Malta, which for two hundred years had been the property of the Doria family. The admiral was naturally annoyed but the island remained in Dragut's hands and was fortified into one of the most inaccessible lairs to which ever pirate repaired. In addition he captured in one raid Susa, Sfax and Monastir, which Doria had retaken for Spain only the previous summer, and finally retook, by a Ulyssean ruse, the Tunisian seaport of Mahdiya, or Africa, as it was always called by Christian writers in the Middle Ages.

Again the harassed Emperor was roused to action; to have the Moors once more entrenched on the coast of Tunis after all the trouble and expense he had been put to in recovering and strengthening it was more than Spanish pride could bear. An expedition was sent to Mahdiya in June 1550, once more under the command of old Admiral Doria. It arrived while Dragut was on his summer cruise in the Gulf of Genoa, Doria's home waters, and his nephew, Hisar Reis, was in command of the city. Hisar withstood a long siege while waiting for Dragut to return with help, but a vigorous assault by the Spaniards on September 8th swept the defenders out of the town.

Dragut received warning before his return and fled to Jerba. Not expecting to be disturbed he had drawn up his galleys on the shores of the inland lake of the island in order to careen their hulls, when Doria's squadron suddenly appeared

at the mouth of the lake's narrow inlet and effectively bottled the corsair in.

Doria at once sent messengers to Madrid and other capitals to announce his triumph, then settled down to wait at the mouth of the trap till the fox came out. He waited a long time, but no sign of the animal was seen. Ultimately Doria ventured up the narrow channel until he reached the lake, when he discovered that the fox had vanished.

The explanation of the disappearance was simple. Dragut had collected two thousand peasants from the island and put them to work with his own crew and slaves to cut a canal across to the other side of the island, through which the ships could be dragged to the sea. While Doria kept his look out Dragut resumed his interrupted cruise, in the course of which he intercepted a galley from Genoa which was on its way with reinforcements for the Spanish admiral at Jerba.

Dragut lived fifteen years longer, fifteen years which began and ended with two furious efforts by the great Sultan of Constantinople to clear out of the Mediterranean, out of existence even, his ancient and unforgiving enemies, the Knights of St. John of Malta. In both of these expeditions Dragut, delighted to pay off a long score, took a leading part; both were failures, and in the second he perished.

The aristocratic brotherhood of the Knights Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem was founded at the time of the First Crusade. It made its headquarters in the Holy City, where its members tended the sick with devotion and fought the infidel with valour until their expulsion by Saladin in 1291.

After wandering about for many years in search of a new domicile they joined forces with a notorious Genoese pirate, Vignolo di Vignoli, and with him conquered the island of Rhodes. Here they constructed a series of massive fortifications wherein they might be safe from any conceivable attack. This was the beginning of the second epoch in their varied and gallant history.

From Rhodes they combined with advantage the two professions of trade and piracy. Their island lay in the fairway of all ships plying with merchandise between Alexandria and

Constantinople and other principal ports of the Eastern Mediterranean. The carrying of slaves was their principal business, but they did not neglect the opportunities offered by the passage of Turkish and Venetian vessels in front of their eyes. At one time or another every Christian nation was either complaining of their depredations or imploring their protection.

The Turks made several attempts to oust them, but were again and again repulsed until in 1522 Suleyman the Magnificent invested the island so thoroughly that after a siege of six months the starving and battered survivors were forced to make an honourable submission. Turned out of Rhodes they resumed their wanderings, flitting from place to place for eight years, while the Grand Porte enjoyed an undisputed hegemony in the eastern half of the Mediterranean and the brothers Barbarossa were threatening to acquire a similar one in the western half.

Their next resting place was Malta, which Charles V ceded them in 1530 together with the neighbouring town of Tripoli. The Emperor was not actuated primarily either by generosity or Christian compassion on the homeless. Malta and Tripoli were of no great value in themselves but of high strategic importance for guarding the surrounding seas from the Turks and the corsairs. His Catholic Majesty reckoned accurately that the Knights, having lost all their property, would be glad to earn a living as an auxiliary of the Spanish high-seas police.

They took their new duties seriously. Once more they built fortifications on a scale never before attempted, and galleys which were the terror of every Moslem vessel, whether legal or illegal, afloat. Their success became proverbial; the strongest and largest of Turkish warships had little chance against an equal number of Maltese galleys, and if the Knights had possessed a sufficient number of ships it is probable that the Turks would have been swept off the Mediterranean. Their fleet numbered only seven large galleys, six of them painted bright red, the flagship of the commander a sombre black. They were of exceptional size, rowed by Mohammedan slaves, and heavily armed. So for many years the Knights of

St. John lived by plundering the enemies of the Faith, and led lives devoted to chastity, piety and charity.

The first of the two Moslem attempts to take Malta was abortive. The fleet, led by Sinan with Dragut second in command, drew up under the walls of the citadel, when the Jew, after reconnoitring the defences and exchanging a few shots, declared the place impregnable and turned south for Tripoli. This secondary stronghold of the Knights was held by only four hundred men, of whom Sinan with his six thousand Turks made short work. He then sailed away, having inflicted more damage on his co-religionists than on his enemy.

The culminating effort of the Mohammedans was made in 1565. The Sultan despatched a huge fleet of a hundred and eighty-five vessels, of which more than one hundred were galleys royal, carrying over thirty thousand fighting men, under the command of Piali Pasha, a Croat — another of the long list of converts from Cross to Crescent. He was joined before Malta by Dragut with a squadron of Algerian war galleys.

The expedition, like the Armada of 1588, was a long while preparing, and the Knights had sufficient warning to enable them to send urgent calls for help to Europe. The Order was fortunate in having for its Grand Master in its greatest hour of peril a man of outstanding wisdom and bravery, the seventy-year-old Jean de la Valette, who had spent almost his whole life in the Brotherhood and had been one of the defenders of Rhodes forty-three years before. He was the most experienced pirate-fighter alive; he had spent a year chained to an oar in one of Barbarossa's galleys; he knew every leading corsair by sight and most of them by name. It was he who had interceded with Doria over twenty years before for the ransom of that same Dragut who now was preparing to disembark his terrible Berbers in the exultant belief that the last chapter of the Crusades was now to be written in the blood of the Crusaders' heirs.

It was one of the great sieges of history. For six months the Turks mined, blew breaches in the walls, and poured in a horde of Believers who were not afraid to die. For six months

the defenders, vastly outnumbered, exploded counter-mines, made furious sorties, were driven back, fought with desperate bravery each time the enemy penetrated their defences. The result appeared to depend entirely on the arrival of the Spaniards; the long summer dragged on and still the Spaniards delayed, as they always delayed until they had succeeded in losing half a world. The result seemed so inevitable—the Knights could hold out no longer—and the promised help did not come.

They never came until it was all over, yet it was they who saved Malta. For on a certain day, when the wounded and starving remnant of the Knights were almost at the end of their tether, the Turks heard that the relief from Spain was on the way, broke into panic in the midst of an attack, ran to their ships and scurried away. The great siege was at an end and the Knights of Malta had become immortal. To this day the memory of the Grand Master still lives in the name of the island capital he so nobly defended: Valetta.

Of the thousands who were killed during the siege, almost the last to die was Dragut, who with his Algerians fought on while the main body of the Turks were fleeing in terror—from nothing worse than bad news.

As DRAGUT represented with distinction the Barbary corsairs in the most magnificent siege of the sixteenth century, so his successor was privileged to represent the same troublesome race six years later in the greatest naval battle of the century, one of the great naval battles of the world, one of the supremely decisive battles of history.

During those six years, although Turkish prestige had suffered at Malta, the Ottoman navy was still formidable and while it held the seas any effort to break up the Algerian organisation could hope for no more than a partial success. In the interval between Malta and Lepanto Uluj Ali, known in Christendom as Ochiali, roamed the ocean with much the same abandon as his predecessors. Ochiali's original intention was to enter the Catholic priesthood, but his studies were interrupted by a pirate raid on his home at Castelli in Calabria and

he was carried off to slavery. The profession of Mohammedanism, a striking personality and an aptitude for the sea soon translated him from the rowing bench to the quarter deck, where his proficiency shortly gained him the command of his own ship. For many years he served under Dragut, who had great confidence in him. He was present at the siege of Malta and his services on that inauspicious occasion brought him to the attention of the Sultan of Turkey, who appointed him Beglerbeg of Algiers in succession to Hassan, son of Kheyr-ed-din. Hassan, a competent administrator, had interrupted the maritime tradition of the Algerian pashas and preferred in more characteristic Moslem fashion to keep away from the sea. Ochiali, in the earlier manner of the Barbarossas, went to sea and stayed there as long as the weather permitted; almost his first act after his appointment was the recapture of Tunis (all but the Goletta) for Selim II, who had in 1566 succeeded his father Suleyman the Magnificent.

One day in the July of 1570 he nearly wiped out the stain of the Malta fiasco. While sailing near the coast of Sicily he suddenly happened on four of the Knights' great galleys. Delighted at the encounter Ochiali gave the order to attack. After a fierce battle three of the galleys were captured, including the flagship, which Saint-Clément, the commander of the Knights, ordered to be abandoned, while he escaped with his treasure on shore at Montichiario. Sixty Knights and serving brothers of the Order were killed or made prisoner.

The pride of the Knights was deeply humiliated. When Saint-Clément returned to Malta he was in danger of being lynched by the mob and was only saved by the intervention of the Grand Master. He was then tried before the secular court, condemned to death, strangled in his cell, and his body placed in a sack and thrown into the sea. Failure, and worse, cowardice were never overlooked or forgiven by "the Religion."

Ochiali's next objective was Cyprus. This island belonged to Venice and the principal activity of its inhabitants was piracy, a practice to which Ochiali entertained strong objection. Cyprus served as the headquarters of the Christian cor-

sairs who preyed on the Syrian coast. In addition its site made it an invaluable base for naval warfare in the Eastern Mediterranean, as well as a convenient depôt for troops and stores. After a siege lasting forty-eight days Nicosia, the capital, fell on September 9th, and Ochiali hurried on to Crete, ravaging every island town and village as he swept on towards the Adriatic.

The following August the conquest of Cyprus was completed and at the end of September the corsair, having joined with the main Turkish fleet under Ali Pasha, Piali's successor, lay at anchor in the Gulf of Corinth, as yet unaware that within a fortnight he would be engaged in the last great struggle of Islam's ocean story.

The capture of Cyprus affected the imagination of Christendom as almost no other aggression of the corsairs had ever done. Venice had not always been on the best of terms with her fellow Christians, but now they responded with rare unanimity to her lamentations and rallied round to teach the Turk such a lesson as he would never forget. The Pope, Pius V, assumed the spiritual leadership of the cause and summoned all Christians to join him in support of the one Italian state above all others that had for centuries irritated the Holy See. The knight errantry of Europe rushed to Italy; even from England, whose Queen this same Pope had excommunicated the previous year, came that doughty Protestant seaman Sir Richard Grenville. Official support was less enthusiastic. Only Spain supplied a large fleet, under the command of Giovanni Andrea Doria, nephew of the dead admiral. The supreme command of all the forces engaged was given to Don John of Austria, the twenty-four-year-old son of Charles V by the beautiful Barbara Bloomberg, most romantic of all the knights errant of the sixteenth century. Amongst the humbler members of his command was Miguel de Cervantes, who was soon to laugh knight errantry out of the world.

The avenging fleet mustered two hundred and six galleys and forty-eight thousand men. Even this powerful force, however, proceeded in its hunt with the utmost caution, dreading lest Ochiali should evade them and scourge the Italian coasts

in their rear while they were looking for the main Turkish fleet under Ali Pasha.

On receipt of intelligence that the Christian fleet was at last at sea the Turkish admirals withdrew their squadrons further up the Gulf and anchored in the Strait of Lepanto. Though greater in number than the allies' fleet the Turks were handicapped by their archaic ordnance. Their soldiers still largely used the bow and arrow which the Christians had discarded in favour of the more modern firearm, and their artillery was of an obsolete type.

Early in the morning of October 7th the two fleets came face to face. The first sight of the enemy was called down by the look out on the maintop of Don John's galley; a sail was reported on the horizon, then more and more until the whole skyline was blotted out. The Christian General quickly ran up a white flag, the signal for battle. The slaves were served with meat and wine, a certain indication of hard work ahead. The various principal officers of the allied fleets suggested a council of war, but Don John declined their advice with the reply that "the time for councils is past. Do not trouble yourselves about aught but fighting." He had himself rowed from galley to galley and as he came under the stern of each he held aloft a crucifix and called out encouragement to the men, who responded with cheers. On return to the deck of his own ship he unfurled the Blessed Standard with the figure of the Saviour and falling on his knees commended his cause to God.

It was nearly midday and a dead calm prevailed as the two fleets drew together. There was no attempt at manœuvring and no possibility of it: both fleets were flanked by the shore. Head on they hurled themselves at one another with a shouting and a roar of cannon such as had never been heard before. Ship rammed ship, splintering their oars like match sticks.

The Turks fought like men possessed, boarding again and again with scimitar and sword, only to be mowed down by the deadly hail of musket fire, but in the end the superior weapons of the West told. Towards evening the Turkish resistance weakened, and the discipline of the allied troops converted the defeat into a rout.

By nightfall of that October day the Ottoman maritime empire had been crushed, never to be revived. For centuries the African corsairs continued to harass and plunder Christians in the Mediterranean, but only as outlawed gangs, never again as auxiliaries of a first-rate sea power.

OCHIALI, who escaped from the battle, taking with him the standard of "the Religion" which he had captured from the Maltese flagship and which was hung in Santa Sophia, survived until 1580. He brought to an end the race of pirate kings. There were mighty corsairs after him — not until the nineteenth century was the breed extinguished in Algeria, and their number in the seventeenth was probably even greater than in the sixteenth — but they held no authority apart from what they could win by their individual capacity.

The first of the great independent chieftains was Murad, who learnt his craft under both Kheyr-ed-din and Ochiali. Like so many of his kind he had been born a Christian (of Albanian parents), was captured as a child and carried off to captivity. His owner, Kara Ali, an Algerian corsair, was delighted with his twelve-year-old prisoner and appointed himself the boy's stepfather. Finding him "to be of a daring sprightly genius, he took great delight in him and soon gave him command of a galliot," since he "never failed showing indisputable tokens and superior capacity far exceeding his years." *

The youth was present at the siege of Malta in 1565, but after that disaster became weary of the discipline and monotony of service in the Ottoman navy, gave the fleet the slip and "went on the account" in his master's ship. His seamanship had not yet advanced as far as he thought, for he ran his vessel on the rocks and lost it, but he saved his crew, galley slaves and arms and got them safely ashore on a small island off the Tuscan coast. There the castaways remained until they were rescued by some passing Algerian ships.

Murad was brought back to Algiers to confront an extremely angry Kara Ali who, as a sign of his displeasure, took away

* Morgan.

his ward's slaves and cast him off. Murad, "stung to the quick and having still a violent itch for the cruising trade," managed to get hold of a small galley rowed by fifteen oars and disappeared towards the coast of Spain. Seven days later he was back again, bringing in tow three Spanish brigantines and a hundred and forty Christians. "This lucky hit . . . got him abundance of reputation and so far reconciled him to his patron that he soon gave him another galliot." Murad was off again immediately to try his luck on his new ship, but, somewhat chastened, put himself under the supervision of the older and officially recognised corsair Ochiali. This expedition ended with the capture of three Maltese galleys off the coast of Sicily.

By January 1578 Murad had acquired a squadron of several galliots of his own and was operating as a fully qualified captain or reis. Nothing much of note happened in that year save that he let the Duke of Tierra Nuova, retiring Viceroy of Sicily, slip through his fingers, but in 1580 he carried out an exploit which made his name as famous as that of Francis Drake, who was just returning from his buccaneering tour of the world.

Leaving Algiers in April 1580 with only two galliots, Murad was cruising quietly off the coast of Tuscany when he suddenly spied over a rocky promontory the tall masts of two galleys at anchor. They were the property of His Holiness Pope Gregory XIII, and one of them was the *Capitana* or Papal flagship.

"Murad's mouth watered at the sight" but even his courage stopped short at attacking two well armed vessels with a pair of rowing boats. Just then, while he was wondering what to do, by great good luck along came two other Algerian galliots similar to his own; that is, propelled by oars but with auxiliary sail, and the nimblewitted corsair at once conceived a way of using them. The Papal galleys would be suspicious of four intruders but not of two, for which they would be far more than a match. Murad took the newcomers in tow, ordered them to lower their masts and proceeded to row towards the unsuspecting galleys.

The scheme worked. The Papal crews failed to observe the galliots in tow until all four of the enemy had come round the promontory and were on top of them. The senior officers were on shore, and a panic swept the crews of the large galleys as the turbaned heads showed up over the side. After a short sharp fight both galleys were prizes.

It was a lucky haul for Murad, the galleys being full of treasure as well as of Christians. Chained to the oars were a hundred Turkish and Moorish slaves, and a number of Christian criminals serving their sentences, "many of whom," records the Protestant Morgan with relish, "were priests, monks and friars, there put not for their goodness." There followed much chaining and unchaining. The Mohammedan galley slaves were liberated and their places taken by the late crew of the galleys diluted with the literally unfrocked priests, monks and friars, who merely changed their gaolers without changing the gaol.

Murad's continued success aroused a natural jealousy amongst his rivals. The Admiral of Algiers himself, Arnaut Memi, went off with fourteen galleys to show that the business was not difficult for a competent man to master. Arnaut remained out for two months, and after a thorough scouring of the Mediterranean came back to his station with one blind Christian, captured on the island of Tursià, to show for his summer's work.

The competition proved unfortunate for the competitors. The new Governor-Pasha, recently sent out from Constantinople and entitled by his office to a tenth share of all the plunder brought in by the corsairs, shortly became disgusted with the diminishing return from these ventures. A tenth of one slave, and he blind, would not have enriched the Pasha very much. Sending for all the corsair chiefs to attend him he told them flatly "that they were all a crew of idle dronish poltroons, and that not one of them, Murad Reis alone excepted, was worth hanging." He ended with the announcement "that he himself would show them how to go a-cruising."

And he did. For purposes of instruction he ordered the

masters of twenty-two galliots and galleys to join his own vessels and led the way to Sardinia.

The first lesson was not convincing. The Pasha hid his corsairs on the little island of San Pietro and waited to surprise the town of Iglesias. Unluckily he was discovered, the alarm given and the beach where he proposed to make his landing instantly so crowded with armed and determined Sardinians that the Pasha thought best to postpone his demonstration to another time and place.

He next moved north to Oristano and landed fifteen hundred "fusiliers," who marched to a town forty miles inland under the guidance of a Sardinian galley slave, who was securely fastened to four stout sailors. There they attacked and departed with seven hundred of the inhabitants, whom they carried off to the island of Mal de Ventre (Belly Ache Island). Here the pirates hung out a flag of truce and invited the Sardinians to come and buy their townsfolk back. The invitation was accepted, a delegation arrived and the negotiations were opened. After a long haggle the corsair had descended to thirty thousand ducats and brought the islanders up to twenty-five thousand, but there they stuck. The Moor lost his temper, the Sardinians broke up the conference and the Pasha, "in a fury because he could not prevail with those islanders to come to his demands," departed to sell his prisoners for what they would fetch in the open market.

Continuing north he made a further raid or two, but then learning that Andrea Doria was on his trail with seventeen galleys, decided that the neighbourhood of Corsica and Sardinia was getting too hot for him and turned off in the direction of Spain. On the way he just missed capturing with his staff and his flagship the Viceroy of Sicily, successor to the Duke who had evaded Murad, which caused the Pasha, less controlled in his feelings than the pirate, to "bite his nails and tear his beard for disappointment."

His first landing, a surprise affair not far from Barcelona, netted him fifty Spanish prisoners but so aroused the countryside that he decided once more to look for his luck elsewhere.

This time he chose a spot near Alicante, whence a little while previously some Moriscos had written him to offer substantial payment if he would come and carry them away. Arrived off-shore at night the Pasha sent a boat ashore to warn the Moriscos that help was at hand and to be ready to leave. Shortly thereafter a strong force of soldiers rowed ashore and brought back over two thousand men, women and children with most of their possessions. These were quickly got on board and the fleet sailed away without the loss of a single soldier or passenger.

The galleys were now fully loaded with prisoners, passengers and plunder, and the Pasha turned his face for home, only pausing to pick up a corn ship from Ragusa which blew across his path. Three months after leaving Algiers he was back with a fortune in plunder and slaves. Scarcely had he landed when he called a meeting of the professional corsairs and demanded the answer to the question: Who was the best corsair, he or they?

Meantime Murad Reis, indifferent alike to competitors and Pashas, went his own way. Three years after his superior's return from a cruise which would, after all, have been no more than a weekend excursion for the great Reis, he carried out the most spectacular enterprise of his whole career and did what no Algerian had ever dared to do before. This was to sail through the Straits of Gibraltar and carry out a plundering expedition in the Atlantic. Hitherto the boldest of pirates had preferred to sail in sight of land except for the rare necessary crossings of the Mediterranean.

Murad left Algiers in 1585 with three of his fighting galliots. Calling at Salée, a thriving nest of pirates in Morocco which was to become as important in a few years as Bougie or Algiers, he was reinforced by several small brigantines. The united squadron then passed Gibraltar and set out across the seven hundred miles of ocean which lay between them and the Canaries, a track as unknown to the Mohammedans as it had been to Western Europe two hundred years before. Murad had picked up a captive who professed to know the course and appointed him pilot, but when, after many days' hard rowing

with only occasional assistance from the sails (the mystery of tacking they had not yet explored) they came in sight of some islands, the pilot failed to recognise his goal and confessed to Murad "that he feared they had missed their voyage and were shot far ahead of the Canaries." To this Murad replied, "Though I was never there, I aver what you say to be morally impossible. Therefore keep on your course." *

He was right and the pilot wrong — shortly afterwards they came in sight of the island of Lanzarote, basking peacefully in the hot summer sun.

Immediately on sighting land the pirates took in their sails and lowered their masts so as to be invisible to the islanders. As soon as it grew dark they were again under way. Rowing swiftly and silently to shore they landed two hundred and fifty fusiliers near the principal town. The surprise was complete. The inhabitants had no time to defend themselves, the place was sacked and three hundred captives carried off. The governor himself, a Spanish nobleman, escaped, but his mother, wife and daughter were dragged off to the ship.

By daylight Murad was anchored a little way off shore, and hung out a flag of truce as an invitation to those on shore to come and ransom their friends and relatives. The governor came first, was heavily mulcted and carried back his family. The other well-to-do folk followed so that "none but the unfortunate and destitute remained in their state of wretchedness."

Murad started back without waste of time, but came very near never reaching home. News of his exploit had preceded him, and Don Martin Padilla, whom the winds were to treat so scurvily a dozen years later when Philip II sent him to take revenge on England for the doings of Essex and Raleigh in the Azores, had been despatched to intercept him in the Straits of Gibraltar.

Murad was warned in time to avoid running into Padilla, but not in time to pass the Straits before the Spaniard had taken up his station. To fight through was impossible; the Spaniard had eighteen galleys of the line. Murad stole into an obscure

* Morgan.

port on the Moroccan coast and hid himself for a month, at the end of which he took advantage of a tempestuous night to pilot his minute squadron through the blockaders into the haven of his native waters.

Murad's next exploit took place four years later. This time he was out on a cruise by himself with only one galley — a significant contrast to the days of Barbarossa and Dragut. After picking up a prize or two off Corsica he sailed towards Malta where he met with a French ship, "those fast friends of the Turk," whose amiable master gave him intelligence of a Maltese royal galley, *La Serena*, which was on her way to Tripoli.

Murad promptly took up his station at an island which he believed the Maltese would necessarily pass. His subordinates told him he was wasting their time, but Murad, like most men of his age a firm believer in the black art, consulted his "fortune book" ("an illusion" says Hædo, the learned Spanish chronicler, "truly diabolical"*) and in it learned that the fates had declared he should wait a little longer. Sure enough, early the next morning the great galley appeared, sailing across their line of vision with a Turkish prize in tow. The "fortune book" had been proved right, but the size of the galley put the amiability of the Frenchman somewhat in doubt.

The odds seemed one-sided — a small galliot against a towering galley of the first class — so Murad decided that his crew required moral encouragement. Calling them round him he made them a speech, ending with the inspiring peroration, "Dread not death, since you left your homes in search of wealth and renown and to render service to our beautiful Prophet Mahomet." Occasionally it is just possible to detect a resemblance between the Barbary corsairs and the Knights of the Religion.

The speech had a great success, and the crew cheered it loudly. But by this time the Maltese was well on his way and the slaves were whipped into hot pursuit. The Knights were the last to fly from an enemy, but the commander of the *Serena* could not believe that one solitary galley constituted the whole of the pursuit. Before accepting the action he ordered the look-out to report how many others he could see

* Hædo, "Topographia e Historia General de Argel," 1612.

following behind. On being assured that this was the only one he at once gave orders to put about and capture the insolent corsair. It was afterwards learned that the Knights had agreed, after observing that the galliot was indeed alone, that "this can certainly be nobody but that devil Murad Reis."

Luck this time was again on the side of the foolhardy. At the very first discharge of the corsair's gun, that inefficient weapon scattered its shot so thoroughly that nearly every one of the Christian artillerymen was killed or wounded at his post. This startling exhibition of gunnery decided the contest then and there; disabled at the start the Christians were compelled to give in at the end of half an hour's fighting.

Murad, not unjustifiably pleased with himself, turned back for Algiers, his prisoners sadly rowing his prize home for him. As they were coasting along off the African shore they rounded a point and suddenly came across a Majorcan pirate "which lay plying there upon much the same business as they themselves followed." This form of cut-throat competition on their own doorstep was too serious to be overlooked. Murad snapped up the Majorcan and gave its crew employment by filling up forty-five vacancies on the benches of the Maltese galley. Two days later he entered the port of Algiers with his two prizes, "their colours dragging as is usual in such cases, and with repeated volleys of great and small guns." The whole town turned out to greet its most distinguished son, and the Pasha not only sent him an escort of janissaries but paid him the high compliment of sending his own horse to carry him to his palace.

Murad finished up his career as Admiral of Algiers, an office he received in 1595. He left most of his official work to be done by a deputy and was invariably out "on the account" early in the season. He disappears from the chronicle, wounded in five places by "the Religion's" bullets. It is known that he got back to Algiers after this last encounter with his great foe, but whether he died of his wounds or retired to a fat old age history does not record.

CHAPTER IV

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

By the end of the century the evolution in the business organisation of the corsairs was complete. Beginning in the days of the first Barbarossa the Beglerbeks sent out from Constantinople to govern Northern Africa had appointed as governors of Algiers, the principal corsair centre, not Turks or Moors for the most part, but European renegades who had worked their way up through skill and daring to the first rank of the country's leading profession. Some of these converts even rose to the post of Beglerbek itself. Kheyr-ed-din, the son of a Greek, was followed by a Sardinian, who was succeeded by a Corsican. Ochiali was a Calabrian, his successor, Ramadan, a Sardinian; after him came in order a Venetian, a Hungarian and an Albanian. By 1588 the thirty-five galliots of Algiers were commanded by eleven Turks and twenty-four renegades representing nearly every Christian nation of the Mediterranean littoral and even beyond. Some of these foreigners had been captured as children and subjected to forcible conversion, but others voluntarily submitted to circumcision and took Mohammedan names for the sake of the wealth and adventure promised by the command of a Barbary ship. In 1586 it was reported by Master John Tipton, first English consul at Algiers, that the treasurer to the Pasha was an English eunuch and renegade, son to Francis Rowlie, merchant of Bristol, who went by the name of Hassan Agha. Of the renegades who rose to be high officials nearly all acquired a certain reputation for efficient and even humane administration.

But after Lepanto the character of the administration changed, as it inevitably does when a widespread and decentralizing power offers corrupt servants the opportunity of speedy enrichment away from the eye of the home govern-

ment. The Pashas sent from Constantinople began to sell the governorship to rich Turks, nearly all of them incompetent and most of them rascals, whose sole ambition was to recompense themselves for the purchase price and put away as much money as possible before their tenure of office ended. During this era the more enterprising renegades were more or less independent of the central authority save for the ten per cent which constituted the Governor's chief source of revenue. These reis or "generals of the galleys" were then free to operate pretty much as they pleased. The days of pure piracy were coming back, and it was now to flourish as it never had before.

In 1606 came a change that revolutionised the art as well as the business of piracy. In that year Simon de Danser instructed the Algerians how to build "round ships," — square-rigged sailing vessels of the type used in the Atlantic — and how to navigate them. It was a transition fully as significant as the change from sail to steam; perhaps even greater, for the sailing vessel could go nearly everywhere the steamship could, and of course range far beyond the remotest possibilities of the oared galley. From that moment not only the coasts but the whole basin of the Mediterranean, winter as well as summer, rough weather as well as smooth, became accessible to the corsairs, and even the long water routes along which travelled the great Spanish treasure flotas were infested with them. The experienced robbers of the North Sea and the Channel, English, Dutch and French, only too often found the golden goose plucked before they could lay their hands on it. Naturally they resented this and trouble followed, for to be deprived of one's loot before one had captured it was as annoying as having it stolen afterwards.

The corsairs' benefactor, Simon de Danser* (sometimes called the elder to distinguish him from his son who followed in his profession), began as an ordinary seaman from Dordrecht. He rose to be commander of a ship and became a privateer in the service of the States General during the rebellion

* For much new material about Danser the author is indebted to Mr. L. C. Vrijman of the Hague.

against Spain. After an unsuccessful Mediterranean cruise he put into Marseilles to refit and victual but found the temptations of that lively port too much for him. Having spent all his money he was forced to sell his ship and spent the proceeds of that as well. Thus deprived of a command he collected a few of the riffraff of the port, stole a small boat and went off "on the account" as an out-and-out pirate. Soon he captured a large vessel, into which he transferred his crew, was joined by a number of English and Moorish seamen and before many months found himself in command of a small fleet, whose largest vessel carried nearly three hundred men and sixty guns. He had now become a power at sea and presently effected a combination with a rival, an English pirate called Warde, which considerably increased his strength.

It was not until 1606, however, that he established himself in Algiers, where he was already famous and assured of a warm welcome. It was then that he taught his hosts the art of modern ship construction, and in return was provided by them with the base and market his activities required. His colleague Warde performed the same service for and received the same reward at Tunis.

For three years the Dutchman cruised the Mediterranean making rich hauls and laying by a large fortune. He built himself a palace in Algiers and hobnobbed with pashas and beys. Then the news reached him that a Spanish and an English fleet were both in the Mediterranean with orders to take him dead or alive. He had also heard unpleasant stories of the uncertainty of life amongst rich foreigners in Algiers. His conscience began to trouble him — he had never forsworn his Christianity like others of his kind — so he decided to retire.

But the problem of respectability offered certain difficulties. It would be hard enough to get out of Algiers with his money; it would be even harder to find a place where he would be welcome, since there was a price on his head in every country that appealed to him as a future home. The second problem was solved first. After some negotiation he succeeded in buying a pardon from King Henry IV of France and prepared to exchange the profits of Algiers for the delights of Paris. The

French ruler had another consideration in mind when closing the deal which he kept to himself for the time being.

The escape from Algiers was contrived with ingenuity instead of cash. Four pirate ships entered the harbour with a choice cargo which they offered for sale. Danser bought almost the whole of it and went on board to pay over the purchase price. As usual the oars of these ships were manned by Christian slaves. While most of the Mohammedan crew were on shore a pre-arranged quarrel broke out between these slaves and the few Moors left on board, who were quickly overpowered and killed, with the exception of some of the officers who were kept as hostages in case things turned out badly. Danser, now master of the four ships, sailed away and in due course arrived safely at his old haunt, Marseilles.

There, despite the Royal pardon, he met with so very hostile a reception that "when crossing the street he was accompanied by part of his bravos, who carried loaded pistols in their hands and formed his bodyguard." Many of the merchants of the city had suffered severe losses at the hands of the Dutchman and in order to get out of Marseilles he had to pay them in full. He then proceeded to Paris in obedience to a royal order. From the capital he wrote in December of 1609 to Zeeland to say that he was in receipt of his pardon from the King of France, and consequently no longer outlawed, adding the apparently irrelevant news "that the Queen of France had been delivered of a young daughter." This infant, christened Henrietta Maria, was in course of time to become the consort of King Charles I of England.

The King of France now divulged the employment he had in mind for his new subject. The French had quarrelled with their former allies, and a fleet was being fitted out to attack the Goletta at Tunis; Henry IV remembered an old maxim about setting a thief to catch a thief and appointed the retired corsair to a place in the expedition. The enterprise was completely successful, the bey's ships were burnt and four hundred and fifty-five guns and booty to the value of four hundred thousand crowns carried back to France.

But seven years later the corsairs were to have their revenge

on the apostate. The story is told in full by the author and traveller William Lithgow who was an eye witness of the attack on the *Goletta*: "When I had stayed here for some five weeks it was my good luck that there arrived here on February 16th, 1616 a Dutch ship the *Meermin* of Amsterdam coming from Tetuan and bound for Venice. On board this ship came a certain captain of the name of Danser, who had been formerly a pirate of renown and a famous commander of the sea, and a very old enemy of the Moors. He was sent as an ambassador by the King of France to take over twenty two French ships that had been captured which were to be restored. This was a stratagem of the Pasha to attract Danser to that town, though the latter had already retired from service and was married at Marseilles. He comes into port, accompanied by two French *monsieurs*, who go on shore to compliment the Pasha. They meet with a friendly reception and the day after, the Pasha with twelve of his followers goes on board to return the visit. Danser considered it to be a great honour that the Pasha had come in person to visit him; consequently he regaled him with all due honours, with soundings of trumpets and roaring of cannon, and nobody so friendly as the hypocrite Pasha and the gratified Danser, who had taken over the ships, as they had been delivered to him that selfsame morning, fully equipped and wanting nothing. Having drunk more than their fill of wine, the Pasha invited Danser to visit him next morning at the fort to which the unhappy Danser agreed. At the appointed time he came on shore with twelve *monsieurs* and approaching the castle was met by two Turks. The company passed over the drawbridge, but when entering the gate, the doors were shut as soon as he had entered and his retinue had to stay outside.

Danser was conducted before the Pasha and was charged with having taken many ships, much booty and excessive riches from the Moors and having murdered them without shewing the least mercy. He was beheaded at once and his body thrown into a moat. Having done this every gun was fired, in order to sink Danser's ship but by cutting the cables she managed to escape though with much difficulty.

As to the *monsieurs* who were on shore they were sent courteously and in safety to their ships, the freed barks, with which they made sail for Marseilles." *

All Europe and Holland in particular was yet to make valuable contributions to the Barbary personnel, but none of them was or ever would be so useful as the seaman from Dordrecht who showed Islam how to build and sail ships as well as Christians did.

The corsairs were quick to learn the lesson Danser had taught them. They went farther and farther afield in their new sailing vessels, finding that these gave them not only a greater cruising range but freed them from the need of carrying provisions for a hundred or two hundred galley slaves. Increasingly the Atlantic commerce became their mark; this had now grown to be of outstanding importance and the coastal raids on Spain less feasible after the expulsion of the last of the Moors from Andalusia in 1610. With no possibility of help from shore the coast raid became risky in proportion as the high seas attack grew more profitable.

It was not long before the terror which had hitherto been felt by the Mediterranean states communicated itself to the northern kingdoms as well. In 1616 Sir Francis Cottington, English ambassador to Spain, wrote to James I's favourite, the Duke of Buckingham, "The strength and boldness of the Barbary pirates is now grown to that height both in the ocean and the Mediterranean seas as I have never known anything to have wrought a greater sadness and distraction in this Court than the daily advice thereof. Their whole fleet consists of forty sail of tall ships of between two and four hundred tons a piece; their admiral (flagship) of five hundred. They are divided into two squadrons, the one of eighteen sail remaining before Malaga in sight of the city, the other about the Cape of S. Maria which is between Lisbon and Seville. That squadron within the straits entered the road of Mostil a town of Malaga, where with their ordnance they beat down the port of the castle, and had doubtless taken the town but that from Granada there came soldiers to succour it; yet they took there divers

* From William Lithgow's "Rare Adventure and Painfull Peregrination," 1632.

ships, and among them three or four of the west part of England. Two big English ships they drove ashore, not past four leagues from Malaga; and after they got on shore also, and burnt them, and to this day they remain before Malaga intercepting all ships that pass that way, and also prohibiting all trade into these parts of Spain."

Between the years 1569 and 1616 the corsair fleet, numbering in all only a hundred vessels, had captured four hundred and sixty-six British ships, whose crews were sold into slavery. The English consuls at Algiers were continually writing home to ask for the alleviation of the lot of English captives and to urge on their government that strong measures be taken to curb the growing insolence of the Algerians. In 1631 the consul wrote direct to the King to say that if ransoms were not speedily sent there would soon be a thousand English slaves in Algiers; in their last cruise alone the corsairs had returned with forty-nine British sail. His letter ended with the warning: "They say that unless you send speedily they will go to England and fetch men out of their beds as they commonly used to in Spain."

The threat was by no means idle. Before long as many as thirty corsair ships were ravaging the Atlantic coasts from their newest base at Salée in Morocco — one of them was actually captured in the River Thames. In the West of England the populace became so nervous that the Lizard light was extinguished because "it will conduct pirates." The Channel was no longer safe for any merchant ship sailing without convoy; in 1625 the Mayor of Plymouth reported that during that one year the Barbary pirates had captured a thousand seamen of the West Country.

The longest voyage these rovers ever made was to Iceland. The leader of this expedition was, like Danser, a Dutchman, but unlike Danser "took the Turban." His name was Jan Jansz, known to the Moors as Murad Reis, but to prevent confusion with the earlier Murad, the disciple of Barbarossa and Ochiali, his European name will be used hereafter.*

Jan Jansz began his career, as did most of the Dutch seafaring men who ultimately turned pirates, as a privateer of the States

* For the history of Jansz I am indebted to Mr. L. C. Vriiman

against the Spaniards during the War of Liberation. But this quasi-lawful type of warfare yielded more glory than profit, and Jans presently trespassed on his commission and found his way to the Barbary coast. There he waged war on the ships of all Christian nations alike, those of Holland not excepted, save that when he attacked a Spaniard he flew the standard of the Prince of Orange as a tribute of sentiment to his origin. When occupied against any other nation's shipping he flew the red half-moon of the Turks.

At first he sailed as mate to a famous corsair called Suleiman Reis, of Algiers, but after his chief's death in 1619 settled at Salée. The port ("its name stunk in all Christendom") was extremely well situated for the new form of piracy, being on the coast of the Atlantic, only fifty miles from Gibraltar, where the corsairs could lie in ambush for everything that passed through the Straits and dash out quickly to meet the East India and Guinea traders. The Salée fleet was not large, about eighteen all told, and the individual vessels were small, since a bar in the harbour prevented ships of deep draught entering unless they were first unloaded.

The port was nominally subject to the Emperor of Morocco, but shortly after Jansz's arrival the Sallentines declared themselves independent and established what was in effect a pirate republic, governed by fourteen of themselves, with a President who was also the Admiral. The Dutchman was the first to be elected, and to show his adopted countrymen how thoroughly he had become one of themselves he married a Moorish woman, though he had left a wife and family at Haarlem.

Business prospered under Jansz's efficient administration and he was soon compelled to find an assistant, a post for which he selected a fellow countryman, Mathys van Bostel Oosterlinck. The Vice-Admiral celebrated his appointment by following his superior's example, turning Mohammedan and marrying a Spanish girl of fourteen, although he had a wife and small daughter in Amsterdam.

Jansz, what with prizes taken at sea and his perquisites as Admiral, which included all dues for anchorage, pilotage and other harbour revenues, as well as brokerage on stolen goods,

soon became an enormously rich man. Nevertheless he occasionally found the routine of business irksome, the pirate in him asserted itself and he went off on a cruise. During one of these, in November 1622, when he was trying his luck in the English Channel, he ran out of provisions and was forced to put in at the port of Veere in Holland to replenish his stock. It seemed a risky undertaking, but the Admiral of Sallee was a subject of the Emperor of Morocco, who had lately made a treaty with the States of Holland; hence Jan could legally claim the privileges of the port, though the welcome he received was a cold one.

The first visitor to come on board was the Dutch Mrs. Jansz, accompanied by all the little Janszes. "His wife and all his children," a contemporary writer records, "came on board to bid him leave the ship; the parents of the crew did the same but they could not succeed in bringing them to do this as they (the Dutch renegade crew) were too much bitten of the Spaniards and too much hankering after booty." Not only did his crew remain, but it was swelled by recruits, despite a stern order by the magistrates that no one was to take service on the vessel. But times were hard in Holland as a result of nearly half a century of war with Spain; the youth of Veere were more tempted by the opportunity of collecting an easy livelihood while getting in a blow at their old enemy than afraid of magisterial displeasure. Jan left Veere with a great many more hands on board than when he entered it.

A few years later, in mid winter, Jansz called at Holland again, this time having barely escaped disaster. Off the coast he had met a big ship flying Dutch colours. Jan, momentarily forgetful of treaties, was "at once enamoured of the fine ship and tried to take her"—it was quite probable that after he had succeeded, the lawyers would again enable him to claim the advantage of the treaty. But the affair turned out quite differently: as he came alongside the vessel the Dutch flag was hauled down, the standard of Spain run up in its place and in a moment Spanish troops were swarming on to his deck. The pirates, outclassed, just managed to escape after a bitter fight,

many of the crew being killed and wounded. They were glad to get safe into the harbour of Amsterdam.

Jan applied to the authorities for assistance for his sick and wounded but was flatly refused. The unfortunate corsair had meant to violate the treaty, had failed and been punished, and was now receiving further punishment by having its benefits denied him just as if he had succeeded. He was not even granted permission to bury his dead, so the corpses had to be pushed beneath the ice as the only means of disposing of them.

After several comparatively bad years in the Straits of Gibraltar Jan decided to try his luck where no pirate, Barbary or other, had ever before ventured. In 1627 he engaged as pilot a Danish slave who claimed to have been to Iceland, and instructed him to lead the way to that remote island. Jansz's three ships contained, besides Moors, three English renegades.

The voyage was a daring feat of navigation for the time but the results were not commensurate with the risk. They plundered Reykjavik, the capital, but only obtained some salted fish and a few hides. To make up for their disappointment they caught and brought back four hundred — some say eight — Icelanders: men, women and children.

On his return Jan took up his quarters in Algiers, but not long afterwards was captured on one of his voyages by the Knights of Malta.*

Good Father Dan, who tells the story, also remarks that he was passing Jan's house after the news of his capture had reached Algiers and saw more than a hundred women going in a body to commiserate with the Moorish Mrs. Jansz on her husband's misfortune. How Jan contrived to obtain his freedom is unknown, but in 1640 he was once again free and once more in the service of the Emperor of Morocco.

On December 30th of that year a Dutch ship entered Sallee, where Jansz was Governor of the Castle. The ship brought a new Dutch consul who had with him, as a pleasant little surprise for the pirate, his daughter Lysbeth, now grown into an attractive young woman.

* Père Dan, "Histoire de Barbarie et de ses Corsaires."

The meeting moved all beholders. Jansz "was seated in great pomp on a carpet, with silk cushions, the servants all round him." When father and daughter met, "both began to cry, and after having discoursed for some time he took his leave in the manner of royalty." Lysbeth afterwards went to stay with her father until the following August in his castle at Maladia, some miles inland, "but the general opinion on board was that she had already had her fill of that people and that country." In any event she returned to Holland and we hear no more of her. Presumably she married a worthy Dutchman who had nothing to do with the sea or Morocco.

How Jansz died no one knows. The only hint we have, an ominous one, is contained in the biography of him by the Schoolmaster of Oostzaan, whose concluding sentence is "His end was very bad."

The business of piracy grew so vast in the seventeenth century that it is scarcely any longer possible to pick out isolated picturesque figures. The principal highways of the oceans were as dangerous, apart from the ordinary risks of travel by sea in that time, as the remoter roads of Calabria and Albania before the Great War. Commerce was crippled, famine in cities was not infrequent, families were torn apart and either permanently separated or impoverished by ransoms exacted to preserve the abducted member or members from the horrors of slavery. And at bottom the evil depended for its continuous existence on the villainous state of Christian European politics. The Turks were no longer strong enough to protect their brethren of the Barbary coast. Had all, or even three or four, of the wronged powers agreed to combine their forces, they could at any time have wiped out the North African pirates. But it was exactly this combination which was impossible. If France was at war with Spain she found the Moors useful allies. Policy led the Dutch in the early seventeenth century to adopt a similar course because it suited them to see the pirates preying upon the enemies of Holland's growing trade. At one time or another the Swedes and the English did the same thing. The result was that instead of exterminating the outlaw the civilised states of the West kept paying him tribute not to

molest their vessels, a bargain he kept only in so far as it suited him. He was as immune from revenge for broken faith as for acts of barbarity.

Occasionally some nation, driven frantic by a series of piratical aggressions, would make an attempt to retaliate, but these lone expeditions, often ill-prepared, and with half-hearted official backing, did little good. England, France, Spain, Holland or Sweden would send out a fleet which would sail into the harbours of Algiers, Tripoli, Bougie or Tunis and fire off some guns. The commander would then be received by the Pasha or Bey, who would graciously accept a handsome gift and sign a fresh treaty promising never again to molest that particular nation's ships nor hold one of its subjects in captivity. But the moment its fleet had sailed away the pirates would be at it again. In 1620 Sir Robert Mansell was sent from England to extort such a promise and succeeded; before he was back in England forty English ships had been swept from the trade routes into the Algerian harbours.

Cromwell was the first English ruler who declined to compromise with the Barbary corsairs. In 1655 he sent a squadron under Blake with instructions to hunt out and exterminate them, and gave the great seaman a sufficient force for the purpose. Blake sailed boldly into Tunis harbour under the very guns of the port, burnt every ship there anchored, then sailed on to Algiers, whence he brought away all the English, Scotch, Irish and Channel Island slaves imprisoned there. The grim Protector and his heroic admiral had shown Europe what a strong ruler and an able sailor could do to the pests. The victory resounded throughout Christendom and was officially celebrated in a broadsheet:

*The barbarous pirates upon Tunis strand
Felt the effects of his avenging hand.*

During the next twenty years various punitive expeditions were sent out, none of which achieved anything until Sir Edward Spragg, following Blake's example, burnt the Algerian fleet in the harbour of Bougie in 1671, with the result that the populace rose, murdered the Aga and carried his head to the

English as a sign that they wanted peace. The good effects of this energetic action lasted for five years; it then became necessary to send Sir John Narbrough to bring the Algerians once more to their senses. Instead, however, of bombarding the place Narbrough followed the more usual practice and meekly paid sixty thousand pieces of eight to liberate a number of English captives. He was sent out again in 1677, this time to punish the Tripolitan pirates who had been growing more insolent during the repression of their brothers farther up the coast. After a great deal of parleying with the Dey, Narbrough saw that nothing was to be gained and roused himself to more active measures. At midnight he sent into the harbour twelve boats fitted with "fireworks," under the command of his senior lieutenant, Cloudesley Shovell (afterwards the famous Admiral Sir Cloudesley Shovell). Within an hour all the enemy ships were on fire "to the great astonishment of the Turks." Somehow or other a certain amount of loot was gathered by the way, for on the following day the admiral was able to distribute one thousand nine hundred and fifty-six pieces of eight as prize money to his gallant officers and men.

Until final retribution overtook the corsairs nearly a century and a half later, probably more serious damage was done to them by prospective captives than by invading squadrons. One such encounter is graphically described in a broadsheet of 1681 entitled "A Faithful Account of the Late Bloody Engagement fought between Captain Booth of the *Adventure* and Hadje Ali, captain of the *Two Lions and Crown* of Algiers on September 17th 1681, off Cape Trafalgar."

The Algerian ship was armed with more than forty great guns, and several smaller. She carried three hundred and twenty-seven Turkish and Moorish soldiers, and her crew consisted of eighty-eight Christian slaves. Her commander, Hadje Ali, was a Danish renegade, born at Copenhagen.

It was at dawn, when the *Adventure* was in chase of a small French vessel, that the big pirate ship was first seen, towing an English prize. The Moors in her quickly got on board their own ship and abandoned the prize. Captain Booth took her over, found two English slaves concealed in her, and ordered

them to follow him with the vessel while he gave chase to the Algerian.

By one o'clock in the afternoon the two ships were alongside and a furious battle began which raged until nine o'clock, by which time both ships were so disabled in their masts and rigging that both lay off and did what they could to repair and refit. Shortly afterwards they again began to fight and continued to do so all through the night until nine o'clock the next morning, when an accident took place which seemed at first to have sealed the fate of the English ship. To quote Captain Booth's own account of this:

About nine in the morning, having taken a man from each gun below where they could best spare them, to man those guns on our quarter deck, one of the King's cripples, being quartered there to carry powder from that place, having three cartridges and powder in his hand, went into the round house to secure himself from the shot, we not knowing what had become of the man, till a great shot from the enemy came into the roundhouse and shot the three cartridges of powder which he had by him, which took fire and blew him out of the round house upon our quarter deck and with him all our grenades which were about seven or eight that were left, which granadoes did kill and wound every man that was by me, I escaped very narrowly among the rest, being hurt in the neck by one of the granado shells.

By the greatest good fortune the moment afterwards the Algerian's mainmast went by the board and the pirates at once called for quarter.

Both ships had received heavy casualties. On the pirate they found Hadje Ali wounded, as well as five of his officers. Four of these were renegades from Holland and Hamburg, the fifth being a nephew of the Governor of Algiers. They also found on board an old Turk, Abram Reis, a former admiral of Algiers "who came that voyage for his pleasure." A Christian slave out of the pirate ship told Captain Booth that had it not been for the fierce old pleasure-seeking Abram Reis, the pirates would have yielded much earlier, but "he encouraged the Turks, telling them of his former success he hath had against the Christians, naming his fighting with Dutchmen of War and another

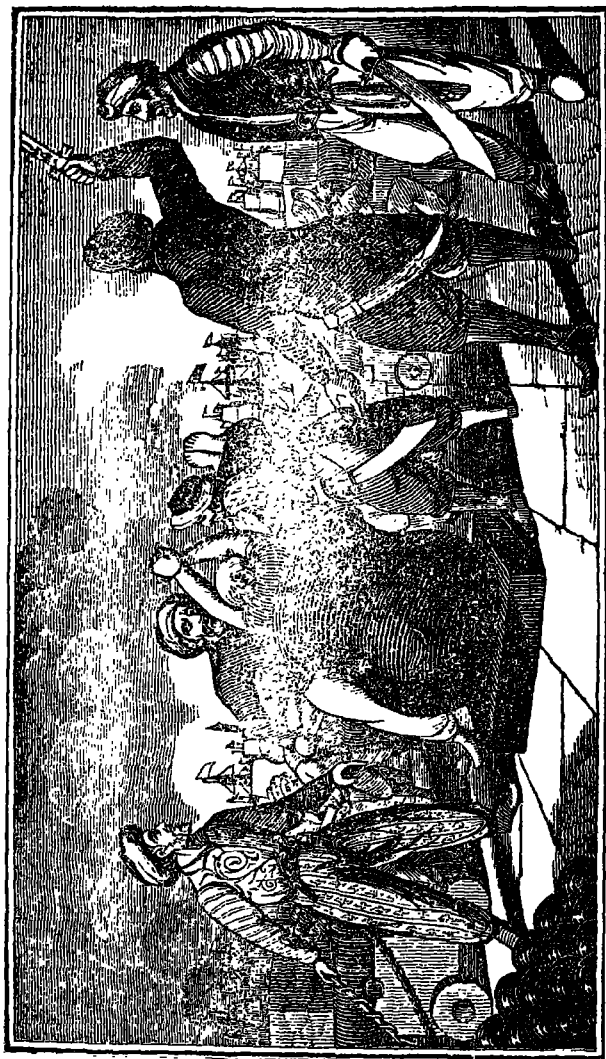
time his fighting Sir Richard Beach in the *Hampshire* with several other good actions."

The changing politics and the growing commerce of France under Louis XIV brought that country finally into line with the corsairs' other European enemies, and from then on the French, like the English, several times undertook to punish the Moors, but with no notable success until the nineteenth century.

One of their expeditions, in 1683, is typical both of the method and the brutality of these conflicts. The Marquis Duquesne, commanding the French squadron, fired six thousand shells into Algiers, killing eight thousand persons and destroying many buildings. The populace rose in revolt, assassinated the Dey and elected in his stead the captain of the galleys, Hadji Hasan, nicknamed Mezzomorto (the half-dead) from his deathlike appearance. The new Dey sent a message to the Admiral threatening that if he did not at once stop the bombardment he would blow every Frenchman in Algiers from the cannon's mouth. The threat was not idle: the bombardment continued and the Dey selected his first victim, Jean Le Vacher, Vicar Apostolic. This noble old man, who had given thirty-six years to the service of the unhappy Christian prisoners, was now dragged down to the mole, tied to the mouth of a gun and shot in the direction of the French fleet. The French did not call off their enterprise until the middle of August when, their ammunition being exhausted, they left Algiers. In the meantime twenty other Frenchmen, including the Consul, had followed the venerable priest.

Five years afterwards the French again bombarded the city when forty-eight more Frenchmen were blown from the pirates' guns. There is to be seen in the Musée de la Marine at Paris, an old gun captured at Algiers, called "la Consulaire" from which the French Consul was blown.

So it went on for more than a century, these independent marauders of the coast waylaying commerce, capturing enormous quantities of money and of slaves, suffering punishment, striking back, making alliances, breaking them, and in general exacting toll, whether by aggression or agreement, from every



THE ALGERINES FIRING OFF THE FRENCH CONSUL FROM A MORTAR AT THE FRENCH FLEET

trading nation of the Western world. A small but illuminating incident is preserved which exposes their curious relationship with the rest of Europe. In the year 1780 the Dey of Algiers bought ten cannon from the Swedish government, at a fixed price. These had already been tested by the makers but the pirates, not content, must make a private test of their own. After filling the first gun half full of powder, they applied a match and the gun exploded, killing two of the Algerians outright and wounding many others. Although the accident could only be ascribed to the carelessness of the pirates, the Swedish consul had to pay heavy damages. The Dey demanded five hundred livres for the broken nose of one of the corsairs alone, and the whole affair cost the Swedish government about seven thousand livres.* This reads exactly like the routine business squabbles of two equal states until one remembers that it is a transaction between a Christian government and a nest of outlaws.

At last a power arose, young and not European, which dared to refuse the tribute demanded by the Barbary corsairs. At the very beginning of their existence the United States had been compelled to fall into line and between 1785 and 1799 had to pay the Dey of Algiers an enormous annual tribute in money to obtain nominal exemption for their ships. In 1798 Mr. Eaton, the American consul at Tunis, having been sent to Algiers in charge of four vessels as tribute from the United States, wrote home to his government, "Can any man believe that this elevated brute (the Dey) has seven kings of Europe, two republics and a continent tributary to him when his whole naval force is not equal to two line of battle ships?" Yet the very next year the tribute amounted to fifty thousand dollars, twenty-eight guns, ten thousand cannon balls, beside quantities of powder, cordage and jewels.

Finally public opinion in the United States was aroused to such a pitch that Congress ordered a fleet to be built at once to deal with the corsairs. The threat of strong measures had its effect on the Dey of Algiers: he agreed not to molest American shipping further if the President would send him a present

* "Sjörovarna på Medelhavet och Levantiska Compagniet," Stockholm, 1921.

of a frigate suitably equipped with powder and arms. On hearing of this the Bey of Tunis hurried to write to the President as well, explaining that unless ten thousand stand of arms and forty cannon were sent without delay "it would be impossible to keep the peace longer." Morocco, not wishing to be left out, then put in her claim to payment, but the Yusuf of Tripoli took the line that he was an aggrieved party and proclaimed war on May 14th 1801 by chopping down the flagstaff of the American consulate.

The young republic took up the challenge, but in her own time. In 1803 Commodore Edward Preble sailed for Gibraltar with the squadron of new warships. Of these the *Philadelphia* with thirty-six guns and the *Vixen* were sent to blockade the port of Tripoli.

On October 31st, while the *Philadelphia* was chasing a ship which was trying to run the blockade and reach Tripoli, she ran aground. No effort of the crew could move her and soon swarms of boats were seen coming out towards the ship. The issue of the ensuing fight was never in doubt. The Americans, though putting up a brave defence, were outnumbered, and after consulting with his officers Captain Bainbridge decided, in order to save the lives of his crew, to haul down his flag. Before doing so he had the magazines drowned by boring holes in the ship's bottom and the pumps choked so that she would become a total loss. Soon the pirates clambered aboard, robbed and stripped the officers, and threw both them and the crew into prison ashore. The unfortunate Bainbridge had the bitter experience a month later of seeing the *Philadelphia* refloated by the pirates and brought into harbour with all her guns salvaged and remounted.

On receipt of the news of this catastrophe Commodore Preble, who was preparing his ships for the next year's campaign, immediately laid plans for the destruction of the captive vessel, and selected for this desperate enterprise a young lieutenant, Stephen Decatur, whom he put in command of a ketch, the *Intrepid*. She carried five officers and seventy men, who were packed like herrings on a platform laid across some water butts without even sufficient room for them to sit up straight.

After a wild voyage in stormy weather the little ship arrived off Tripoli. Decatur decided to launch his attack the same night. On entering the harbour only a few of the crew, disguised as Maltese sailors, were allowed on deck, whence they could see the *Philadelphia* riding at anchor a mile away under the walls of the fort.

Sailing boldly in, the *Intrepid* drew up alongside the larger ship and in answer to a Moorish hail the Sicilian pilot replied in Tripolitan that they had lost their anchor in a gale and would like to run a line to the warship so that they might ride alongside of her during the night. Completely deceived, the pirates helped to make the ketch fast — at that moment a cry of “Americanos ! Americanos !” rang out and the battle began with the sharp order to “Board !” from the American commander. The Yankee sailors at once clambered over the side and so sudden was the onset that in ten minutes the *Philadelphia* was recaptured with scarcely a casualty on the American side. Everything from now onwards went according to prearranged plan and fires were lighted in several parts of the ship. Once she was well alight, Decatur gave the order to get back on board the ketch and man the sweeps and pull for dear life. And not a moment too soon, for almost every gun in the fort was firing at them.

This scene has been described by one of the officers present, Charles Morriss, who wrote:

Up to this time the ships and batteries of the enemy had remained silent but they were now prepared to act and when the crew of the ketch gave three cheers in exultation of their success they received the return of a general discharge from the enemy. The confusion of the moment probably prevented much care in their direction, and though under fire for half an hour the only shot which struck the ketch was one through the topgallant sail. We were in greater danger from the *Philadelphia* whose broadsides commanded the passage by which we were retreating and whose guns were loaded, and discharged as they became heated. We escaped these also and while urging the ketch onwards with sweeps the crew were commenting upon the beauty of the spray thrown up by the shot between us and the brilliant light of the ship, rather than calculating any

danger that might be apprehended from the contact. The appearance of the ship was indeed magnificent. The flames in the interior illuminated her ports and ascending her rigging and masts formed columns of fire which meeting the tops were reflected into beautiful capitals, whilst the occasional discharge of her guns gave an idea of some directing spirit within her. The walls of the city and its batteries and the masts and rigging of cruisers at anchor, brilliantly illuminated and animated by the discharge of artillery, formed worthy adjuncts and an appropriate background of the picture. Fanned by a light breeze our exertions soon carried us beyond the range of their shot.

It was not until the following July that Commodore Preble was prepared to attack Tripoli. Altogether five assaults were made before the pirates' stronghold was compelled to surrender and submit to the American terms. But a strict blockade of the coast was kept up for the two following years. In June 1805 a treaty was finally signed which provided that no further tribute should be paid and that American ships should be free to sail where they would, unmolested by the pirates.

But the sharp lesson America had taught the corsairs was, as usual, soon forgotten. Europe was still willing to argue, threaten and — pay up. But at last the behaviour of the pirates became so outrageous that England decided to deal with them in a thorough way. In 1816 Lord Exmouth was given *carte blanche* to do as he pleased, and duly arrived off Algiers with a powerful fleet, reinforced by a squadron of Dutch warships under the command of Vice-Admiral Baron van der Capellen.

The match that lighted the actual conflagration was an order by the Dey of Algiers to arrest all the Italians under British protection at Bona and Oran. These orders resulted in the massacre at Bona of a hundred unarmed Italians who were attending Mass. A hundred more were wounded, and eight hundred robbed and thrown into prison.

The combined fleets of the allies arrived at Algiers on August 27th. In the meantime the *Prometheus* had been sent on ahead to Algiers to rescue the English consul and his family, who were in grave danger of their lives.

The consul's wife and daughters, disguised as midshipmen,

got safely aboard the *Prometheus*, but some other ruse had to be devised to get the baby on board. With this end in view the naval surgeon doped the child with an opiate. Hidden in a basket of fruit and vegetables it was being carried through the gate of the docks when unluckily it cried. Immediately the baby, the surgeon, three midshipmen and the boat's crew were arrested and dragged off before the Dey. Three days later the baby was returned to its mother, "a solitary example" wrote Lord Exmouth in his despatch "of his humanity."

The moment the Fleet arrived at Algiers the Admiral demanded the instant release of the prisoners. No answer was vouchsafed. Without more ado he opened hostilities.

"Then commenced a fire," wrote the Admiral, "as animated and well supported as I believe was ever witnessed from a quarter before three till nine, without intermission and which did not cease altogether till half past eleven. The ships immediately following me were admirably and coolly taking up their stations with a precision even beyond my most sanguine hope and never did British flag receive on any occasion more zealous and honourable support."

The battle raged furiously, even the women, who in those days sailed on board ships of war, serving at the guns with their husbands. By ten at night the main pirate batteries were silenced, and all the ships in the port were in flames, which quickly spread to the Arsenal, storehouses and gunboats, "exhibiting a spectacle of awful grandeur and interest no pen can describe."

Next day a treaty was concluded by which one thousand six hundred and forty-two slaves were set at liberty, and the Dey was forced to make a public apology to Mr. McDonell, the British Consul, who had been imprisoned half naked and in chains in a cell for condemned murderers.*

This lesson might have had and was expected to have a lasting effect for good, yet scarcely was the fleet out of sight of the Mediterranean than the pirates were at their old ways again.

The populace, deciding that their Dey was unlucky, strangled him, and another, Ali Khoja, was put in his place. But this

* Playfair.

rascal, "who greatly affected literature," proved to be a worse blackguard than his predecessor. According to Mr. Shaler, the American Consul, when he and the other foreign Consuls made their first official visit to the new Dey they were made to pass a score of corpses before reaching his presence, where they found him magnificently dressed with a book in his hand as if their entrance disturbed him in his studies."

Owing to the recent action by Lord Exmouth the supply of European women had failed so that the Dey, who seems to have been as fond of the fair sex as he was of literature, was driven to other means than sea piracy to procure additions to his harem. One case of his villainy in particular made a great sensation in Europe and was warmly taken up by Sir Sidney Smith, the President of the Anti-Piratic Association for the Redemption of Slaves in Barbary.

About it Sir Lambert Playfair writes: "A Sardinian girl, named Rosa Ponsombio, who was engaged to be married, was induced on some pretext to go with her mother one evening to the French consulate; on her return she was waylaid by emissaries of the Dey, who throwing a cloth over her head carried her off to his seraglio. The poor girl was forced to change her religion and her dress; but one day she found means of throwing a paper over the wall, addressed to the British Consul, informing him of her sad condition and warning him, as well as the Spanish and Dutch Consuls, to look well after their own daughters, as a similar fate was reserved for them. Indeed, after the Dey's death a book of memoranda was found amongst his effects containing this entry: "Mr. McDonell's daughter, pretty and young, for my harem; the Spanish consul's daughter who is ugly, to serve the favourite; I shall have the English consul's head cut off and that of the Spanish consul also and all the consuls shall be killed if they dare to complain."

Sir Sidney Smith tried in vain to rescue the girl but his efforts, even combined with those of M. de Richelieu, the French Minister, failed to bring about her release and she remained a prisoner in the Dey's seraglio until he died of plague in 1818. The epidemic of this disease had raged for some time

in Algiers and was spread all over Europe by the Algerian ships.

By this time the slave trade was in full swing again in spite of all treaties and bombardments, and at the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle it was decided to take measures against the Barbary pirates. In September 1819 a combined English and French fleet arrived in the Bay of Algiers, full of dire threats which all came to nothing, for in the end they sailed away leaving the Pasha to laugh and go on as he had done before.

And so matters continued, slavery was reestablished, and the rulers of the Barbary states became more and more truculent, insulting and finally beheading consuls, firing on flags of truce and generally behaving like barbarians.

But the day of reckoning was at last drawing near. Driven to desperation, the French, on May 26th 1820, sent a large fleet from Toulon, under the command of Admiral Duperré, with an army of thirty-seven thousand soldiers as well as cavalry and artillery. On June 13th the army was landed and threw up entrenchments. The French then began a slow but steady advance on Algiers, defeating the Moors in every action fought. On July 4th the bombardment of the city began, the principal fort fell and the powder magazine blew up. The next day the French occupied Algiers and the Dey and his family were sent to Naples in a French frigate. Gradually the surrounding tribes, beginning with Tunis, were subjugated by France and after so many hundreds of years the Scourge of Christendom was virtually brought to an end.

There were sporadic outbursts of piracy at intervals during the nineteenth century but in nearly all cases the offenders were caught and punished. With the gradual occupation of the Barbary coast by the various Southern European powers even these occasional recrudescences became less and less serious, and ultimately the last remnants of corsair activity were extinguished at the beginning of the present century.

CHAPTER V

SLAVERY AND REDEMPTION

THE trade in slaves was the reason, the support, the reward, of the Mediterranean pirate, both classical and Barbary, for upward of twenty centuries. The business grew to staggering proportions. Companies were formed in Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli for the sole purpose of financing vessels which were sent to sea with the single object of bringing back living merchandise. There is no record of numbers, but there was scarcely a year in which thousands of Europeans did not disappear into the maw of this traffic. Father Dan, who worked for years amongst them, states that in Algiers alone there were twenty-five thousand Christian slaves in 1634, besides eight thousand Christians who had turned Mohammedan.

When the captives were brought back to port they were first marched off to the bagnios, a strong underground prison. They were then examined by interpreters, who found out each prisoner's name, country of origin and trade or profession; if he had rich connections the amount of his ransom was determined upon and he was put aside until that matter could be adjusted. The other wretches were hurried into the Besistan or great slave market, where they were put up for auction like cattle. Usually they were bought by a dealer who had no direct use for them himself, but hired them out individually or collectively to someone who had — a clerk to a merchant who needed a bookkeeper, a group of labourers to a building contractor.

Some of the slaves were treated with the most devilish cruelty, but, apart from the galleys and public works, this was the exception rather than the rule. The private Turkish or Moorish slave-owner looked upon his Christian captive not as a criminal (even though he considered him an infidel and called

him a dog) but as an animal like a horse, who would work best if well fed and looked after. In this the Mohammedans differed rather from the Christians, to whom a Moslem captive was a heretic and subject to be treated as such. There is an account of a Spanish priest who protested at an act of wanton cruelty by the Turks, who answered sharply with a reminder of the Holy Inquisition and its auto-da-fé, which effectively silenced the priest.

The fate of the unransomed prisoners varied enormously. Some of them, if they were skilled craftsmen or professional men, were in great demand by the Moors, especially physicians, who were treated with respect, though because of their value their owners were most reluctant to consider their release. Others accepted conversion and so escaped technical captivity, but were for ever after cast out from the society of their fellow Christians. These renegades enjoyed a certain amount of freedom and would sometimes attain important posts under the Turkish government; others, the offscourings of the European ports, took the turban simply as a means of turning pirate.

The great majority of captives were destined to a short lifetime of intense physical labour. The Moors were indefatigable builders, and at any Barbary port might be seen chained gangs of Christian slaves cutting stone, digging excavations, building houses, forts and harbours.

The fate of women captives is easily guessed. The great majority simply disappeared into the harems if they were young or into domestic labour if old. A typical story of a woman captive will be found in Appendix II.

But by far the worst employment to which a slave was liable was the galley. A man normally unaccustomed to physical labour would be chained to an oar alongside four or five or six other slaves. For food he would be given a few biscuits with an occasional mouthful of gruel, and for drink vinegar and water with a few drops of oil on the surface—all this to sustain a labour in any circumstances beyond normal endurance. Between the two lines of rowers ran a bridge along which walked two *Comiti* or boatswains carrying long whips

which they brought down on the bare back of the laggard and the weary.

Two accounts exist from men who had actual experience of the rowing bench, one as slave, the other as witness. The first is by Jean Marteilie de Bergerac, who left the following description of experiences in 1707.*

Think of six men chained to a bench, naked as when they were born, one foot on the stretcher, the other on the bench in front, holding an immensely heavy oar (fifteen feet long) bending forwards to the stern with arms at full reach to clear the backs of the rowers in front who bend likewise; and then having got forward shoving up the oar's end to let the blade catch the water, then throwing their bodies back on to the groaning bench. A galley-oar sometimes pulls thus for ten, or even twenty hours, without a moment's rest. The boatswain or other sailor, in such a stress, puts a piece of bread steeped in wine in the wretched rower's mouth to stop fainting and then the captain shouts the order to redouble the lash. If a slave falls exhausted upon his oar (which often chances) he is flogged till he is taken for dead, and then pitched unceremoniously into the sea.

The second is from an anonymous eye-witness:

Those who have not seen a galley at sea, especially in chasing or being chased, cannot well conceive the shock such a spectacle must give to a heart capable of the least tincture of commiseration. To behold the ranks and files of half-naked, half-starved, half-tanned meagre wretches, chained to a plank, from whence they remove not for months together (commonly half a year) urged on, even beyond human strength with cruel and repeated blows on their bare flesh, to an incessant continuation of the most violent of all exercises and this for whole days and nights successively, which often happens in a furious chase when one party, like vultures, is hurried on almost as eagerly after their prey, as is the weaker party hurried away in hopes of preserving life and liberty.

Naturally the stories we have of cruelty are for the most part told with an anti-Mohammedan bias, but there are indications that the other side were no more addicted to humanity in the galleys than their enemies. There is a story of a Moor who

* Whall: "Romance of Navigation."

was chained to a Spanish oar, but finding himself unequal to the work, at last in desperation chopped off his own left hand above the wrist in the hope that some other work would be found for him. But instead, before his wound was half healed he was again chained to the oar with a device attached to his stump, and now received special attention from the men with the lash. Eventually his case came to the ears of the Dey of Algiers, who informed the Spanish Father of the Redemption that he would exchange no more prisoners unless the one-handed rower was first surrendered.

No descriptions of captivities can equal the firsthand accounts contained in letters smuggled home or diaries later published by escaped or ransomed slaves. The following, written by one of these, Thomas Sweet, a "better sort of person," is so typical and so touching that it will bear reproduction in full:

Dear Friends,

It is now about six years since I was most unfortunately taken by a Turks man of war on the coasts of Barbary, captive into Argiere, since which time I have written oft to London to Master Southwood of the upper ground, to Richard Barnard of Duke's Place, Richard Coote of the Bankside, to Master Linger, a haberdasher in Crooked Lane, and in that to Master Southwood I sent an inclosed to my father, if living, and other letters to my brothers and friends if not dead. I could never hear whether any of you were alive or dead, which makes me think the letters are either miscarried, or all of you deceased, or gone to other places, or else I know you are too much Christians and friends that you could have looked upon me in such a condition. O! my friends, once more I tell you I am a miserable captive in Argiere, taken by a Flemish vessel two years after I left the wars in Gilderland. My Patroone is one Baron, a French renegade, that lives in the country, but hires me and another Protestant captive (one Master Robinson, a Norfolk man) out in Argiere, for this time and if we go up to the country, you may never hear of us again. Our misery is that the price of our redemption will be no less than £250, because we are thought to have good friends in England, and we must both go off together. Master Robinson hath written to his friends, and we have deeply bound ourselves to each other, that we will engage

our friends to us both equally. Ah! father, brother, friends and acquaintance, use some speedy means for our redemption. Many hundred slaves have been redeemed from their misery since we came hither, which makes us hope still we may be the next and then the next, but still our hopes are deceived. We do pray you, therefore, for the Lord Christ's sake that redeemed you, that you would use all possible means for our redemption. There is now a party in England renowned over the Christian world for their piety this way. Oh make your address to those noble worthies in the name of Christ for whose sake we suffer. We did never so well understand the meaning of that Psalm, penned by those captive Jews, held in Babilonish captivity, as now: "By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept when we remembered thee Oh Sion," when we remembered thee Oh England. Oh good friends, we hope these our sighs will come to your ears, and move pity and compassion.

We are told there is a merchant in London, one Mr. Stanner of St. Mary Axe, that hath a factor in Legorn, and one Mr. Hodges and Mr. Mico, Londoners, that are dealers there who are able to direct you in the readiest way for our redemption. Deny us not your prayers if you can do nothing else. It will be some comfort to hear from friends. There is a post in London that conveys letters into all parts, and if you have an opportunity of letting us hear from you, if you please, within a month or six weeks. The Lord direct your thoughts with ways of love and strengthen us with faith and patience.

Your sorrowful friend and brother in Christ,

Thomas Sweet

From Barbary: September 29, 1646.

No list of redeemed slaves includes the name of either Thomas Sweet or Richard Robinson, so that it is most likely that they were, as they feared, sent into the interior of the country, whence no slave ever returned.

In spite of the strict guard kept over the slaves there were occasional escapes and the accounts of these adventures are perhaps amongst the most thrilling in all the literature of piracy.

One of these is in the author's possession, a small and very rare volume published in 1675 under the title of "Ebenezzer or a small monument of Great Mercy," which was written "By me, William Okeley." The author prefaces his story with a long allegorical poem of which the first two lines are:

*This Author never was in print before,
And (let this please or not) will never more.*

Despite this disclaimer Mr. Okeley then sets down his narrative in a thoroughly professional manner.

It was in June 1638, he writes, that the "*Mary* of London" set sail from Gravesend for the Island of New Providence in the West Indies. She was armed with six guns and carried a cargo of linen and woollen cloth and some sixty souls made up of crew and passengers. The voyage started unpropitiously. After being weatherbound for five weeks in the Downs, the *Mary* reached the Isle of Wight "but by this time all our beer in the ship stunk, and we were forced to throw it overboard, and to take in vinegar to mix with our water for our voyage." Their next misfortune was to run on to a sand bank, but with much toil they floated the ship off at high water. "These circumstances," observes the author, "seem very inconsiderable to those who were not concerned in the Products of them, but God has given us the advantage and leisure to see what *great things* were in the Womb of *those little things*."

Our voyagers, who now sailed with two other ships for their mutual protection, met, six days afterwards, three Algerian warships, which attacked them and after a short fight, in which six of the *Mary's* crew were killed, captured all the three English vessels. For several weeks the captives were kept prisoners on board, while the pirates cruised in search of prey, during which time Okeley learnt to speak a little Arabic on the chance that it might be of use to him later on.

Arrived at Algiers the new captives were driven to the slave market. The men fetched various prices, the highest being paid for the young ones with sound teeth and strong limbs. Their hands were particularly examined; those with hard calloused palms being known to be used to hard work, but those with well kept soft hands would often fetch high prices as likely to be merchants or gentlemen and so good for a profitable ransom.

Okeley was bought by a Moorish shipowner, who employed him to do blacksmith's work, but soon afterwards he was

ordered to go for a cruise in one of his pirate vessels, against which the Englishman strongly protested, but all in vain. After an unsuccessful cruise Okeley's patron turned his slave out telling him to find some trade or other, out of which he was to keep himself and pay his owner two dollars a month.

Okeley opened a small shop, where he sold tobacco and wine, and as business began to increase he took into partnership another captive, John Randal, a glover by trade. This man, whose wife and child had been captured with him, began to make canvas clothes to sell to the seamen amongst the slaves.

After four years or more Okeley observed that he and other slaves had become "so habituated to bondage that we almost forgot Liberty, and grew stupid and senseless of our slavery; like *Issacher, we crouched down between our burdens, we bowed our shoulders to bear, and became servants of tribute.* I. Chron. iv, 23."

The principal need Okeley felt was for religious comfort and this was soon to be provided in the person of the good Mr. Devereux Spratt, a fellow captive and Anglican priest. "Thrice a week this Godly, peaceful servant of Jesus Christ prayed with us, and preached to us the Word of God; our meeting place was a cellar which I had hired. To our meetings resorted many, sometimes three- or fourscore, and though we were next the street, yet we never had the least disturbance from the Turks or Moors."

After a while Okeley's master, having made several unsuccessful cruises, was forced to sell everything to pay his debts, and his slaves changed hands. Okeley was bought by a "grave old gentleman" who not only treated his English slave with pity and kindness, but as a son, and indeed was so gentle and good natured that for the first time since his captivity at Algiers Okeley felt happy. But in spite of his kind patron, he still yearned for freedom and set about making plans for his escape, but not without great searching of conscience, for the honest slave was worried whether "it was not down-right theft to withdraw myself from his service, who had bought me, paid for me and possessed me as his own proper goods, and now

I was not my own, had no right to myself." At last his conscience, to his great relief, decided that his "Patron's title was rotten at the foundation; Man is too noble a creature to be made subject to a deed of bargain and sale and my consent was never asked to all their bargains." Much relieved in mind, William Okeley then began to make serious plans for an escape. After confiding in Mr. Spratt and getting his consent and blessing, the conspirators, for several were in the plot, began to make a canvas boat, the pieces of which when completed were to be carried down to the sea and there joined together, when it was hoped it would "by the superintendency of Divine Providence, prove an Ark, to deliver us out of the hands of our enemies."

The cellar where the church services were held was chosen as being the safest place in which to make the boat, and in due time a frame was constructed which could be taken to pieces; a canvas cover was also made, well smeared with pitch, which could be stretched over the frame. The parts of the boat were carried down to the seashore by one of the slaves, who was a washerman and each day used to carry some pieces of the boat under the clothes he took to wash, and hide them under a hedge. By the same method the bulky tarred canvas was got out of the city and hidden with the framework.

At last one dark night the seven Englishmen met at the appointed place and hour, quickly put the boat together and launched her, to find to their great relief and joy that she floated. Then, stripping themselves naked, they waded out with the boat and began to get aboard, only to discover to their dismay that when all seven were in she began to sink. Experience showed that five was all the boat would float with, so two had to be left on the beach while the rest ventured out to sea. The voyage began with four men pulling for dear life while the fifth kept on baling without a moment's rest. When daylight came they saw to their horror that they were still in sight of the ships lying in the harbour, but luckily they were unobserved. They rowed for three days until all their bread was exhausted and almost all their drinking water. By the fourth day — it was in July and the heat excessive — the

refugees were almost at their last gasp when they managed to catch a tortoise floating asleep on the sea. They drank its blood and ate its flesh and were so revived that they again took up the oars and pulled towards, as they hoped, Majorca and freedom.

At last on the sixth day land was sighted, which encouraged the tired rowers to pull harder, but it was not until the following day that the almost dying runaways arrived safely at Majorca, where they were treated with great kindness, fed, clothed and then sent to Cadiz in one of the King of Spain's galleys. At Cadiz they found an English vessel in which they sailed home, reaching the Downs in September 1644.*

Mr. Okeley's conscience proved a difficulty to him, though fortunately not an insuperable one. There is one story, however, which involves the conscience of an entire ship's crew, all God-fearing Quakers who were compelled by their creed to contrive their escape in a most unorthodox manner. The account is contained in a pamphlet by one of the sailors, Thomas Lurting, and is appropriately entitled "The Fighting Sailor Turned Peaceable Christian."

It was in August 1663 that Lurting sailed as first mate in an English ketch bound from Venice for England. The captain, mate and crew were all Quakers, and in accordance with their creed, carried no arms on board. Just at this time the Barbary pirates were unusually active, but the captain, refusing to listen to the crews' suggestion of waiting for a convoy, insisted on continuing his voyage alone. When off the coast of "May-York," which was the seventeenth century sailors' pronunciation of the name of the island of Majorca or Mallorca, an Algerian vessel chased and took the English ship. Eight Turks were ordered to board the ketch to carry her and the English prisoners to Algiers.

"All this while," says Lurting, "I was under a great exercise of spirit — and going to the side to see the Turks come in, the word of the Lord ran through me thus: 'Be not afraid for all this, thou shalt not go to Algiers.'" After this Lurting lost all

* For an exciting escape of galley slaves from a Turkish warship see Appendix III.

his fear and "received them (the Turks) as a man might his friends and they were as civil to us." Thus the pirates got their first surprise.

The obliging Lurting next showed his visitors over the vessel, explaining all about her cargo. He also found an opportunity to warn his shipmates to be very polite to the Turks and be willing to do all that was told them, as he was certain that he would find means for their escape. The Turks, delighted to find such an unusually docile crew, retired to the great cabin to rest and sleep while the infidels sailed the ship.

Lurting then explained to the still somewhat mystified crew his plan, which was to lash up all the Turks in the cabin and run off with the vessel. The sailors readily agreed to this scheme; indeed one simple Quaker, forgetting for the moment his religious scruples, declared, "I will kill one or two," while another offered to "cut as many of their throats as you will have me." This so shocked the good Lurting that he declared if he heard another word about killing or throat-cutting he would inform the Turks.

In the end, after much discussion, the Turks were all duly lashed up, and the Englishmen were once again masters of their ship. This would be thought to end the story, but no. Lurting was convinced that it behoved good Christians and good Quakers to liberate the Turks. The crew were for taking them to Majorca near by, but this Lurting refused to hear of, for their late captors, now their prisoners, would be seized by the Spaniards and sold for slaves. What he proposed was to put the Turks ashore in their own country.

This, which sounds at first a simple matter, was far from being so in actuality. The ketch was steered close off the Algerian coast and then rose the question: how were the Turks to be put ashore without the Quakers themselves being recaptured? Much argument amongst the crew and much communing with the Lord went on as to how ten Turks were to be safely put on shore in a boat rowed by three sailors. It was a difficult problem to arrange; it was like one of those puzzles in which, whatever is done, at some moment or other there are more blacks than whites in the boat. At last it was

decided to carry all the Turks in one trip, and to do this the ingenious Lurting (who refused the obviously simple suggestion of binding the Turks because he said "to bind them would but exasperate them") arranged the Turks as follows:

He first placed the captain of the Turks in the boat's stern with a fellow pirate on either side. On the laps of these he made the next three sit and when all were thus seated, two sailors each took an oar, another sat in the bows armed with a carpenter's axe (for show only), while Lurting steered, the tiller in one hand and a boathook in the other. Under his legs were piled all the Turks' weapons. At last, after committing themselves to the Lord, the crew pushed off.

It was a long pull to the shore and all the longer because the nervous sailors would continue to look over their shoulders and say they saw turbaned heads bobbing up behind the rocks on the shore. At length, after much discussion and panic, the boat was backed into the shore, the captives were landed and thrown their arms and half a hundredweight of bread. The Turks, overwhelmed by this kindness or possibly with sinister intentions, warmly invited the sailors to go with them to the neighbouring town where there was wine to be had and other good things. The cautious Lurting refused, but "we parted in great love, and stayed until they got up the hill, and they shook their caps at us and we at them."

The boat then rowed back to the ship "and as soon as we came on board we had a fair wind, which we had not had all the while the Turks were on board, nor many days before." This reward for good deeds continued until they cast anchor in the Thames. Quickly the news spread and all and sundry came off to hear first hand the story of the Quakers who had "been taken by the Turks and had redeemed themselves and had never a gun." Even the King, Charles II, and his brother, the Duke of York, came from Greenwich, accompanied by many lords, to see so strange a spectacle. The King asked many questions about his men-of-war in the Mediterranean, but Lurting told him bluntly: "We had seen none of them," which must have disconcerted the monarch and his admiral brother.

