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# SIR HENRY MORGAN, BUCCANEER

By **CYRUS TOWNSEND BRADY,**  
Author of "The Southerners," "For Love of Country," "The Grip of Honor," Etc.  
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**CHAPTER XVII.**  
**T**HE clock on the wall was striking 11 as Hornigold forced his prisoners into the guardroom of the first fort that had been captured, which, as it was the larger of the two, Morgan had selected as his headquarters. Mercedes' soul had turned to stone at the sights and sounds which met her as she passed through the town, where the hellish revelry was now in full blast. The things she witnessed and heard were enough to appeal the stoutest heart that ever beat within the rudest breast. She forgot her own danger in her sympathy for the suffering inhabitants of the devoted town. Ghostly pale and sick with horror, she tottered and staggered as she entered the room. As for the Senora Agapida, she had collapsed long since, and for the last hundred yards of the journey had been dragged helplessly along by two of her captors, who threw her in a senseless heap on the stone flagging of the great vaulted chamber. The agony and suffering, the torture and death, the shame and dishonor of his people affected Alvarado differently. His soul flamed within his breast with pity for the one, rage for the other. He lusted and thirsted to break away and single handed rush upon the human wolves and tigers who were depopulating women, torturing men, murdering children, as if they had been devils. The desire mastered him, and he writhed and struggled in his bonds, but unavailingly.

It was a haggard, distracted pair, therefore, which was brought before the chief buccaneer. Morgan sat at the head of the guardroom on a platform, a table before him strewn with reckless prodigality with vessels of gold and silver stolen from altar and sideboard indifferently, some piled high with food, others brimming with a variety of liquors, from the rich old wines of Xeres to the fiery native rum. L'Ollonnois, Teach and De Lussan were also in the room. Teach was roaring out a song, that song of London town, with its rollicking chorus:  
"Though life now is pleasant and sweet  
To the sense,  
We'll be damnably moldy a hundred years hence."  
The room was full of plunder of one sort and another, and the buccaneers were being served by frightened negro slaves, their footsteps quickened and their obedience enforced by the sight of a dead black in one corner whom De Lussan had knifed a short time since because he had been slow in coming to his call. The smell of spilled liquor, of burnt powder and of blood, indescribable and sickening, hung in the close, hot air. Lamps and candles were flaring and spluttering in the room, but the greater illumination came through the open casements from the roaring fires of burning houses outside. The temptation to join in the sack of the town had been too much for Hornigold's remaining man; consequently he and those conveying Senora Agapida alone attended the prisoners. These last, after throwing the duenna recklessly upon the floor, hurried out after the rest, leaving the officers and women alone.

"Alvarado, Alvarado!" she screamed. "Help me; save me!"  
Like a maddened bull, though his hands were bound also, Alvarado threw himself upon the negro. The force with which he struck him hurled him backward, and the two fell to the floor, the maroon beneath. His head struck a corner of the step with a force that would have killed a white man. In an instant, however, the negro was on his feet. He whipped out his dagger and would have plunged it into the breast of the prostrate Spaniard had not Mercedes, lightly bound—for, being a woman, they thought it not necessary to be unusually severe in her lashings—wrenched free her hands and caught the half breed's upraised arm.  
"Mercy!" she screamed, while struggling to divert the blow, looking toward Morgan.  
"Hold your hand, Black Dog," answered that worthy. "Leave the man and come hither. This is thy first appeal, lady. You know my power at last, eh? Down on your knees and beg for his life!"  
Instantly Mercedes sank to her knees and stretched out her hands, a piteous, appealing, lovely figure.  
"Spare him, spare him!" she cried.  
"What would you do for him?"  
"My life for his," she answered bravely.  
"Nay, Mercedes," interposed Alvarado, "let him work his will on me."  
"There are worse places, thou seest, lady, than by my side," sneered Morgan. "By heaven, 'twas a pretty play, was it not, mates? I spare him, but remember 'tis for you. Harry Morgan's way. Now reward me. Hither, I say!"  
"Captain Morgan," cried Hornigold, suddenly interrupting him, "I bethink me you should send men to seize the mountain pass that leads to Caracas at once, else we may have troops upon us in the morning."  
It was a bold diversion, and yet it succeeded. There could be no safe feasting in La Guayra with that open road. Morgan had overlooked it, but the boatswain's words recalled it to him. For a moment he forgot the prisoners. Safety was a paramount consideration.

"That's well said, Hornigold," cried Morgan, who was not so drunk that he could not realize the practical value of Hornigold's suggestion and the great danger of disregarding his advice. "The pass must be seized at all hazards. With that in our possession we may bide our time. I thought to wait until tomorrow, but you're right. We've feasted and drunk enough for the night. Guards for the pass now. But how to get them?"  
He rose to his feet as he spoke and came down the hall.  
"Teach and L'Ollonnois," follow me!" he cried. "Gather up fifty of the soberest men and lead them up the mountain road till you reach the pass, and then hold it till I come. Nay, no hesitation," he roared. "Canst not see the necessity? Unless we are masters of that pass we are caught like rats in a trap here in La Guayra. Tomorrow or the next day we shall march up toward Caracas. Your share of the treasure shall be held safe. You shall have first consideration on the other side of the mountains. Nay, I will have it so!" He stamped his foot in furious rage. "We've all had too much drink already," he continued. "Now we must make things secure. Hornigold, take charge of this fort. I leave the



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supplies for the present, and with tremendous energy, seconded by De Lussan and some of the soberer men, he routed out the buccaneers and set them to work.  
"You have saved me for the moment," said Mercedes gratefully, turning to Hornigold as he led her away from the hall.  
"Twas not for care of you," hissed out the old man malevolently, "but that I'd fain balk him in every desire he cherishes, even of possessing you."  
"Whatever it was, I am thankful, senior. You have my prayers."  
"Prayers!" laughed the old sailor. "It hath been sixty years since I heard those canting Puritans, my mother and father, pray. I want no prayers. But come, I must put you in ward. There should be strong rooms in this castle."  
He summoned a slave and found what he wanted. Mercedes and Senora Agapida, who was fetched by other slaves, were locked in one room; Alvarado was thrust into another. As soon as he could do so after making some provision for the comfort of the women Hornigold came down to him.  
"Senior," he said, "the band is drunk and helpless. One hundred resolute men could master them. Morgan means to march to Caracas tomorrow. He cannot get his men in shape to do so long as the liquor flows in La Guayra. If I set you free what can you do?"  
"There is a way over the mountains," answered Alvarado—"a secret way. It has been abandoned for fifty years, but I could follow it to Caracas."  
"And once there, what then?"



"If I set you free"—  
"There, if the viceroys be not gone, and I do not believe he has yet departed, are a thousand soldiers to retake the city."  
"And if they be gone?"  
"I'll raise the citizens, the household guards, the savages and the slaves."  
"Can you do it?"  
"Free me and see," answered Alvarado with such resolution that he convinced the sailor. "The men of Caracas love the daughter of the viceroys. They are not inexperienced in arms. I will lead them. The advantage of numbers will be with us. If you free me, I take it we will have a friend within the walls. Success is certain. We have too much to revenge," he added, his face flushing with rage at the thought of it all.  
"That's well," answered Hornigold. "If I free you, what reward shall I have?"  
"I will cover you with treasure."  
"And guarantee my life and liberty?"  
"They shall be held inviolate."  
"We captured the Porto Bello plate ship and were wrecked two days ago a league or so to the westward. We buried the treasure. Shall I have my share?"  
"All that thou canst take if the honor of the lady be preserved. I answer for the viceroys."  
"Will you swear it?"  
"Yes."  
"That suffices. You shall go!" cried the buccaneer, all his objections satisfied. "But as you love the woman lose no time. I'll be at the west gate under the rocks at 10 o'clock tomorrow night. You know it?"  
"Yes. Go on."  
"I'll open the gate for you and leave the rest to you. You must be there with your force. Now, go."  
"I shall be there. But I cannot leave without Donna Mercedes."  
"And you can't go with her. Think! Could she make her way over the mountains?"  
"No, no, but—"  
"I'll watch over her with my life," urged the one-eyed. "My share of the treasure depends upon her safety, you said."  
"But Morgan!"  
"I hate him with a hatred greater than thine."  
"He is thy captain."  
"He betrayed me, and I swore to take such vengeance as was never heard before, to make him suffer torments by my hand."  
"You would betray him?"  
"It was for that I came with him, for that I live. He craves and covets the Donna Mercedes. He shall not have her. Trust me to interpose at the last moment."  
"Is this true? Can I believe you?"  
"Else why should I jeopard my life by freeing you? I hate him, I tell you. Remember! The west gate! There are not 300 men here. The best fifty have gone with Teach and L'Ollonnois; the rest are drunken and cowardly. Here are weapons. Wrap yourself in this cloak and come. Say no word to any one on the way. As you love the girl, lose no time!"  
As he spoke the old man cut the bonds of Alvarado, bolted upon him dagger and sword, and at a charged pistol in his hand, threw his head with a steel cap and a long cloak around him. The two then went forth into the night. Avoiding the notice of others, they hastened along the deserted parapet—for there were none to keep watch or guard—until they came to one of the ladders by which the buc-

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caners had entered the town. Down it Alvarado, first swearing again on the cross on his honor to respect his agreement with Hornigold and again receiving the man's assurance, dropped hastily to the ground.  
There was no one to look, and he dashed recklessly across the narrow strip of sand to the shadow of the cliffs, along which he ran until he came opposite the place of his mother's death. The white water was rolling and crashing on the beach and the body was gone. With a hasty petition for the repose of her soul, he ran on until he reached the turn of the road. Unlike the priest, however, he did not pursue the mountain road, but after going a short distance he left the way and plunged to the right through the trees directly up the side of the hill.  
His face was cut and slashed by Morgan's dagger; his soul had been racked and torn by the scenes he had gone through; the plight of Mercedes stirred him to the very depths; his heart yearned over the slaughtered garri- son, the ruined town, but with a strength superhuman he plunged at the hill in spite of the forest, groping about in the darkness with frantic energy until he found the traces of a slender, rocky path which led over the mountains.

**When Hats Were Unknown.**  
In ancient days hats were unknown, men having hoods attached to their outer garments, which they wore or discarded at pleasure. Stow, the old historian, says that nobody wore anything else except the lord mayor of London, who sometimes donned a hat on state occasions. In the reign of King Henry VII., he says, the citizens began to wear "flat caps knit of woolen yarn, black, but so light that they were obliged to tie them under their chins, for else the wind would be master over them."

**Death by Lottery.**  
Among other complications of Chinese law and its execution is a unique and rather racy method of dealing with prisoners by lottery. Once a year the vermilion pencil of imperial authority is waved over a chart on which the names of convicted criminals are written, and those which it includes in a haphazard sweep are executed forthwith. The rest are either reprieved altogether or their executions are postponed for another year.

**An Amended Quotation.**  
Miss Ida Tarbell's first journalistic experience was as editor of the Chattanooga. Her predecessor on the journal, once editor of the Oil City Derrick, had established the custom of heading with a quotation the column in which he made brief mention of the news of the day. Miss Tarbell followed his habit and bent her mind to the task of supplying suitable quotations. Once upon a time she set down, as plain as pen could set it:  
"The meek eyed morn appears, mother of dew."  
Then she went home, pardonably proud of knowing her Thomson so well, and at the head of the column next day she read:  
"The weak eyed worm appears."

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