

**THE LIFE OF A CELEBRATED  
BUCCANEER; A PAGE OF  
PAST HISTORY FOR THE USE  
OF THE CHILDREN OF TO-DAY**

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The life of a celebrated Buccaneer; a page of past history for the use of the children of to-day by  
Richard Clynton

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*A PAGE OF PAST HISTORY FOR THE USE OF THE  
CHILDREN OF TO-DAY*

BY  
RICHARD CLYNTON



LONDON  
SWAN SONNENSCH E I N & C O.  
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# LIFE OF A CELEBRATED BUCCANEER.

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## CHAPTER I.

ONCE upon a time there lived on an island, separated from the main land of Europe by a silver streak of the ocean, a celebrated Buccaneer.

There was a rugged grandeur about the rock-bound coast of this island, with its bluff, bold headlands and beetling cliffs, where the sea birds loved to make their nests high up above the spray; mingling their cries with the voice of the ocean as it rushed into its wide and deep throated caverns. The waves, too, worked ever, and for ever, a broad fretwork collar round these rocky shores. Unlucky was the ship that found this island on her lee in a gale of wind. Many a child had been made fatherless there, and many a wife a widow. But to those who knew how to thread their way through the many channels, numerous bays, creeks, and rivers, offered a safe retreat either from the storm or from an enemy.

This island was a fit home for one following the profession of a Buccaneer. Its natural advantages were extremely great; for not only was it difficult of access, but its innumerable big throated caverns opened their wide jaws ready to receive anything that floated in from the ocean. However, this bold pirate did such a good business, that in a short time these caves became too

small, so he had to build wharves and warehouses to hold his plunder ; for he lived in such an age, and was surrounded by such unprincipled people, that he could not leave his things lying about on the shore. Besides which, the climate was not good, being frequently visited by fogs, gales of wind, and very heavy rains.

Soon villages rose up ; then towns, which in their turn grew into great cities, the principal of which were generally planted by the side of some one of his many rivers. Soon the bays and rivers became crowded with ships, and the shores were busy scenes of industry. Cargoes were being landed. Sails were being made and repaired ; ropes overhauled and restranded, and the smell of the pitch caldrons rose up and mingled with the salt air blown in fresh from the sea. Shipwrights' hammers resounded along the shores, and were echoed back by the beetling cliffs. While the men worked, the women sang, and the chubby-faced, fair-haired children played about on the beach.

To those who ask how our bold Buccaneer acquired most of his property, it must be answered that it came to him in a manner usual in those times. Everybody laid their hands upon what they could, and then devoted all their spare time and energy to the keeping of it. Title deeds were for the most part written in blood, with a sharp-pointed one-nibbed steel pen. When we live in Rome we must do as the Romans do, and we must not set up to be better than our neighbours, that is, if we wish to prosper, and when all the world is going in for universal plunder it does not pay to stand on one side, with hands idle, arms folded, and eyes upturned to heaven, saying that people are wicked. Needs must when the devil drives.

It has been a time-honoured custom to rob and kill, so that riches may be laid up ; then it becomes the duty of all to watch lest the thief breaks through and steals. This primitive method of doing business is now justly condemned, and all nations pay at least a tribute to virtue, by flinging a cloth over any shady action. But nations even now have to maintain their dignity. Insults have to be resented, and ambitious designs have to be



frustrated. Battles are fought, and people are slaughtered, and some one, as the saying is, has to pay the piper.

It would almost seem, by a contemplation of things in general, that man by nature is a robber, the action changing its colour according to the atmosphere that people have to live in. In barbarous ages the act of plunder is done openly, and a fellow-creature is sent about his business, either with a broken head or with a spear through his body, and there is an end to him, and perhaps the world is not much the poorer. That honesty is the best policy is, by experience, forced upon us; but even now, in our most enlightened age, the individual will at times adulterate his liquor, sand his sugar, and sell short weight, though he may try to sanctify the deed by saying his prayers before and after; thus adding somewhat to the general stock of humbugs, hypocrites, and Pharisees. But to our story.

It was a noble sight to see this bold Buccaneer getting under weigh with his fleet of ships. Clack, clack went the windlasses, and his brave lads could be heard singing as they lifted their anchors a peak—

Merrily round our capstans go  
As we heave in the slack of our chain,  
Into our sails the north winds blow  
As we bear away from the main.  
Yo ho, my lads, heave ho!

Home went the sheets. Up went the yards, and the sails bellied out to the wind. On the shores crowded the women and children. The little ones with shock heads of curly hair, the sport of the breeze, crying after their fathers, holding up their tearful little faces for the sea-breeze to kiss. The wives wishing their brave lads a prosperous voyage, and a safe return, with plenty of plunder. Silks and spices from the East, and gold and silver from the West, or wherever they could find it. Away went the ships, with their white canvas spread like the wings of a seagull. Soon the hulls were down, and the white specks, after lingering for a while upon the far-off horizon, sank beneath and

vanished. Then sending a sigh after their mates on the wings of the north wind, the women returned to their homes and sang their young sea whelps to sleep, with lullabies tuned to the daring deeds of their fathers.

## CHAPTER II.

THINGS in this world do not remain shady long. Time works wonders and throws the halo of romance over the darkest deeds. See what time and romance have done for William Tell. Look at your Alexander and your Frederick; are not they both called great? Ah! these two were conquerors not plunderers; and there lies the difference, though perhaps Maria Theresa and one or two others might have had something to say against one of these fine fellows. Then there is Robin Hood. Have not time and romance completely changed the aspect of that, at one time, bold and notorious outlaw? For over fifty years did this jolly robber enjoy himself upon other people's property. Look too at the numerous other gentlemen of the road; your crusaders and adventurers in early times. What were the hardy Norsemen, of whom we love to sing? There is something very attractive about your robber, no matter whether he carries on his profession by sea or land, the only thing needful being, to study him at a distance, and through the halo of this said romance. If it were not for the world's great robbers what would historians have to record; what would poets have to sing about? If they had to confine themselves to the virtuous actions, to the good that is done, their occupation would be gone. The chronicling of small beer is a waste of labour.

But there comes a time when the very worst of sinners are troubled by that mysterious part of the human economy known by the name of conscience. This conscience is at times a veritable tyrant, saying what we shall eat, what we shall drink, and what we shall do. To the many the matter is not one of difficulty. If they have to make their way in the world, conscience is either thrown overboard, or put under hatches until such times as it is