

taunce, and unhesitatingly avowing their illegal vocation. At length to such an extent had things arrived that it was no longer deemed prudent to overlook them. Already, had the unwished for notoriety, to the scandal of New-England and New-York, extended across the ocean. The enemies of the colonies had been industriously at work and their dear bought fame, purchased at the price of innumerable hardships, was now associated with every thing that was evil. Reform was imperatively necessary, and the home government arousing, as it were, from wilful inactivity, at length, began to take measures to bring to justice or effectually exile the nefarious cabal from the waters of the colonies. Among the principal charges contained in the instructions of the Earl of Bellamont, was one which authorized him to fit out a craft for the capture, if possible, of the gangs of pirates who infested the coast, and accordingly, immediately upon his arrival in New-York, he made it his first business to obey his commands to the letter. While Governor of Barbadoes, chance had frequently thrown him in contact with an unprincipled commander of a slaver about whose origin but little or nothing was known. For a long time he had appeared at regular intervals, always laden with rich and valuable cargoes which he professed to have received in exchange for negroes, and his appearance was invariably welcomed by the merchants; for every one who traded with him was pretty certain of getting his invoices at less than half of their original value. Having sold his merchandize he would stay ashore until every penny was squandered in dissipation, and then, hastening aboard, he would spread his sails and stretch away—whither no one knew, but about that none were concerned, for as regularly as the moon changed, his light cutter was at anchor in the harbour. He was mysterious himself, and so were all his movements. He always came and went in the night. Such a man had Lord Bellamont selected to lead the enterprise he had conceived.

He had studied his character coolly and deliberately. He knew him to be entirely devoid of principle, and not altogether scrupulous about the means he employed so that his ends were attained, but at the same time he knew that he possessed a bold and fearless mind, a perfect recklessness of life and a disposition to seek out danger for the fierce pleasure of the excitement in subduing it. Another motive which had great influence in the selection was this: Lord Bellamont judged, and not incorrectly, that from his roving excursions upon the ocean, and depraved habits, he had been thrown frequently in the way of these very outcasts—perhaps was one himself—and of necessity was intimately acquainted with their secret lurking places, rendezvous, and, in fact, might possibly be possessed of all their secrets. Such an ally was an acquisition of too much importance to be disregarded, and the Earl resolved, that let the consequences be what they might, he would leave no means untried to engage him in the expedition, and actuated also possibly, by the hopes of sharing in the valuable booty with which the vessels of the proscribed were known to be loaded, the Governor lost not a moment in forwarding his preparations with all possible speed.

The sun had gone down in all its radiant glory at the close of a day in June, 1696, and the mild, cheerful twilight of a summer's evening had fallen upon the bay and town of New-York. The waters of the harbour were lulled to rest, and the streams of the two noble rivers which washed the banks of the then little city, upon either side, were flowing gently to their confluence. The solitude of a wilderness seemed to hang upon every thing around. Down the harbour, the haughty-like brig of war, from whose peak the insignia of Great Britain dropped listlessly, yielding to every puff of air, floated lazily at her anchor. The busy hum of industry, which during the day had resounded through the streets, had given place to a deep and almost unbroken silence. The air seemed hot and feverish. Now