

to the countenance and eye of the prisoner a new expression. We see guilt written in every lineament of his visage, and translate the look of conscious innocence into ruffian hardihood, or callous indifference.

These men, gentlemen, are accused of the crime of piracy, and are consequently viewed with horror as robbers and murderers. Let me entreat you to lay aside all prepossessions of this kind and not suppose, because the prisoners are accused, that they are guilty. There is not a man perhaps who has looked upon these individuals, but has said in his heart, "Why, they can't be innocent; what hardened villains they are." And doubtless, if a phenologist had examined them, he would have decided them to possess the bumps indicative of these propensities, which have filled the world with violence and blood. I venture, however, to say that the men before you differ only in the color of their skins, from the most respectable crew that ever sailed out of the port of Boston. Prejudices exist, too, in relation to the place from which they come. We are too apt to suppose the Havana a mere nest of pirates, and to believe that the same sun which, in some countries, so speedily ripens and brings to perfection the productions of the vegetable world, induces similar precocity and redundancy of crime.

Even Spain, with its romantic associations, has but a sorry reputation among us; our imagination usually paints a Spanish sailor with the bloody knife in his hand. And yet we have heard this day related a striking instance of Spanish humanity. A vessel, in circumstances of extreme peril, lay aground on the Bahama bank. Her crew and passengers (many of the latter women and children) awaited death from the two most opposite elements, fire and water. While in this situation, one our own ships, like the Levite and Priest in the Scriptures, passed by and left the sufferers unnoticed. But another man, like the good Samaritan in the parable to which I have alluded, saw and rescued them. And this man, was he a Yankee! an American! No! he was a Spaniard! and his name was Bernardo De Soto!