

back to the ships. Upon this Ojeda landed with all his force, and struck such terror into the Indians that they came forward with signs of amity, and brought a considerable quantity of gold as a peace-offering, which was graciously accepted." The construction of the fortress was at once commenced, and although interrupted by the attack of a neighbouring cacique, who was, however, easily defeated, Ojeda's men completed it speedily. It contained a magazine of provisions, dealt out twice a day, and was defended by cannon. The treasure gained in trade, or by robbery, was deposited in a strong box with double locks.

Meantime provisions were becoming scarce, while the vessel which had been despatched to Jamaica for supplies did not appear. "The people, worn-out with labours and privations of various kinds, and disgusted with the situation of the settlement, which was in a poor and unhealthy country, grew discontented and factious. They began to fear that they should lose the means of departing, as their vessels were in danger of being destroyed by the marine worms. Ojeda led them forth repeatedly upon foraging parties about the adjacent country, and collected some provisions and booty in the Indian villages. The provisions he deposited in the magazine, part of the spoil he divided among his followers, and the gold he locked up in the strong box, the keys of which he took possession of, to the great displeasure of the supervisor and his associate Ocampo. The murmurs of the people grew loud as their sufferings increased. They insinuated that Ojeda had no authority over this part of the coast, having passed the boundaries of his government, and formed his settlement in the country discovered by Bastides. By the time Vergara arrived from Jamaica the factions of this petty colony had risen to an alarming height. Ocampo's personal enmity to the governor, arising probably from some feud about the strong box; being a particular friend of Vergara, he held a private conference with him, and laid a plan to entrap the doughty Ojeda. In pursuance of this the latter was invited on board the caravel of Vergara, to see the provisions he had brought from Jamaica; but no sooner was he on board than they charged him with having transgressed the limits of his government, with having provoked the hostility of the Indians, and needlessly sacrificed the lives of his followers, and above all, with having taken possession of the strong box, in contempt of the authority of the royal supervisor, and with the intention of appropriating to himself all the gains of the enterprise. They informed him, therefore, of their intention to convey him a prisoner to Hispaniola, to answer to the governor for his offences." Ojeda was entrapped, and scarcely knew what to do. He proposed to Vergara and Ocampo that they should return to Spain with such of the men as were tired of the enterprise, and they at first agreed with this, and promised to leave him the smallest of the vessels, and a third of the provisions and spoils. They even engaged to build him a row boat before leaving, and commenced the work; but the ship carpenters were invalids, and there were no caulkers, and the two conspirators soon changed their minds, and resolved to take him prisoner to Hispaniola. He was put in irons, and the vessels set sail, having on board the whole of the little community, as well as that strong box of gold and treasure, the disputed possession of which was at the bottom of most of this trouble.

Arrived off the desired coast, Ojeda made a bold struggle for liberty. He was a strong man and a good swimmer, so one night he let himself down quietly into the sea, and made an attempt to reach the land. But, while his arms were free, his feet were shackled with