

no sooner had Ortiz and his companion advanced to the place where the letter was displayed, than a multitude came running from it, and surrounding them, seized eagerly upon them. The number of the Indians was so great, that the Spaniards in the vessels did not dare to attempt to rescue them, and saw them carried forcibly away. In this first onset the man who accompanied Ortiz was killed, he having made resistance when he was seized.

Not far from the place where they were made prisoners, was another Indian town, or village, consisting of about 8 or 10 houses or wigwams. These houses were made of wood, and covered with palm-leaves. At one end of this village there was a building, which the captive called a temple, but of what dimensions it was he makes no mention. Over the door of entrance into this temple there was placed the figure of a bird, carved out in wood, and it was especially surprising that this bird had gilded eyes. No attempt is made by Ortiz even to conjecture how or by whom the art of gilding was practised, in this wild and distant region, nor does he mention meeting with any other specimen of that art during his captivity. At the opposite extremity of this village stood the house of the chief, or casique, as he was often called, upon an eminence, raised, as it was supposed, for a fortification. These things remained the same ten years afterwards, and are mentioned by the historian of Fernando De Soto's Invasion of Florida. The name of the chief of this village was Ucita, before whom was presented the captive, Ortiz, who was condemned to suffer immediate death.

The manner of his death was by torture, which was to be effected in this wise. The executioners set four stakes in the ground, and to these they fastened four poles; the captive was then taken, and with his arms and legs extended, was by them bound to these poles, at such a distance from the ground, that a fire, made directly under him, would be a long time in consuming him. Never did a poor victim look with greater certainty to death for relief, than did John Ortiz at this time. The fire had already begun to rage, when a most remarkable circumstance happened to save his life—a daughter of the stern Ucita arose and plead for him. Among other things she said these to her father: "My kind father, why kill this poor stranger? he can do you nor any of us any injury, seeing he is but one and alone. It is better that you should keep him confined; for even in that condition he may sometime be of great service to you." The chief was silent for a short time, but finally ordered him to be released from his place of torture. They had no sooner taken the thongs from his wrists and

