

red hot, and ordered a surgeon to apply them to each orifice of his wound. The surgeon, fearful that should he die the death would be laid to his door, shudderingly refused, whereupon Ojeda threatened to hang him if he did not obey, and he was obliged to comply. Ojeda refused to be held or tied down, and endured the agony without moving a muscle. This violent remedy so inflamed his system that he had to be wrapped in sheets steeped in vinegar to allay the fever, and it is said that a barrel of vinegar was consumed in this way. But he lived, and his wounds healed; "the cold poison," says Las Casas, "was consumed by the vivid fire."

At this time their provisions were again becoming scarce, and the arrival of a strange ship, commanded by one Bernardino de Talavera, a desperate pirate, was welcomed, as it brought some relief, although supplies were only furnished for large prices in gold. Some dissatisfaction was expressed at the division of the food, and shortly afterwards serious factions arose. At last Ojeda volunteered to go himself to San Domingo in quest of necessary supplies, to which his followers agreed, and he embarked on board Talavera's ship. They had scarcely put to sea when a serious quarrel arose between the freebooter and Ojeda; the latter, apparently, having acted on board as though he were commander instead of passenger. He was actually put in irons, where "he reviled Talavera and his gang as recreants, traitors, pirates, and offered to fight the whole of them successively, provided they would give him a clear deck and come on two at a time." They left him fuming and raging in his chains until a violent gale arose, and they bethought themselves that Ojeda was a skilful navigator. They then parleyed, offering him his liberty if he would pilot the ship, and he consented, but all his skill was unavailing, and he was obliged to run her on the southern coast of Cuba—then as yet uncolonised, except by runaway slaves from Hayti. Here they made a toilsome march through forests and morasses, crossing mountains and rivers, in a nearly starved condition. One morass, entangled by roots and creeping vines, and cut up by sloughs and creeks, occupied them thirty days to cross, at the end of which time only thirty-five men survived out of seventy that had left the ship. At last they reached an Indian village. "The Indians gathered round and gazed at them with wonder, but when they learnt their story, they exhibited a humanity that would have done honour to the most professing Christians. They bore them to their dwellings, set meat and drink before them, and vied with each other in discharging the offices of the kindest humanity. Finding that a number of their companions were still in the morass, the cacique sent a large party of Indians with provisions for their relief, with orders to bring on their shoulders such as were too feeble to walk. . . . The Spaniards were brought to the village, succoured, cherished, consoled, and almost worshipped as if they had been angels." And now Ojeda prepared to carry out a vow he had made on his journey, that if saved, he would erect a little hermitage or oratory, with an altar, above which he would place the picture to which he attributed his wonderful escape. The cacique listened with attention to his explanations regarding the beneficence of the Virgin, whom he represented as the mother of the Deity who reigned above, and acquired a profound veneration for the picture. Long after, when the Bishop Las Casas, who has recorded these facts, arrived at the same village, he found the chapel preserved with