

in search of food, for the whole forest teemed with lurking foes. They devoured such herbs and roots as they could find without regard to their quality. Their bodies became corrupted, and various diseases, combined with the ravages of famine, daily thinned their numbers. The sentinel who feebly mounted guard at night was often found dead at his post in the morning. Some stretched themselves on the ground, and expired of mere famine and debility; nor was death any longer regarded as an evil, but rather as a welcome relief from a life of horror and despair." Such is the chronicler's mournful account.



ARRIVAL OF OJEDA AND HIS FOLLOWERS AT THE INDIAN VILLAGES.

We have seen that Ojeda felt unbounded confidence in his charm—the picture of the Holy Virgin—and he had so long escaped unscathed that the Indians also believed him to bear a charmed life. They determined one day to test the question, and placed four of their most expert archers in ambush, with directions to single him out, while a number more advanced to the fort sounding their conches and drums, and yelling with hideous noises. Ojeda sallied forth to meet them, and the Indians fled to the ambuscade. The archers waited till he was full in front, and then discharged their poisoned arrows. Three he warded off by his buckler, but the fourth pierced his thigh. Ojeda was carried back to the fort, more despondent than he had ever yet been, for his talisman seemed to have failed him, and thrilling pains shot through his body. But he was not to be thus defeated. He caused two plates of iron to be made