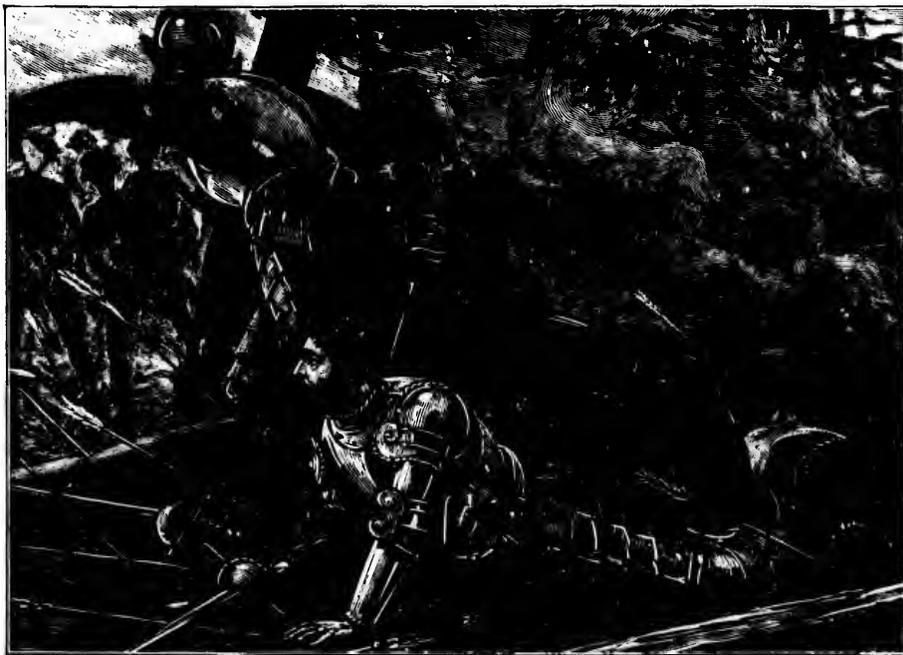


for a debt of five hundred ducats, and carried before the Alcalde Mayor. "This was a thunderstroke to the unfortunate cavalier. In vain he represented his utter incapacity to furnish such a sum at the moment; in vain he represented the ruin that would accrue to himself, and the vast injury to the public service, should he be prevented from joining his expedition. The Alcalde Mayor was inflexible, and Niuesa was reduced to despair. At this critical moment relief came from a most unexpected quarter. The heart of a public notary was melted by his distress! He stepped forward in court, and declared that rather than see so



THE DEATH OF LA COSA.

gallant a gentleman reduced to extremity, he himself would pay down the money. Niuesa gazed at him with astonishment, and could scarce believe his senses; but when he saw him actually pay off the debt, and found himself suddenly released from this dreadful embarrassment, he embraced his deliverer with tears of gratitude, and hastened with all speed to embark, lest some other legal spell should be laid upon his person."

Ojeda set sail from San Domingo on the 10th of November, 1509, with three hundred men, among the adventurers being Francisco Pizarro, afterwards the renowned conqueror of Peru. They arrived speedily at Carthagena, which harbour Cosa advised Ojeda to abandon, and commence a settlement in the Gulf of Uraba, where the natives were much less ferocious, and did not use poisoned weapons, as did those of the former place. Ojeda, however, was too high-spirited to alter his plans on account of any number of naked