

1568. difficulty in protecting their arms. The weather cleared at last ; and Mr. de Gourgues, by the favor of a little grove, reconnoitred the fort at his leisure. He perceived them to be all in motion, and had no doubt but that he was discovered ; but he was mistaken, learning subsequently that they were repairing a cistern.

About ten o'clock, the tide being at its lowest, they crossed, though not without difficulty ; for besides the water being waist-high, the bottom was covered with large sharp oysters, which cut the shoes and even the feet of the soldiers. The Indians, though barefooted, knew how to avoid them ; and there were very few at this passage, most of them having crossed the river at its mouth in periaguas.¹

The Spaniards were still unaware of the presence of the French in Florida ; and nothing convinced the Chevalier de Gourgues more of the hatred of the natives for their new neighbors, than the secrecy observed on this occasion. At last, all the troops having crossed, and being full of ardor to come to action, the general thought the time too precious to waste in speeches. He contented himself with showing his soldiers in a few words the justice of their cause, which the Almighty himself would not fail to favor ; and he sounded the charge. He had divided his little troop into two bands : giving the command of one to the Sieur de Casenove, his lieutenant, he put himself at the head of the rest, and advanced slowly in order of battle.²

Its capture.
Exploit of
an Indian.

The moment they passed the wood which covered it, the Spaniards fired two culverins at him, that Mr. de Laudonniere had left in Caroline. The first time, they fired too far ; but they were reloading, and the front ranks were beginning to waver, when the brave Olocotora, who never left the general, glided unperceived to the foot of the platform where the two culverins were planted, leaped upon it, and drove a pike which he bore through the gunner's body.

¹ Basanier, *Histoire Notable*, p. 213. de la Floride, pp. 344, 345 ; Basanier,

² De Gourgues MS. ; La Reprinse p. 213.