

of that holy doctor being celebrated on the day.¹ He did not stop, however, but kept on his way ; and the next day perceived four ships at anchor, from which he concluded that the French had received the expected re-enforcements. He at once convened his council, which advised him to return to Hispaniola, and wait till his whole fleet had got together. This resolution chagrined him all the more, from the fact that he had been discovered, that there was no wind, that his ships were in a very bad state, and that he had every thing to fear, if pursued.²

1565.

He accordingly represented that it seemed to him more advisable to surprise the four French vessels anchored at the roadstead, where they had remained apparently because they could not enter the river on which the fort stood ; that doubtless they were but poorly manned, as their commander, believing them in perfect security, cou'd have left only a part of the crew on board ; that after taking them, there was nothing to prevent his entering the St. Augustine and fortifying his position, while some of his vessels went to Hispaniola to explain his situation to such of his fleet as had reached there, and to take in necessary provisions and munitions ; that when all his forces had united at St. Augustine River, he could attack the French by sea and land,—in which case, after the loss of their largest ships, they would be able neither to resist so powerful an attack nor even return to France.

He resolves
to attack
the French
vessels.

These reasons were deemed convincing, and they considered the project of the captain-general worthy of his

What passed
in council.

¹ Barcia, *Ensayo Cronologico*, pp. 70, 71. Mendoza gives it differently, and apparently more accurately. Menendez made the coast, August 28, St. Augustine's day, off the mouth of the St. John ; but not landing, did not detect the presence of the French. He coasted along ; and though he took two Frenchmen prisoners, was unable to find the French fort. On the 30th, he landed fifty

men, who penetrated to a town four leagues inland ; and they being well received, Menendez himself landed on the 1st September, and after making the Indians presents, learned of them, through the French as interpreters, that the French post was only five leagues off. Mendoza, p. 196.

² Barcia, *Ensayo Cronologico*, p. 74.