

At daybreak the French ships appeared at the very spot just left by the two Spanish vessels, and the next moment one of them advanced to the bar with three sloops. The adelantado saw the greatness of his peril; but, fortunately for him, the French had to wait two full hours for the return of the tide, so as to be able to cross the bar. The weather was fine, and the sea very beautiful, when suddenly there sprang up so violent a norther, that Mr. de Ribaut was forced to stand off the coast and abandon his prey at the very moment when, to all appearance, it could not escape.¹

1565.

The French are surprised by a furious storm just as they lower a boat to attack the Spaniards.

Menendez did not doubt but that this storm, which saved him, was an answer to the prayers he had offered up in the midst of the danger from which he beheld himself so happily delivered, and his only thought was to profit by the absence of the French. He had a Mass of the Holy Ghost said, at the close of which he assembled his council of war. He there stated, that if the king's service alone were in question, no one could be surprised at their renouncing an enterprise so beset with obstacles; but it was the cause of God, not to be forsaken without incurring the malediction of the Almighty. "We are," he added, "surrounded by enemies, our provisions begin to fail, but it is in such great extremities that real courage is shown."

Menendez's speech to his officers.

At these words, the council interrupted him, assuring him that they were all ready to second him to their utmost. Then, full of renewed confidence, he resumed, and said "that Heaven visibly declared for them; that the success of their expedition was certain, if they were not wanting to themselves; that the French squadron, which three days before fled before them, had surely dared to come out and attack them only after being re-enforced with the best men in Fort Caroline; that the storm which had just driven

¹ Barcia, *Ensayo Cronologico*, p. 77, 2; Mendoza, p. 208; Menendez to the King, Oct. 15, cited in Parkman, 107; Le Moyne de Morgues, p. 24.