

Meanwhile, there remained opposite the fort only that one of the three French ships commanded by James de Ribaut. That officer had seen the Spaniards enter Caroline, without firing a single cannon at them, although near enough to do them considerable injury, and having sixty soldiers and a pretty good crew on board. It is true that the fort was taken so suddenly, that Ribaut was apparently unaware of the attack till the moment when the enemy were in, and that in firing on them he might fear that his balls would reach his countrymen; but it is not so easy to excuse his conduct to Mr. de Laudonnier, after the latter had reached his ship.

1565.
Misconduct
of young
Ribaut.

He first weighed anchor to join the other two ships, which were anchored near the mouth of the river. Then Laudonnier proposed to go in search of Mr. de Ribaut, whose fate was still unknown; but he declared it to be his intention to proceed to France, without stopping anywhere. This so shocked Laudonnier, that he went to another vessel.¹ Unfortunately, the ship had no pilot who durst venture to sail alone. Ribaut had four, but would give none. The third ship and another vessel which remained on the coast had not sailors enough to work them, and they had to be abandoned. Laudonnier advised Ribaut to set them on fire, to prevent the Spaniards using them, either against him or against the squadron if it reappeared; but

vessel. This does not apparently include all, as his party and Laudonnier's numbered much more. Barcia says that sixty escaped, of whom six surrendered, and ten were subsequently taken, making those who reached the ships forty-four. Mendoza says nothing of the seventy saved. He gives one hundred and forty-two killed, including a "great cosmographer and magician," and says about three hundred escaped (p 221). But the last figures are evidently wild. Laudonnier may per-

haps underrate his force; but the Spanish accounts bear it out, making about two hundred in all, besides the women and children.

¹ Laudonnier's narrative and Challeux are silent as to any proposal to seek John Ribault. Laudonnier says that after reaching the vessels, he was in the Levrier, when "Captain James Ribault and Captain Valnot came to see me; and there we concluded to return to France." As to his going to another vessel he is silent.