

as he had no vessel able to resist it, if it attacked him before the arrival of the rest of the fleet, which he awaited impatiently. But his fears and his hopes vanished almost simultaneously; and the sad fate of the French squadron made him bear more easily the loss of his galleon and the dispersion of his fleet, of which he was soon informed.

1565.

Menendez  
learns bad  
news of the  
fleet.

The storm which had driven Mr. Ribaut away from the St. Augustine River, at the moment when he held the Spaniards there unable to resist him, lasted till the 23d of September, and forced him ashore more than fifty leagues from there, in the direction of the Bahama Channel, and finally dashed all his ships to pieces on the rocks. All his men escaped by swimming; but all that was on the ships was lost.<sup>1</sup> The sequel of this unhappy adventure is so differently represented by the French and Spaniards, that it is absolutely impossible to reconcile them. In such cases, where truth, for all his endeavor, eludes him, the impartial writer owes it to the fidelity of history to give the contradictory versions, adding the reasons and authorities which support them, and leaving the public to judge.

Ribaut's  
shipwreck.  
Contradiction  
between his-  
torians on  
the point.

Mr. de Ribaut, say the French historians, finding himself wrecked on an unknown coast, without arms or provisions, wished to try and reach May River. The difficulties, misery, and hardship endured by this wretched band, on their march through an unknown, uninhabited, and often impracticable country, are more easily conceived than described. At last, the commander, finding an abandoned sloop on the shore, sent Michael le Vasseur in it, to go and reconnoitre the condition of affairs at Caroline.

What be-  
fell the  
French  
after the  
shipwreck,  
according  
to our his-  
torians.

Le Vasseur went near enough to discern the Spanish ensigns on the fort.<sup>2</sup> His return with this sad tidings appalled every heart, and it was long before they could come to any resolution. At last, Mr. de Ribaut resolved

<sup>1</sup> Histoire Memorable, p. 292.

Moyne de Morgues, p. 28; De Gal-

<sup>2</sup> Histoire Memorable, pp. 293-5.

lorum Expeditione, pp. 465, 466.

He says, *Thomas le Vasseur*. Le The fort must be St. Augustine.