

1565. them served at once, and went to take his meal with his own men.

The negotiation.

After the lapse of an hour he returned to the French, and asked them whether they were convinced of what he had told them? The officer replied that he could not doubt it, and that he implored him to give them a vessel to return to France. "I would do it willingly," replied the adelantado, "if you were Catholics, and I had vessels to spare." "At least," replied the officer, "permit us to stay with you, till an occasion offers for us to sail; there is no war between our two nations, and our kings are friends and brothers." "It is true," replied Menendez, "that the French Catholics are our friends and allies; but it is not so with heretics, on whom I make war with fire and sword, and will make it with all cruelty¹ on all of that sect that I meet on land or water; and in this I profess to serve both kings. I have come to Florida to plant the Roman Catholic faith. If you throw yourselves on my mercy, and give up your arms and ensigns, I will do what God inspires me: if not, take such course as you please, but expect neither friendship nor truce from me."

With these words he left them, telling them to consult. The Gascon already mentioned then offered to go and report to the whole troop what he had just heard. He was allowed to do so, and after two hours came back. Then the officer and his companions went to the adelantado, and offered him twenty thousand ducats if he would guarantee them their lives. Menendez replied that, although he was only a poor soldier, he was incapable of acting from motives of interest; that if he granted a favor he would do it from pure generosity; and, as the officer insisted, he protested that they would sooner see heaven and earth come together, than see him change his resolution.

At this answer, the officer and his gentlemen recrossed

¹ Que tenia con ellos guerra a con toda crudelad. *Ensayo Crono-sangre e fuego, y que esta la haria logico*, p. 86, 2.