

1565. 23d of October, under the command of Andrew Lopez Patiño and John Velez de Medrano. Menendez increased it by a like number of soldiers from his garrison, and on the 26th set out with this force, marching on foot, followed by the arms and provisions on two boats, which anchored every night opposite his camp.

Their surrender.

On the 1st of November he discovered the French, who, surprised to see the Spaniards arrive, fled to a mountain. Menendez sent to tell them that they might come without fear, and that he not only gave them a pledge of life, but would treat them the same as his own soldiers. Most of them confided in his word, and he kept it to the letter; he employed them even in his subsequent expeditions, and gained several to the Catholic religion; but their commander and twenty others replied to his envoy, that they would rather be eaten by the savages than surrender to him. He despised their small number, and left them in peace. He set fire to the fort and ship, which were already considerably advanced, and returned to St. Augustine, well satisfied to be rid of so many Frenchmen, who might have given him a great deal of trouble¹ had Mr. de Ribaut² chosen to follow the advice of Mr. de Laudonniere, or if the storm which destroyed his ships had begun only two hours later.

It is quite useless for me to add any reflections of my own on the difference and the contradictions between the two accounts, which I have just given—my readers will make them as well as I can; but I cannot refrain from acknowledging much more probability in the latter than in the former, and I avow that I should hesitate to tax a man of honor with such black perfidy as is attributed to the governor of San Matheo, on the authority of a single man, who under the circumstances in which he was, ex-

¹ A full account of this affair, by Doctor Solis de Meras, a brother-in-law of Menendez, is in Barcia, pp. 85-90.

² The highest eulogy on Ribaut is by Menendez. See Parkman's *Pioneers*, p. 132.