

1568. them, and had no small difficulty in saving the rest from the hands of the Indians, to hand them over to the executioners.¹

Booty taken
there.

San Matheo being now without defenders, the general entered with all his troops, who took a considerable booty. There were in it, five double culverins; four medium-sized and some small iron and brass cannon; eighteen barrels of powder; and a very large stock of arms of all kinds, which were conveyed to the bark used for transporting the troops. The powder was, however, lost by one of those accidents which it is difficult to avoid. An Indian, cooking a fish quite far from the magazine, let some fire fall on a train of powder which had not been perceived, and by means of which the Spaniards intended to blow up the French, in case they forced the breach. Fortunately, no one was near enough to be injured, although the magazine blew up.

The general gave his men and the Indians their time to pillage; and also made liberal presents to the latter, who seemed much more charmed with his manners than his gifts. He then had all his prisoners brought to the same spot where the French had been massacred, and where Menendez had engraved on a stone these words: "I do not do this as to Frenchmen, but as to Lutherans." He reproached them with their cruelty, their perfidy, their violation of oaths;² then hung them all on a tree; and instead of the former inscription, put on a pine board: "I do not do this as to Spaniards, nor as to maranes;³ but as to traitors, robbers, and murderers."⁴

Reflection
on this con-
duct.

Some historians seem to approve this conduct as just and legitimate; and it would, indeed, have some show of justice, especially supposing that the Spaniards had, as all then supposed, violated their oath. But apart from the

¹ La Reprins de la Floride, p. 355; Basanier, p. 217. was not then disputed.—*Charlevoix*.

² A nickname for Spaniards.

³ The reader must remember the account of the sailor, whose fidelity

⁴ La Reprins de la Floride, pp. 356-9; Basan., p. 218; Gourgues MS.