

Menendez led a detachment of 70 men against this chief, but without success. The soldiers could not now venture far beyond the protection of the forts without being harassed by the Indians and within a year fifty or more, including a number of officers, were killed.

The same spirit of mutiny that took hold of the French arose among the Spanish garrisons. On one occasion all but twenty of those in the forts on the San Mateo determined to leave and were aboard a vessel ready to sail when Menendez arrived from St. Augustine. He induced thirty of them to remain, put them on a boat and ordered them to St. Augustine; but on the way they were attacked by the Indians and most of them killed. The mutineers sailed and were wrecked on the lower Florida coast where they fell into the hands of the Indians of that section.

At the end of 18 months conditions in Florida were growing from bad to worse; supplies and recruits were slow in coming from the West Indies and the dissension of the colonists was growing. Menendez therefore decided to go to Spain and make a personal report in the interest of the Florida colony. He sailed in the spring of 1567, and remained in Spain a year. During his absence there occurred at the mouth of the River San Mateo (St. Johns) the most spectacular incident of them all.

### **Retribution of Dominic de Gourgues**

The court of France, anti-Huguenot in sentiment, ignored the popular clamor for retribution for the outrages perpetrated against Frenchmen in Florida. Observing that the slaughter of his countrymen would likely go unavenged and believing that the honor of France demanded a retributive measure, Dominic de Gourgues, a soldier of fortune, took upon himself the responsibility of a private enterprise against the Spaniards in Florida.

Selling his own estate and borrowing from his friends, De Gourgues managed to finance the building of three vessels especially equipped for the enterprise. His fighting force comprised about 100 soldiers armed with arquebusses and 80 mariners with cross-bows and pikes; there were also a number of persons unskilled in arms, but seeking adventure.