to reconnoiter. These were the ships that chased the French out to sea. He had set about fortifying the place, which he called St. Augustine, and was so engaged when Ribault's fleet appeared off the harbor. He saw the French ships driven southward and speculated as to their return. He called his officers in council and laid before them a plan to attack the French fort by land before the French vessels should return. His officers, as in the case of Ribault, opposed the plan; but Menendez was determined, and on the 16th of September he marched with a force of 500 men to attack Fort Caroline. Indians did not take part in this further than acting as guides. The tempest had not ceased; rain fell in torrents, and it was only after the severest hardships that the Spaniards reached the vicinity of Fort Caroline after sunset of the 19th. Coming to a pine grove, they camped at a low, wet place one-quarter of a league from the fort; here Menendez assembled his captains in council. Drenched and hungry with their powder wet and useless the Spaniards debated the advisability of making an attack on the French fort. Menendez was practically alone in an unswerving desire to attack the fort, his captains opposing it and suggesting the return to St. Augustine and the abandonment of the expedition. The council lasted until the early morning hours, and the will of Menendez prevailed.

* The place where the Spaniards camped that night and the fate of Florida was sealed is easily recognized today. The road skirts it just before the climb to St. Johns Bluff commences. It is a natural depression surrounded by hills, about three-fourths of a mile (approximately one-fourth of a league) southeast of the site of Fort Caroline—the only situation of that kind anywhere in the locality.

/Before dawn, September 20th, the Spaniards began to move closer to the fort. They had marched only a few hundred yards when amidst the rain and tempest, and the tangled underbrush, the columns became separated and Menendez called a halt. He interrogated a Frenchman (one of Laudonniere's mutineers) whom he had brought with him. The Frenchman told him that "right over there, down below, three arquebus shots away, was the fort, one side of which was washed by the waters of the river." Nothing could be clearer than this description recorded by Meras, which con-