

slave-catcher and half-pirate as he was, like other naval heroes of that wild age.

Romantic as was his exploit, it lacked the fulness of poetic justice, since the chief offender escaped him. While Gourgues was sailing towards Florida, Menendez was in Spain, high in favor at court, where he told to approving ears how he had butchered the heretics. Borgia, the sainted General of the Jesuits, was his fast friend; and two years later, when he returned to America, the Pope, Paul the Fifth, regarding him as an instrument for the conversion of the Indians, wrote him a letter with his benediction.¹ He re-established his power in Florida, rebuilt Fort San Mateo, and taught the Indians that death or flight was the only refuge from Spanish tyranny. They murdered his missionaries and spurned their doctrine. "The Devil is the best thing in the world," they cried; "we adore him; he makes men brave." Even the Jesuits despaired, and abandoned Florida in disgust.

Menendez was summoned home, where fresh honors awaited him from the Crown, though, according to the somewhat doubtful assertion of the heretical Grotius, his deeds had left a stain upon his name among the people.² He was given command of the armada of three hundred sail and twenty thousand men, which, in 1574, was gathered at Santander against England and Flanders. But now, at the

¹ "Carta de San Pio V. à Pedro Menendez," Barcia, 139.

² Grotius, *Annales*, 63.