

bade his artillery cease and all things be made ready for assault. Hitherto the garrison had kept carefully under cover—some in the keep itself, some in the towers on either side of the northwest curtain-wall; in the which, though somewhat shaken and damaged, there was still found sufficient shelter—but the instant the fire of the enemy's artillery abated a trumpet within the castle sounded the "assembly." The Free Companion knew right well what that lull and stillness after the tempest portended, and mustered his men instantly to meet the assault.

The time was so short, and the breach so open, that little could be done to hinder the advance of the stormers; yet something the garrison attempted by their leader's orders—strewing here and there planks slippery with oil, and driving into every available crevice sharpened stakes or truncheons of lances, so as to make a kind of rude stockade. Throughout the siege the Red Cross of St. George had floated from the keep; but now, on either of the two towers flanking the breach, was planted a pennon. On the one was blazoned a *rouge dragon*, the device of Hacquemont; the other—it had not been aired for many a day—bore the device of two splintered lances, crossed, on a sable field.

The French advanced eight abreast, their order resembling that of a modern column of subdivision, shouting the war-cries of their different leaders. In the front rank marched Sir Alain de Beaumanoir, who claimed that honor in right of having been forbidden to try his fortune in the first assault. Next to him came Sir Tristan de la Roye, a very valiant Breton