

The fugitives feared lest the Sultan, perceiving their escape and that of his beloved daughter, might despatch his servants in pursuit. While thus anxiously seeking a way out of their predicament, suddenly they espied a small skiff dart from the opposite river bank. It was propelled by a noble-looking young man, who reached them in an instant, and "without further salutation", said : "I have come for you, Gentlemen, enter, I will ferry you across, for I know your wish." They embarked and, in the twinkling of an eye, they were on the opposite bank. "Instantly the young man and the skiff vanished from their sight".

Pursuing their journey, they walked for about three hours. Ismeria was exhausted and begged the Knights to suffer her to rest a little. They all four left the beaten path and, hidden by some bushes, they fell into a peaceful slumber.

In France

This slumber was to be followed by a marvellous awakening. On opening their eyes to the daylight, our four fugitives wondered where they were. They heard the sound of a bagpipe on which a shepherd was playing. The Knights went up to him and, believing they were still in Egypt, asked him "in the moorish language" where they were.

"Gentlemen", replied the shepherd, "speak French if you wish me to understand you.

— Are we then in France, my friend ?

— To be sure.

— But in what province, in what diocese ?

— In the province of Picardy, in the diocese of Laon and quite near the château of Marchais".

This was the Knights' own château, their paternal house. Then they realized what an astounding miracle the glorious Virgin Mary had wrought in their