

*" Sous au sorcellier ! "*

And a savage-looking archer stepped out of the throng in the knight's rear, and smote on his bare head with his glaarme.

Without a moan or a struggle, Ralph Brakespeare pitched forward—dead before his forehead touched the flagstones.

When De Clisson heard what had been done, he was very ill-pleased thereat, for he averred that he had rather than a thousand golden crowns have taken the Free Companion alive, sith he had not slain him with his own hand. And very rueful waxed the knight's countenance as he looked at the gaps in his muster-roll, and counted up the cost of the siege ; for the booty found in Hacquemont hardly amounted to a month's pay of a hundred spearmen, and the castle itself, as a fortalice, was scarce worth the winning. So De Clisson departed, leaving behind a force sufficient to guard and repair the place, letting the old garrison go where they would—first binding them by oath not to bear arms against France. With him, too, went Gualtier de Marsan, but not as a prisoner ; for the new-made knight, having satisfied his honor and discharged his duty as esquire, was not minded to persist in bearing arms against his natural sovereign. So he became liege-man of France again, and by dint of good service found favor both with King and Constable.

When the news of what had been done at Hacquemont came to Bordeaux, and the ancient merchant who had the packet in charge delivered to the Lady Odille her husband's letter, the widow's mourning for many days after was real. It was embittered, too, by