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*A SQUADRON OF GUARDS*

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half way up when a hand roughly shook the door; then a heavy boot crashed against it.

"They've barred the door, sir," said a coarse English voice, and the boot crashed again against the hard oak panel.

"Then your kicking is waste of good leather," and I could distinguish the jingle of a steel scabbard, as the leader swung down from his saddle. "Look about for something with which to force the lock. St. Anne! the place is as bare as a stripped chicken! Hear you any sound of the rascals within?"

"Not a peep, sir. 'T is my faith they've taken to the hills at sight of us."

"And let us hope left us an inn stocked to our needs," with a laugh. "'T is God's mercy, and not to be frowned at. What find you, lads?"

"There is naught here, sir," replied another voice, "of size for a ram."

"No? then pry away at the shutters with your swords. Lift Saunders on your shoulders — so! Once inside, and we have the castle. Ah! easily done, men; now rip it out."