

## A Ladder of Swords

upon the great rock called of the Ecréhos. These will be in line with thy sight by the sands of Hatainville. Near by the Tour de Rozel shall I be watching and awaiting thee. By day and night doth my prayer ascend for thee.

"The messenger who bears this to thee (a piratical knave with a most kind heart, having, I am told, a wife in every port of France and of England the south, a most heinous sin!) will wait for thy answer, or will bring thee hither, which is still better. He is worthy of trust if thou makest him swear by the little finger of St. Peter. By all other swearings he doth deceive freely.

"The Lord make thee true, Michel. If thou art faithful to me, I shall know how faithful thou art in all; for thy vows to me were most frequent and pronounced, with a full savor that might warrant short seasoning. Yet, because thou mayst still be given to such dear fantasies of truth as were on thy lips in those dark days wherein thy sword saved my life 'twixt Paris and Rouen, I tell thee now that I do love thee, and shall