

name was a mystery; and the Black Prince and his knights had long wished to encounter a man who was a disgrace alike to chivalry and the English name. When, therefore, Walter saw his banner in the king's division he urged his horse towards it, and, followed by Ralph and some thirty men-at-arms, hewed his way through the crowd until he was close to the banner.

A knight in gray armour spurred forward to meet him, and a desperate conflict took place. Never had Walter crossed swords with a stouter adversary, and his opponent fought with as much vehemence and fury as if the sight of Walter's banner, which Ralph carried behind him, had aroused in him a frenzy of rage and hate. In guarding his head from one of his opponent's sweeping blows Walter's sword shivered at the hilt; but before the Gray Knight could repeat the blow Walter snatched his heavy battle-axe from his saddle. The knight reined back his horse for an instant, and imitated his example, and with these heavy weapons the fight was renewed. The Knight of the Raven had lost by the change, for Walter's great strength stood him in good stead, and presently with a tremendous blow he beat down his opponent's axe and cleft through his helmet almost to the chin.

The knight fell dead from his horse, and Walter, with his band pressing on, carried confusion into the ranks of his followers. When these had been defeated Walter rode back with Ralph to the spot where the Knight of the Raven had fallen.

"Take off his helmet, Ralph. Let me see his face. Methinks I recognized his voice, and he fought as if he knew and hated me."

Ralph removed the helmet.

"It is as I thought," Walter said; "it is Sir James



THE END OF A RECREANT KNIGHT.