

antagonist, and the scale of victory was rapidly inclining in his favour.

The followers of the two knights had hitherto stood passively by, watching with earnest interest the motions of the combatants; but when those of the Lord de Valence saw their master losing ground, his arm relaxing its vigour, and the blood flowing from his wounds, they shouted his war-cry, and with uplifted weapons rushed forward to his rescue. But instantly turning with the mien of an enraged lion towards them:

"Back, knives, at your peril!" he cried; "this quarrel is my own, and let him meddle with it who dare!" and with these words he returned more fiercely than ever to the combat, but still without gaining any advantage over his adversary. Yet, though wounded and bleeding, the undaunted courage with which he continued the contest, gained him the applause of Sir Enguerrard, who frankly offered him quarter. But he contemptuously spurned it, though shortly after, when he received such a blow upon his right arm that his sword dropped suddenly from his hand, the knight generously refused to press his conquest, and would have returned his weapon to its scabbard, saying, that both had fairly proved their courage, and for himself he was satisfied with the punishment he had inflicted, though it fell short of the death he had threatened.

But, as if infuriated by the prospect of defeat, the Lord de Valence scoffed at the offered mercy, and, throwing himself from his horse, plucked his sword from the ground, and with his left hand made a desperate thrust at Sir Enguerrard, who had dismounted at the same moment, and while he adroitly parried the stroke, pointed his own blade at his adversary's breast with so true an aim that it entered through the joints of his armour, and was buried to the hilt in his heart. He immediately sunk to the earth with a deep groan. His followers rushed towards him, and, on raising his helmet, showed his ghastly features fixed and terrible in their last agony. They gazed a moment in silence, and then speaking in a low tone to each other, one of them mounted his horse, and rode rapidly away. His companion remained kneeling at the side of his fallen lord, striving, with his scarf to staunch the blood that flowed freely from his side, muttering to himself while thus employed:

"And so it hath ended as I ever said it would, for the day came not more surely than some occasion of brawl and raffle to our lord. It was meat and drink to him to bandy sharp words and hard blows, and now, I trow, he hath had his fill of them."

Sir Enguerrard stood for a few moments, look-

ing silently upon his slain antagonist, and then, with feelings less of triumph than of sadness, he turned slowly away, and, remounting his horse, was on the point of once more spurring on towards Bruniguil, when the advance of a party on horseback caused him to rein up beside the road, in order to give them room to pass.

But, instead of so doing, they made a sudden halt, and looked earnestly, yet not with any symptoms of surprise or curiosity, upon his disarray, which, soiled as he was, with the dust and blood of the recent encounter, made him look no soft and carpet knight. The train consisted of a stout and jovial-looking personage, whose years might have numbered well high sixty. His countenance, though bright and cheerful, showed that time had brought to him, as to all, his share of suffering and sorrow; yet there was the gaiety of youth in his smile, and its fire still sparkled in the quick glance of his dark and merry eye. He was mounted on a Flanders mare, of great size and beauty, and his whole appearance bespoke him a man of wealth and substance, for a massy chain of gold encircled his neck, and his riding-cap and short horseman's cloak were composed of the richest Genoa velvet. Sir Enguerrard instantly recognized in him, Philip de Rosay, the wealthiest merchant of Evreux, who was renowned for his beneficence and hospitality. On several occasions he had granted immense loans of money to the king of Navarre, to aid him in sore straits, and, in return for his kindness, the monarch honoured him with his friendship, and conferred on him favours that secured his gratitude and attachment; so that in all Navarre there was not a subject more deeply vexed by his sovereign's imprisonment, than the rich merchant of Evreux.

Close beside the bridle-rein of Master Philip, so was he called, rode, on a white Arabian, of most delicate proportions and marvellous beauty, a lady, whom the young knight instantly conceived to be his daughter, for the charms of the fair Gabrielle de Rosay were the theme of song and legend throughout the country; and though the features of the maiden who sat silently upon her snow-white steed, were, as was not unusual in those days, concealed by a velvet mask, yet the exquisite symmetry of her figure, and the light and airy grace of her motions, did not escape the quick glance of Sir Enguerrard. Then, too, he thought, that hair of sunny gold must needs cluster round a face of loveliness; and as for the eyes, that sparkled through that envious mask, already in his heart he felt the power and fervour of their beams.

A damsel, mounted on a low brown jennet, followed her young mistress, and two lusty