

A Ladder of Swords

the island and had escaped without punishment.

Hearing, Lemprière of Rozel roared at him in anger: "Durst speak to me! For every fleece you thieved I'll have you flayed with bowstrings if ever I sight your face within my boundaries."

"Then I'll fetch and carry no more for M'sieu' of Rozel," said Buonespoir, in an offended tone, but grinning under his reddish beard.

"When didst fetch and carry for me, varlet?" Lemprière roared again.

"When the Seigneur of Rozel fell from his horse, overslung with sack, the night of the royal duke's visit, and the footpads were on him, I carried him on my back to the lodge of Rozel Manor. The footpads had scores to settle with the great Rozel."

For a moment the seigneur stared, then roared again, but this time with laughter.

"By the devil and Rollo, I have sworn to this hour that there was no man in the isle could have carried me on his shoulders. And I was right, for Jersiais you're none, neither