

dream." The last syllables mingled with the death-rattle.

A few seconds later Brakespeare loosed very gently the clasp of the corpse's fingers.

"Draw him aside, so that he be not trampled on," the knight said, as he rose. His face had settled down again and bore no sign of grief or pain, or even of the heat of battle; and in the same measured voice in which he had once before made brief oration to his garrison, he thus bespoke them:

"Good friends and followers, while we have brief breathing-space—for the door below will yield to naught less than engine or *bellier*—take counsel, I pray you, for your own safety. Hardily, thus far, have ye stood at my back; I render you hearty thanks therefor; but I now discharge each and every one of you from such duty—nay, I earnestly urge that ye will risk your lives no farther. Too many lie dead without there already; to such as remain the French will surely show fair quarter. I am under a vow to fight here *à l'outrance* but none such binds any of ye; wherefore I counsel you to ascend to the platform up yonder and make what terms ye will for your own selves with them below, leaving me here to do as seemeth me good—only let French hands, and none of yours, pluck down St. George's banner. And so shall ye be free of all shame or blood-guiltiness in sight both of God and man."

The thing may sound incredible nowadays, but in those times—whether for good or evil—men acted not by our standard and rule. Among those who listened to the Free Companion there was neither dispute nor doubt. They cried out with one accord praying their