

SIR GALAHAD OF THE ARMY

on Le Brocq's face, "there are four to feed—four; have mercy—ah, God in Heaven, we must all starve."

"I can refuse my son nothing to-day. Do you ask this thing of me, Sir Roger Le Brocq?" Fonzano's voice was level and smooth, but there was no mockery in it. From the intent, earnest face, the gross chin on the gross chest, Le Brocq looked into the haggard eyes of Pietro Spina; the lips moved, but no sound came, the agony of petition was too great.

"I ask this of you," said Le Brocq slowly.

Fonzano nodded his huge head. "A Knight of France," he said soberly. "Take him away; give him bread and meat for his family and henceforth a daily dole; it is my son's gift."

Silently the group of five moved to the door, nor were Spina's feet of more use to him than when he entered; as the door closed they heard him sobbing bitterly. Suddenly Le Brocq bethought himself.

"There must be no compulsion on the Signorina."

"There will be none."

But the gust of passion had not died out of Le Brocq. Now it broke afresh.

"And has there been no compulsion? You carry things with too high a hand. By the power that made me, Count Fonzano, why should I not force an end between us here and now?"

"Because you dare not; because a Chevalier of France dare not even threaten such a miserable half-man as Federigo Caldora." With a sweep of his hand Fonzano flung back the crimson coverlet inpetuously, almost fiercely, from the chair-front. Strapped into the chair was the gross torso, but below the torso—nothing. "My horse rolled on me. They say I would have died. God knows, it would have been easier to have died than live like this. But while I lay senseless they hacked me as I am—me, Federigo Caldora! and left me a byword and a jest to every coward and scullion. Misfortune has no friends. Said one 'Some men die by inches but poor Fonzano