

chronicles with which the Spaniards of the sixteenth century were familiar. Of the many old Spanish ballads quoted or alluded to by Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, metrical translations have uniformly been inserted in the Notes; and as by far the greater part of these compositions are altogether new to the English public, it is hoped this part of the work may afford some pleasure to those who delight in comparing the early literatures of the different nations of Christendom.

## THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE

TO

THE READER

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You may depend upon my bare word, reader, without any further security, that I could wish this offspring of my brain were as ingenious, sprightly, and accomplished, as yourself could desire; but the mischief on't is, nature will have its course. Every production must resemble its author, and my barren and unpolished understanding can produce nothing but what is very dull, very impertinent, and extravagant beyond imagination. You may suppose it the child of disturbance, engendered in some dismal prison,\* where wretchedness keeps its residence, and every dismal sound its habitation. Rest and ease, and convenient place, pleasant fields and groves, murmuring

\* The Author is said to have wrote this satirical romance in a prison.

springs, and a sweet repose of mind, are helps that raise the fancy, and impregnate even the most barren muses with conceptions that fill the world with admiration and delight. Some parents are so blinded by a fatherly fondness, that they mistake the very imperfections of their children for so many beauties; and the folly and impertinence of the brave boy must pass upon their friends and acquaintance for wit and sense. But I, who am only a stepfather, disavow the authority of this modern and prevalent custom; nor will I earnestly beseech you, with tears in my eyes, which is many a poor author's case, dear reader, to pardon or dissemble my child's faults; for what favour can I expect from you, who are neither his friend nor relation? You have a soul of your own, and the privilege of free-will, whoever you be, as well as the proudest he that struts in a gaudy outside; you are a king by your own fire-side, as much as any monarch on his throne; you have liberty and property, which set you above favour or affection, and may therefore freely like or dislike this history, according to your humour.

I had a great mind to have exposed it as naked as it was born, without the addition

of a preface, or the numberless trumpery of commendatory sonnets, epigrams, and other poems that usually usher in the conceptions of authors; for I dare boldly say, that though I bestowed some time in writing the book, yet it cost me not half so much labour as this very preface. I very often took up my pen, and as often laid it down, and could not for my life think of anything to the purpose. Sitting once in a very studious posture, with my paper before me, my pen in my ear, my elbow on the table, and my cheek on my hand, considering how I should begin, a certain friend of mine, an ingenious gentleman, and of a merry disposition, came in and surprised me. He asked me what I was so very intent and thoughtful upon? I was so free with him as not to mince the matter, but told him plainly I had been puzzling my brain for a preface to Don Quixote, and had made myself so uneasy about it, that I was now resolved to trouble my head no further either with preface or book, and even to let the achievements of that noble knight remain unpublished; for, continued I, why should I expose myself to the lash of the old legislator, the vulgar? They will say, I have spent my youthful days very finely to have nothing to

recommend my grey hairs to the world, but a dry, insipid legend, not worth a rush, wanting good language as well as invention, barren of conceits or pointed wit, and without either quotations in the margin, or annotations at the end, which other books, though never so fabulous or profane, have to set them off. Other authors can pass upon the public by stuffing their books from Aristotle, Plato, and the whole company of ancient philosophers, thus amusing their readers into a great opinion of their prodigious reading. Plutarch and Cicero are slurred on the public for as orthodox doctors as St. Thomas, or any of the fathers. And then the method of these moderns is so wonderfully agreeable and full of variety, that they cannot fail to please. In one line, they will describe you a whining amorous coxcomb, and the next shall be some dry scrap of a homily, with such ingenious turns as cannot choose but ravish the reader. Now I want all these embellishments and graces; I have neither marginal notes nor critical remarks; I do not so much as know what authors I follow, and consequently can have no formal index, as it is the fashion now, methodically strung on the letters of the alphabet, beginning with Aristotle, and ending with Xeno-

phon, or Zoilus, or Zeuxis, which last two are commonly crammed into the same piece, though one of them was a famous painter, and the other a saucy critic. I shall want also the pompous preliminaries of commendatory verses sent to me by the right honourable my Lord such a one, by the honourable the Lady such a one, or the most ingenious Master such a one; though I know I might have them at an easy rate from two or three brothers of the quill of my acquaintance, and better, I am sure, than the best quality in Spain can compose.

In short, my friend, said I, the great Don Quixote may lie buried in the musty records of La Mancha, until providence has ordered some better hand to fit him out as he ought to be; for I must own myself altogether incapable of the task. Besides, I am naturally lazy, and love my ease too well to take the pains of turning over authors for those things which I can express as well without it. And these are the considerations that made me so thoughtful when you came in. The gentleman, after a long and loud fit of laughing, rubbing his forehead, O' my conscience, friend, said he, your discourse has freed me from a mistake that has a great while im-

posed upon me. I always took you for a man of sense, but now I am sufficiently convinced to the contrary. What! puzzled at so inconsiderable a trifle! a business of so little difficulty confound a man of such deep sense and searching thought, as once you seemed to be!

I am sorry, sir, that your lazy humour and poor understanding should need the advice I am about to give you, which will presently solve all your objections and fears concerning the publishing of the renowned Don Quixote, the luminary and mirror of all knight-errantry. Pray, sir, said I, be pleased to instruct me in whatever you think may remove my fears, or solve my doubts. The first thing you object, replied he, is your want of commendatory copies from persons of figure and quality. There is nothing sooner helped; it is but taking a little pains in writing them yourself, and clapping whose name you please to them. You may father them on Prester John of the Indies, or on the Emperor of Trapizonde, whom I know to be most celebrated poets. But suppose they were not, and that some presuming pedantic critics might snarl, and deny this notorious truth, value it not two farthings; and though they should convict you of for-

gery, you are in no danger of losing the hand with which you wrote \* them.

As to marginal notes and quotations from authors for your history, it is but dropping here and there some scattered Latin sentences that you have already by rote, or may have with little or no pains. For example, in treating of liberty and slavery, clap me in,

*“Non bene pro toto libertas venditur auro;”*

and, at the same time, make Horace, or some other author, vouch it in the margin. If you treat of the power of death, come round with this close,

*“Pallida mors æquo pulsat pede pauperum  
tabernas,*

*Regumque turres.”*

If of loving our enemies, as heaven enjoins, you may, if you have the least curiosity, presently turn to the divine precept, and say, *Ego autem dico vobis, diligite inimicos vestros;* or if you discourse of bad thoughts, bring in this passage, *De corde exeunt cogitationes malæ.* If the uncertainty of friendship be your theme, Cato offers you his old couplet with all his heart,

*“Donec eris felix multos numerabis amicos,  
Tempora si fuerint nubila, solus eris.”*

\* He lost his left hand (*izquierda*) in the sea-fight at Lepanto against the Turks.

And so proceed. These scraps of Latin will at least gain you the credit of a great grammarian, which, I'll assure you, is no small accomplishment in this age. As to annotations or remarks at the end of your book, you may safely take this course. If you have occasion for a giant in your piece, be sure you bring in Goliah, and on this very Goliah (who will not cost you one farthing) you may spin out a swingeing annotation. You may say, The Giant Goliah, or Goliath, was a Philistine, whom David the shepherd slew with the thundering stroke of a pebble in the valley of Terebinthus; *vide* Kings, in such a chapter, and such a verse, where you may find it written. If not satisfied with this, you would appear a great humanist, and would show your knowledge in geography, take some occasion to draw the river Tagus into your discourse, out of which you may fish a most notable remark. The river Tagus, say you, was so called from a certain king of Spain. It takes its rise from such a place, and buries its waters in the ocean, kissing first the walls of the famous city of Lisbon; and some are of opinion that the sands of this river are gold, &c. If you have occasion to talk of robbers, I can presently give you the history of Cacus, for I have it by heart. If you

would descant upon whores, or women of the town, there is the Bishop\* of Mondonedo, who can furnish you with Lamia, Lais, and Flora, courtesans, whose acquaintance will be very much to your reputation. Ovid's Medea can afford you a good example of cruelty. Calypso from Homer, and Circe out of Virgil, are famous instances of witchcraft or enchantment. Would you treat of valiant commanders? Julius Cæsar has writ his commentaries on purpose; and Plutarch can furnish you with a thousand Alexanders. If you would mention love, and have but three grains of Italian, you may find Leon the Jew ready to serve you most abundantly. But if you would keep nearer home, it is but examining Fonseca of divine love, which you have here in your study, and you need go no farther for all that can be said on that copious subject. In short, it is but quoting these authors in your book, and let me alone to make large annotations. I'll engage to crowd your margin sufficiently, and scribble you four or five sheets to boot at the end of your book; and for the citation of so many authors, it is the easiest thing in nature. Find out one of these books with an alphabetical index, and without any farther ceremony, remove it *verbatim* into your

\* Guevara.

own; and though the world won't believe you have occasion for such lumber, yet there are fools enough to be thus drawn into an opinion of the work; at least, such a flourishing train of attendants will give your book a fashionable air, and recommend it for sale; for few chapmen will stand to examine it, and compare the authorities upon the counter, since they can expect nothing but their labour for their pains. But, after all, sir, if I know any thing of the matter, you have no occasion for any of these things; for your subject being a satire on knight-errantry, is so absolutely new, that neither Aristotle, St. Basil, nor Cicero, ever dreamt or heard of it. Those fabulous extravagances have nothing to do with the impartial punctuality of true history; nor do I find any business you can have either with astrology, geometry, or logic, and I hope you are too good a man to mix sacred things with profane. Nothing but pure nature is your business; her you must consult, and the closer you can imitate, your picture is the better. And since this writing of yours aims at no more than to destroy the authority and acceptance the books of chivalry have had in the world, and among the vulgar, you have no need to go begging sentences of philosophers, passages out of holy writ, poetical fables, rhetor-

ical orations, or miracles of saints. Do but take care to express yourself in a plain, easy manner, in well-chosen, significant, and decent terms, and to give an harmonious and pleasing turn to your periods; study to explain your thoughts, and set them in the truest light, labouring, as much as possible, not to leave them dark nor intricate, but clear and intelligible. Let your diverting stories be expressed in diverting terms, to kindle mirth in the melancholic, and heighten it in the gay. Let mirth and humour be your superficial design, though laid on a solid foundation, to challenge attention from the ignorant, and admiration from the judicious; to secure your work from the contempt of the graver sort, and deserve the praises of men of sense; keeping your eye still fixed on the principal end of your project, the fall and destruction of that monstrous heap of ill-contrived romances, which, though abhorred by many, have so strangely infatuated the greater part of mankind. Mind this, and your business is done.

I listened very attentively to my friend's discourse, and found it so reasonable and convincing, that, without any reply, I took his advice, and have told you the story by way of preface; wherein you may see, gentlemen, how happy I am in so ingenious a friend, to whose seasonable

counsel you are all obliged for the omission of all this pedantic garniture in the history of the renowned Don Quixote de la Mancha, whose character among all the neighbours about Montiel is, that he was the most chaste lover, and the most valiant knight, that has been known in those parts these many years. I will not urge the service I have done you by introducing you into so considerable and noble a knight's acquaintance, but only beg the favour of some small acknowledgment for recommending you to the familiarity of the famous Sancho Panca, his squire, in whom, in my opinion, you will find united and described all the squire-like graces, which are scattered up and down in the whole bead-roll of books of chivalry. And now I take my leave, entreating you not to forget your humble servant.

## CHAPTER I

THE QUALITY AND WAY OF LIVING OF THE RENOWNED  
DON QUIXOTE DE LA MANCHA

1

At a certain village in La Mancha,\* of which I cannot remember the name,<sup>1</sup> there lived not long ago one of those old-fashioned gentlemen who are never without a lance upon a rack,<sup>2</sup> an old target, a lean horse, and a greyhound. His diet consisted more of beef than mutton; and with minced meat on most nights, lentiles on Fridays, griefs and groans<sup>3</sup> on Saturdays, and a pigeon extraordinary on Sundays, he consumed three-quarters of his revenue; the rest was laid out in a plush coat, velvet breeches, with slippers of the same for holidays; and a suit of the very best home-spun cloth, which he bestowed on himself for working days. His whole family was a house-keeper something turned of forty, a niece not twenty, and a man that served him in the house and in the field, and could saddle

\* A small territory partly in the kingdom of Arragon and partly in Castile; it is a liberty within itself, distinct from all the country about.

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, Note 1 to Chapter I.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix, Note 2 to Chapter I.

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix, Note 3 to Chapter I.