

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,¹ there lived not long ago one of those old-fashioned gentlemen who are never without a lance upon a rack,² 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 groans³ 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.

¹ See Appendix, Note 1 to Chapter I.

² See Appendix, Note 2 to Chapter I.

³ See Appendix, Note 3 to Chapter I.

a horse and handle the pruning-hook. The master himself was nigh fifty years of age, of a hale and strong complexion, lean-bodied, and thin-faced, an early riser and a lover of hunting. Some say his sir-name was Quixada or Quesada (for authors differ in this particular); however, we may reasonably conjecture he was called Quixada (*i.e.* lantern-jaws), though this concerns us but little, provided we keep strictly to the truth in every point of this history.

You must know, then, that when our gentleman had nothing to do (which was almost all the year round), he past his time in reading books of knight-errantry, which he did with that application and delight, that at last he in a manner wholly left off his country sports, and even the care of his estate; nay, he grew so strangely besotted with these amusements that he sold many acres of arable land to purchase books of that kind, by which means he collected as many of them as were to be had; but, among them all, none pleased him like the works of the famous Feliciano de Sylva;⁴ for the clearness of his prose, and those intricate expressions with which it is interlaced, seemed to him so many pearls of eloquence, especially when he came to read the challenges, and the amorous addresses,

⁴ See Appendix, Note 4 to Chapter I.

many of them in this extraordinary style:—"The reason of your unreasonable usage of my reason does so enfeeble my reason that I have reason to expostulate with your beauty." And this: "The sublime heavens, which with your divinity divinely fortify you with the stars, and fix you the deserfer of the desert that is deserved by your grandeur." These, and such-like expressions, strangely puzzled the poor gentleman's understanding, while he was breaking his brain to unravel their meaning, which Aristotle himself could never have found, though he should have been raised from the dead for that very purpose.

He did not so well like those dreadful wounds which Don Belianis⁵ gave and received, for he considered that all the art of surgery could never secure his face and body from being strangely disfigured with scars. However, he highly commended the author for concluding his book with a promise to finish that unfinished adventure; and many times he had a desire to put pen to paper, and faithfully and literally finish it himself; which he had certainly done, and doubtless with good success, had not his thoughts been wholly engrossed in much more important designs.

⁵ See Appendix, Note 5 to Chapter I.

He would often dispute with the curate* of the parish, a man of learning, that had taken his degrees at Gigenza,⁶ who was the better knight, Palmerin of England or Amadis de Gaul;⁷ but Master Nicholas, the barber of the same town, would say that none of them could compare with the Knight of the Sun; and that if any one came near him, it was certainly Don Galaor, the brother of Amadis de Gaul; for he was a man of a most commodious temper, neither was he so finical, nor such a puling, whining lover as his brother; and as for courage, he was not a jot behind him.

In fine, he gave himself up so wholly to the reading of romances that a-nights he would pore on until it was day, and a-days he would read on until it was night; and thus by sleeping little and reading much the moisture of his brain was exhausted to that degree that at last he lost the use of his reason. A world of disorderly notions picked out of his books crowded into his imagination; and now his head was full of nothing but enchantments, quarrels, battles, challenges, wounds, complaints, amours, torments, and abundance of stuff and impossi-

* In Spain the curate is the head priest in the parish, and he that has the cure of souls.

⁶ See Appendix, Note 6 to Chapter I.

⁷ See Appendix, Note 7 to Chapter I.

bilities; insomuch that all the fables and fantastical tales which he read seemed to him now as true as the most authentic histories. He would say that the Cid Ruydiaz⁸ was a very brave knight, but not worthy to stand in competition with the knight of the burning sword, who, with a single back-stroke, had cut in sunder two fierce and mighty giants. He liked yet better Bernardo del Carpio,⁹ who, at Roncesvalles, deprived of life the enchanted Orlando, having lifted him from the ground and choked him in the air, as Hercules did Antæus, the son of the Earth.

As for the giant Morgante,¹⁰ he always spoke very civil things of him; for though he was one of that monstrous brood, who ever were intolerably proud and brutish, he still behaved himself like a civil and well-bred person.

But of all men in the world he admired Rinaldo of Montalban,¹¹ and particularly his sallying out of his castle to rob all he met; and then again when abroad he carried away the idol of Mahomet,¹² which was all massy gold, as the history says; but he so hated that traitor Gala-

⁸ See Appendix, Note 8 to Chapter I.

⁹ See Appendix, Note 9 to Chapter I.

¹⁰ See Appendix, Note 10 to Chapter I.

¹¹ See Appendix, Note 11 to Chapter I.

¹² See Appendix, Note 12 to Chapter I.

lon,¹³ that for the pleasure of kicking him handsomely he would have given up his housekeeper, nay, and his niece into the bargain.

Having thus lost his understanding, he unluckily stumbled upon the oddest fancy that ever entered into a madman's brain; for now he thought it convenient and necessary, as well for the increase of his own honour as the service of the public, to turn knight-errant, and roam through the whole world armed cap-a-pee, and mounted on his steed in quest of adventures; that thus imitating those knight-errants of whom he had read, and following their course of life, redressing all manner of grievances, and exposing himself to danger on all occasions, at last, after a happy conclusion of his enterprises, he might purchase everlasting honour and renown. Transported with these agreeable delusions, the poor gentleman already grasped in imagination the imperial sceptre of Trebizonde, and, hurried away by his mighty expectations, he prepares with all expedition to take the field.

The first thing he did was to scour a suit of armour that had belonged to his great grandfather, and had lain time out of mind carelessly rusting in a corner; but when he had cleaned

¹³ See Appendix, Note 13 to Chapter I.

and repaired it as well as he could, he perceived there was a material piece wanting, for instead of a complete helmet there was only a single head-piece. However, his industry supplied that defect, for with some pasteboard he made a kind of half-beaver or vizor, which, being fitted to the head-piece, made it look like an entire helmet. Then, to know whether it was cutlass-proof, he drew his sword and tried its edge upon the pasteboard vizor; but with the very first stroke he unluckily undid in a moment what he had been a whole week a-doing. He did not like its being broke with so much ease, and therefore, to secure it from the like accident, he made it anew, and fenced it with thin plates of iron, which he fixed on the inside of it so artificially that at last he had reason to be satisfied with the solidity of the work; and so, without any farther experiment, he resolved it should pass to all intents and purposes for a full and sufficient helmet.

The next moment he went to view his horse, whose bones stuck out like the corners of a Spanish real, being a worse jade than Gonela's,¹⁴ *qui tantum pellis et ossa fuit*; however, his master thought that neither Alexander's Bucephalus¹⁵

¹⁴ See Appendix, Note 14 to Chapter I.

¹⁵ See Appendix, Note 15 to Chapter I.

nor the Cid's Babieca, could be compared with him. He was four days considering what name to give him, for, as he argued with himself, there was no reason that a horse bestrid by so famous a knight, and withal so excellent in himself, should not be distinguished by a particular name; and therefore he studied to give him such a one as should demonstrate as well what kind of a horse he had been before his master was a knight-errant as what he was now, thinking it but just since the owner changed his profession that the horse should also change his title and be dignified with another, a good big word, such a one as should fill the mouth and seem consonant with the quality and profession of his master. And thus after many names which he devised, rejected, changed, liked, disliked, and pitched upon again, he concluded to call him *Rozinante*,* a name, in his opinion, lofty, sounding, and significant of what he had been before, and also of what he was now; in a word, a horse before or above all the vulgar breed of horses in the world.

When he had thus given his horse a name so much to his satisfaction, he thought of chusing

* *Rozin* commonly means an ordinary horse; *ante* signifies before and formerly. Thus the word *Rozinante* may imply that he was formerly an ordinary horse, and also that he is now an horse that claims the precedence from all other ordinary horses.

one for himself; and having seriously pondered on the matter eight whole days more, at last he determined to call himself Don Quixote. Whence the author of this most authentic history draws this inference, that his right name was Quixada, and not Quesada, as others obstinately pretend. And observing, that the valiant Amadis, not satisfied with the bare appellation of Amadis, added to it the name of his country, that it might grow more famous by his exploits, and so styled himself Amadis de Gaul; so he, like a true lover of his native soil, resolved to call himself Don Quixote de la Mancha; which addition, to his thinking, denoted very plainly his parentage and country, and consequently would fix a lasting honour on that part of the world.

And now, his armour being scoured, his head-piece improved to a helmet, his horse and himself new named, he perceived he wanted nothing but a lady, on whom he might bestow the empire of his heart; for he was sensible that a knight-errant without a mistress,¹⁶ was a tree without either fruit or leaves, and a body without a soul. Should I, said he to himself, by good or ill fortune, chance to encounter some giant, as it is common in knight-errantry,

¹⁶ See Appendix, Note 16 to Chapter I.

and happen to lay him prostrate on the ground, transfixed with my lance, or cleft in two, or, in short, overcome him, and have him at my mercy, would it not be proper to have some lady, to whom I may send him as a trophy of my valour? Then when he comes into her presence, throwing himself at her feet, he may thus make his humble submission: "Lady, I am the giant Caraculiambro,¹⁷ lord of the island of Malindrania, vanquished in single combat by that never-deservedly-enough-ex-tolled knight-errant Don Quixote de la Mancha, who has commanded me to cast myself most humbly at your feet, that it may please your honour to dispose of me according to your will." Oh! how elevated was the knight with the conceit of this imaginary submission of the giant; especially having withal bethought himself of a person, on whom he might confer the title of his mistress! which, it is believed, happened thus: Near the place where he lived, dwelt a good likely country lass, for whom he had formerly had a sort of an inclination, though, it is believed, she never heard of it, nor regarded it in the least. Her name was Aldonza Lorenzo, and this was she whom he thought he might entitle to the sovereignty of

¹⁷ See Appendix, Note 17 to Chapter I.

his heart; upon which he studied to find her out a new name, that might have some affinity with her old one, and yet at the same time sound somewhat like that of a princess, or lady of quality; so at last he resolved to call her Dulcinea, with the addition of del Toboso, from the place where she was born; a name, in his opinion, sweet, harmonious, extraordinary, and no less significative than the others which he had devised.