

Quixote, "that we may wanton, and, as it were, thrust our arms up to the very elbows, in that which we call adventures. But let me give thee one necessary caution; know, that though thou should'st see me in the greatest extremity of danger, thou must not offer to draw thy sword in my defence, unless thou findest me assaulted by base plebeians and vile scoundrels; for in such a case thou may'st assist thy master: but if those with whom I am fighting are knights, thou must not do it; for the laws of chivalry do not allow thee to encounter a knight, till thou art one thyself."—"Never fear," quoth Sancho; "I'll be sure to obey your worship in that, I'll warrant you; for I have ever loved peace and quietness, and never cared to thrust myself into frays and quarrels: and yet I don't care to take blows at any one's hands neither; and should any knight offer to set upon me first, I fancy I should hardly mind your laws; for all laws, whether of God or man, allow one to stand in his own defence, if any offer to do him a mischief."—"I agree to that," replied Don Quixote; "but as for helping me against any knights, thou must set bounds to thy natural impulses."—"I'll be sure to do it," quoth Sancho; "never trust me if I don't keep

your commandments as well as I do the Sabbath."

As they were talking, they spied coming towards them two monks of the order of St Benedict mounted on two dromedaries, for the mules on which they rode were so high and stately, that they seemed little less. They wore riding-masks, with glasses at the eyes,¹ against the dust, and umbrellas to shelter them from the sun. After them came a coach, with four or five men on horseback, and two muleteers on foot. There proved to be in the coach a Biscayan lady, who was going to Seville to meet her husband, that was there in order to embark for the Indies, to take possession of a considerable post. Scarce had Don Quixote perceived the monks, who were not of the same company, though they went the same way, but he cried to his squire, "Either I am deceived, or this will prove the most famous adventure that ever was known; for without all question those two black things that move towards us must be some necromancers, that are carrying away by force some princess in that coach; and 'tis my duty to prevent so great an injury."—"I fear me this will prove a worse job than the wind-mills," quoth Sancho.—"'Slife, sir, don't

¹ See Appendix, Note 3, Chapter VIII.

you see these are Benedictine friars, and 'tis likely the coach belongs to some travellers that are in it: therefore once more take warning, and don't you be led away by the devil."—"I have already told thee, Sancho," replied Don Quixote, "thou art miserably ignorant in matters of adventures: what I say is true, and thou shalt find it so presently." This said, he spurred on his horse, and posted himself just in the midst of the road where the monks were to pass. And when they came within hearing, "Cursed implements of hell," cried he, in a loud and haughty tone, "immediately release those high-born princesses whom you are violently conveying away in the coach, or else prepare to meet with instant death, as the just punishment of your pernicious deeds." The monks stopt their mules, no less astonished at the figure, than at the expressions of the speaker. "Sir Knight," cried they, "we are no such persons as you are pleased to term us, but religious men, of the order of St Benedict, that travel about our affairs, and are wholly ignorant whether or no there are any princesses carried away by force in that coach."—"I am not to be deceived with fair words," replied Don Quixote; "I know you well enough, perfidious catiffs;" and immediately, without

expecting their reply, he set spurs to Rozinante, and ran so furiously, with his lance couched, against the first monk, that if he had not prudently flung himself off to the ground, the knight would certainly have laid him either dead, or grievously wounded. The other observing the discourteous usage of his companion, clapped his heels to his over-grown mule's flanks, and scoured over the plain as if he had been running a race with the wind. Sancho Pança no sooner saw the monk fall, but he nimbly skipt off his ass, and running to him, began to strip him immediately; but then the two muleteers, who waited on the monks, came up to him, and asked why he offered to strip him? Sancho told them, that this belonged to him as lawful plunder, being the spoils won in battle by his lord and master Don Quixote. The fellows, with whom there was no jesting, not knowing what he meant by his spoils and battle, and seeing Don Quixote at a good distance in deep discourse by the side of the coach, fell both upon poor Sancho, threw him down, tore his beard from his chin, trampled on his guts, thumped and mauled him in every part of his carcase, and there left him sprawling without breath or motion. In the meanwhile the monk, scared out of his wits, and as pale as

a ghost, got upon his mule again as fast as he could, and spurred after his friend, who staid for him at a distance, expecting the issue of this strange adventure; but being unwilling to stay to see the end of it, they made the best of their way, making more signs of the cross than if the devil had been posting after them.

Don Quixote, as I said, was all that while engaged with the lady in the coach. "Lady," cried he, "your discretion is now at liberty to dispose of your beautiful self as you please; for the presumptuous arrogance of those who attempted to enslave your person lies prostrate in the dust, overthrown by this my strenuous arm: and that you may not be at a loss for the name of your deliverer, know I am called Don Quixote de la Mancha, by profession a knight-errant and adventurer, captive to that peerless beauty Donna Dulcinea del Toboso: nor do I desire any other recompence for the service I have done you, but that you return to Toboso to present yourselves to that lady, and let her know what I have done to purchase your deliverance." To this strange talk, a certain Biscayan, the lady's squire, gentleman-usher, or what you will please to call him, who rode along with the coach, listened with great attention; and perceiving that Don Quixote not

only stopped the coach, but would have it presently go back to Toboso, he bore briskly up to him, and laying hold of his lance, "Get gone," cried he to him in bad Spanish and worse Biscayan.¹ * "Get gone, thou knight, and devil go with thou; or by he who me create, if thou do not leave the coach, me kill thee now so sure as me be a Biscayan." Don Quixote, who made shift to understand him well enough, very calmly made him this answer: "Wert thou a cavalier,† as thou are not, ere this I would have chastised thy insolence and temerity, thou inconsiderable mortal."—"What! me no gentleman?" replied the Biscayan; "I swear thou be a liar, as me be Christian. If thou throw away lance, and draw sword, me will make no more of thee than cat does of mouse: me will show thee me be Biscayan, and gentleman by land, gentleman by sea, gentleman in spite of devil; and thou lie if thou say contrary."—"I'll try titles with you as the man said,"² replied Don Quixote: and with that throwing away his lance, he drew his sword,

¹ See Appendix, Note 4, Chapter VIII.

* The Biscayners generally speak broken Spanish, wherefore the English is rendered accordingly.

† Cavallero in Spanish signifies a gentleman as well as a knight; and used in these different senses by the knight-errant and the gentleman-usher, causes the difference between Don Quixote and the Biscayner,

² See Appendix, Note 5, Chapter VIII.

grasped his target, and attacked the Biscayan, fully bent on his destruction. The Biscayan seeing him come on so furiously, would gladly have alighted, not trusting to his mule, which was one of those scurvy jades that are let out to hire; but all he had time to do was only to draw his sword, and snatch a cushion out of the coach to serve him instead of a shield; and immediately they assaulted one another with all the fury of mortal enemies. The by-standers did all they could to prevent their fighting; but it was in vain, for the Biscayan swore in his gibberish he would kill his very lady, and all those who presumed to hinder him, if they would not let him fight. The lady in the coach being extremely affrighted at these passages, made her coachman drive out of harm's way, and at a distance was an eye-witness of the furious combat. At the same time the Biscayan let fall such a mighty blow on Don Quixote's shoulder over his target, that had not his armour been sword-proof, he would have cleft him down to the very waist. The knight feeling the weight of that unmeasurable blow, cried out aloud, "Oh! lady of my soul, Dulcinea! flower of all beauty, vouchsafe to succour your champion in this dangerous combat, undertaken to set forth your worth!" The

breathing out of this short prayer, the gripping fast of his sword, the covering himself with his shield, and the charging of his enemy, was but the work of a moment; for Don Quixote was resolved to venture the fortune of the combat all upon one blow. The Biscayan, who read his design in his dreadful countenance, resolved to face him with equal bravery, and stand the terrible shock, with uplifted sword, and covered with the cushion, not being able to manage his jaded mule, who, defying the spur, and not being cut out for such pranks, would move neither to the right nor to the left. While Don Quixote, with his sword aloft, was rushing upon the wary Biscayan, with a full resolution to cleave him asunder, all the spectators stood trembling with terror and amazement, expecting the dreadful event of those prodigious blows which threatened the two desperate combatants: the lady in the coach, with her women, were making a thousand vows and offerings to all the images and places of devotion in Spain, that Providence might deliver them and the squire out of the great danger that threatened them.

But here we must deplore the abrupt end of this history, which the author leaves off just at the very point when the fortune of the battle

is going to be decided, pretending he could find nothing more recorded of Don Quixote's wondrous achievements than what he had already related. However, the second undertaker of this work could not believe, that so curious a history could lie for ever inevitably buried in oblivion; or that the learned of La Mancha were so regardless, of their country's glory, as not to preserve in their archives, or at least in their closets, some memoirs, as monuments of this famous knight; and therefore he would not give over enquiring after the continuation of this pleasant history, till at last he happily found it, as the next Book will inform the reader.

BOOK II

CHAPTER I

THE EVENT OF THE MOST STUPENDOUS COMBAT BETWEEN THE BRAVE BISCAYAN AND THE VALOR- OUS DON QUIXOTE

IN the First Book of this history, we left the valiant Biscayan and the renowned Don Quixote with their swords lifted up, and ready to discharge on each other two furious and most terrible blows, which had they fallen directly, and met with no opposition, would have cut and divided the two combatants from head to heel, and have split them like a pomegranate: but, as I said before, the story remained imperfect; neither did the author inform us where we might find the remaining part of the relation. This vexed me extremely, and turned the pleasure which the perusal of the beginning had afforded me into disgust, when I had reason to despair of ever seeing the rest. Yet, after all, it seemed to me no less impossible than unjust,