for mine I say nothing, since they are not to be named the same day with your worship's; and yet I dare avouch, that if any notice be taken in knight-errantry of the feats of squires, mine will be sure to come in for a share." —"Truly, Sancho," replied Don Quixote,[1] "there is some reason in what thou sayest; but first of all it is requisite that a knight-errant should spend some time in various parts of the world, as a probationer in quest of adventures, that, by achieving some extraordinary exploits, his renown may diffuse itself through neighbouring climes and distant nations: so when he goes to the court of some great monarch, his fame flying before him as his harbinger, secures him such a reception, that the knight has scarcely reached the gates of the metropolis of the kingdom, when he finds himself attended and surrounded by admiring crowds, pointing and crying out, 'There, there rides the Knight of the Sun, or of the Serpent,' or whatever other title the knight takes upon him: 'That is he,' they will cry, 'who vanquished in single combat the huge giant Brocabruno, sirnamed of the invincible strength: this is he that freed the great Mamaluco of Persia from the enchant-

[1] See Appendix, Note 1, Book III., Chapter VII.

ment that had kept him confined for almost nine hundred years together.' Thus, as they relate his achievements with loud acclamations, the spreading rumour at last reaches the king's palace, and the monarch of that country, being desirous to be informed with his own eyes, will not fail to look out of his window. As soon as he sees the knight, knowing him by his arms, or the device on his shield, he will be obliged to say to his attendants, 'My lords and gentlemen, haste all of you, as many as are knights, go and receive the flower of chivalry that is coming to our court.' At the king's command, away they all run to introduce him; the king himself meets him half-way on the stairs, where he embraces his valorous guest, and kisses his cheek: then taking him by the hand, he leads him directly to the queen's apartment, where the knight finds her attended by the princess her daughter, who must be one of the most beautiful and most accomplished damsels in the whole compass of the universe. At the same time fate will so dispose of every thing, that the princess shall gaze on the knight, and the knight on the princess, and each shall admire one another as persons rather angelical than human; and then, by an unaccountable

charm, they shall both find themselves caught and entangled in the inextricable net of love, and wondrously perplexed for want of an opportunity to discover their amorous anguish to one another. After this, doubtless, the knight is conducted by the king to one of the richest apartments in the palace; where, having taken off his armour, they will bring him a rich scarlet vestment lined with ermines; and if he looked so graceful cased in steel, how lovely will he appear in all the heightening ornaments of courtiers! Night being come, he shall sup with the king, the queen, and the princess; and shall all the while be feasting his eyes with the sight of the charmer, yet so as nobody shall perceive it; and she will repay him his glances with as much discretion; for, as I have said, she is a most accomplished person. After supper a surprising scene is unexpectedly to appear: enter first an ill-favoured little dwarf, and after him a fair damsel between two giants, with the offer of a certain adventure so contrived by an ancient necromancer, and so difficult to be performed, that he who shall undertake and end it with success, shall be esteemed the best knight in the world. Presently it is the king's pleasure that all his courtiers should attempt it; which they

do, but all of them unsuccessfully; for the honour is reserved for the valorous stranger, who affects that with ease which the rest essayed in vain; and then the princess shall be overjoyed, and esteem herself the most happy creature in the world, for having bestowed her affections on so deserving an object. Now by the happy appointment of fate, this king, or this emperor, is at war with one of his neighbours as powerful as himself, and the knight being informed of this, after he has been some few days at court, offers the king his service; which is accepted with joy, and the knight courteously kisses the king's hand in acknowledgment of so great a favour. That night the lover takes his leave of the princess at the iron grate before her chamber-window looking into the garden, where he and she have already had several interviews, by means of the princess's confidante, a damsel who carries on the intrigue between them. The knight sighs, the princess swoons, the damsel runs for cold water to bring her to life again, very uneasy also because the morning light approaches, and she would not have them discovered, lest it should reflect on her lady's honour. At last the princess revives, and gives the knight her lovely hand to kiss

through the iron grate; which he does a thousand and a thousand times, bathing it all the while with his tears. Then they agree how to transmit their thoughts with secrecy to each other, with a mutual intercourse of letters, during this fatal absence. The princess prays him to return with all the speed of a lover; the knight promises it with repeated vows, and a thousand kind protestations. At last, the fatal moment being come that must tear him from all he loves, and from his very self, he seals once more his love on her soft snowy hand, almost breathing out his soul, which mounts to his lips, and even would leave its body to dwell there; and then he is hurried away by the fearful confidante. After this cruel separation he retires to his chamber, and throws himself on his bed; but grief will not suffer sleep to close his eyes. Then rising with the sun, he goes to take his leave of the king and the queen: he desires to pay his compliment of leave to the princess, but he is told she is indisposed; and as he has reason to believe that his departing is the cause of her disorder, he is so grieved at the news, that he is ready to betray the secret of his heart; which the princess's confidante observing, she goes and acquaints her with it, and finds the

lovely mourner bathed in tears, who tells her, that the greatest affliction of her soul is her not knowing whether her charming knight be of royal blood: but the damsel pacifies her, assuring her that so much gallantry, and such noble qualifications, were unquestionably derived from an illustrious and royal original. This comforts the afflicted fair, who does all she can to compose her looks, lest the king or the queen should suspect the cause of their alteration; and so some days after she appears in public as before. And now the knight, having been absent for some time, meets, fights, and overcomes the king's enemies, takes I do not know how many cities, wins I do not know how many battles, returns to court, and appears before his mistress laden with honour. He visits her privately as before, and they agree that he shall demand her of the king her father in marriage, as the reward of all his services: but the king will not grant his suit, as being unacquainted with his birth: however, whether it be that the princess suffers herself to be privately carried away, or that some other means are used, the knight marries her, and in a little time the king is well pleased with the match: for now the knight appears to be the son of a mighty king of I cannot tell

what country, for I think it is not in the map. Some time after, the father dies, the princess is heiress, and thus in a trice our knight comes to be king. Having thus completed his happiness, his next thoughts are to gratify his squire, and all those who have been instrumental in his advancement to the throne: thus he marries his squire to one of the princess's damsels, and most probably to her favourite, who had been privy to the amours, and who is daughter to one of the most considerable dukes in the kingdom."

"That is what I have been looking for all this while," quoth Sancho; "give me but that, and let the world rub, there I'll stick; for every tittle of this will come to pass, and be your worship's case as sure as a gun, if you will take upon you that same nickname of the Knight of the Woeful Figure."—"Most certainly, Sancho," replied Don Quixote; "for by the same steps, and in that very manner, knights-errant have always proceeded to ascend to the throne; therefore our chief business is to find out some great potentate, either among the Christians or the Pagans, that is at war with his neighbours, and has a fair daughter. But we shall have time enough to enquire after that; for, as I have told thee, we must first

purchase fame in other places, before we presume to go to court. Another thing makes me more uneasy: suppose we have found out a king and a princess, and I have filled the world with the fame of my unparalleled achievements, yet cannot I tell how to find out that I am of royal blood, though it were but second cousin to an emperor; for it is not to be expected that the king will ever consent that I shall wed his daughter until I have made this out by authentic proofs, though my service deserve it never so much; and thus, for want of a punctilio, I am in danger of losing what my valour so justly merits. It is true, indeed, I am a gentleman, and of a noted ancient family, and possessed of an estate of a hundred and twenty crowns a-year; nay, perhaps the learned historiographer who is to write the history of my life, will so improve and beautify my genealogy, that he will find me to be the fifth, or sixth at least, in descent from a king; for, Sancho, there are two sorts of originals in the world; some who, sprung from mighty kings and princes, by little and little have been so lessened and obscured, that the estates and titles of the following generations have dwindled to nothing, and ended in a point like a pyramid; others, who, from mean and low

beginnings, still rise and rise, till at last they are raised to the very top of human greatness: so vast the difference is, that those who were something are now nothing, and those that were nothing are now something. And therefore who knows but that I may be one of those whose original is so illustrious? which being handsomely made out, after due examination, ought undoubtedly to satisfy the king, my father-in-law. But even supposing he were still refractory, the princess is to be so desperately in love with me, that she will marry me without his consent, though I were a son of the meanest water-carrier; and if her tender honour scruples to bless me against her father's will, then it may not be amiss to put a pleasant constraint upon her, by conveying her by force out of the reach of her father, to whose persecutions either time or death will be sure to put a period."

"Ay," quoth Sancho, "your rake-helly fellows have a saying that is pat to your purpose, Never cringe nor creep, for what you by force may reap; though I think it were better said, A leap from a hedge is better than the prayer of a good man.* No more to be said, if the king your father-in-law won't let

* Better to rob than to ask charity.

you have his daughter by fair means, never stand shall I, shall I, but fairly and squarely run away with her. All the mischief that I fear is only, that while you are making your peace with him, and waiting after a dead man's shoes, as the saying is, the poor dog of a squire is like to go along barefoot, and may go hang himself for any good you will be able to do him, unless the damsel, Go-between, who is to be his wife, run away too with the princess, and he solace himself with her till a better time comes; for I don't see but that the knight may clap up the match between us without any more ado."—"That is most certain," answered Don Quixote.—"Why then," quoth Sancho, "let us even take our chance, and let the world rub."—"May fortune crown our wishes," cried Don Quixote, "and let him be a wretch who thinks himself one!"—"Amen, say I," quoth Sancho; "for I am one of your old Christians, and that is enough to qualify me to be an earl."—"And more than enough," said Don Quixote; "for though thou wert not so well descended, being a king I could bestow nobility on thee, without putting thee to the trouble of buying it, or doing me the least service; and making thee an earl, men must call thee my lord, though it grieves them never so much."

—"And do you think," quoth Sancho, "I would not become my equality main well?"—"Thou shouldest say quality," said Don Quixote, "and not equality."—"Even as you will," returned Sancho: "but, as I was saying, I should become an earldom rarely; for I was once beadle to a brotherhood, and the beadle's gown did so become me, that every body said I had the presence of a warden. Then how do you think I shall look with a duke's robes on my back, all bedaubed with gold and pearl like any foreign count? I believe we shall have folks come a hundred leagues to see me."—"Thou wilt look well enough," said Don Quixote; "but then thou must shave that rough bushy beard of thine at least every other day, or people will read thy beginning in thy face as soon as they see thee."—"Why then," quoth Sancho, "it is but keeping a barber in my house; and if needs be, he shall trot after me wherever I go, like a grandee's master of the horse."—"How camest thou to know," said Don Quixote, "that grandees have their masters of the horse to ride after them?"—"I'll tell you," quoth Sancho: "some years ago I happened to be about a month among your court-folks, and there I saw a little dandiprat riding about, who, they said, was a

hugeous great lord: there was a man a horse-back that followed him close wherever he went, turning and stopping as he did, you would have thought he had been tied to his horse's tail. With that I asked why that hind-man did not ride by the other, but still came after him thus? and they told me he was master of his horses, and that the grandees have always such kind of men at their tail; and I marked this so well, that I han't forgot it since."—"Thou art in the right," said Don Quixote; "and thou mayest as reasonably have thy barber attend thee in this manner. Customs did not come up all at once, but rather started up and were improved by degrees; so thou mayest be the first earl that rode in state with his barber behind him; and this may be said to justify thy conduct, that it is an office of more trust to shave a man's beard than to saddle a horse."—"Well," quoth Sancho, "leave the business of the cut-beard to me, and do but take care you be a king and I an earl."—"Never doubt it," replied Don Quixote; and with that looking about, he discovered—what the next chapter will tell you.