

so faithful a lover, and so I should be prompted to a revenge which I do not desire to take. Farewell."

"This letter," quoth Don Quixote, "does not give us any further insight into the things we would know; all I can infer from it is, that the person who wrote it was a betrayed lover." And so turning over the remaining leaves, he found several other letters and verses, some of which were legible, and some so scribbled, that he could make nothing of them. As for those he read, he could meet with nothing in them but accusations, complaints and expostulations, distrusts and jealousies, pleasures and discontents, favours and disdain, the one highly valued, the other as mournfully resented. And while the knight was poring on the table-book, Sancho was rummaging the portmanteau, and the seat of the saddle, with that exactness that he did not leave a corner unsearched, nor a seam unripped, nor a single lock of wool unpicked; for the gold he had found, which was above an hundred ducats, had but whetted his greedy appetite, and made him wild for more. Yet though this was all he could find, he thought himself well paid for the more than Herculean labours he had

undergone; nor could he now repine at his being tossed in a blanket, the straining and griping operation of the balsam, the benedictions of the pack-staves and leavers, the fisticuffs of the lewd carrier, the loss of his cloak, his dear wallet, and of his dearer ass, and all the hunger, thirst, and fatigue, which he had suffered in his kind master's service. On the other side, the Knight of the Woeful Figure strangely desired to know who was the owner of the portmanteau, guessing by the verses, the letter, the linen, and the gold, that he was a person of worth, whom the disdain and unkindness of his mistress had driven to despair. At length, however, he gave over the thoughts of it, discovering nobody through that vast desert; and so he rode on, wholly guided by Rozinante's discretion, which always made the grave sagacious creature choose the plainest and smoothest way; the master still firmly believing, that in those woody uncultivated forests he should infallibly start some wonderful adventure.

And indeed, while these hopes possessed him, he spied upon the top of a stony crag just before him a man that skipped from rock to rock, over briars and bushes, with wonderful agility. He seemed to him naked from the



waist upwards, with a thick black beard, his hair long, and strangely tangled, his head, legs, and feet bare; on his hips a pair of breeches, that appeared to be of sad-coloured velvet, but so tattered and torn, that they discovered his skin in many places. These particulars were observed by Don Quixote while he passed by, and he followed him, endeavouring to overtake him, for he presently guessed this was the owner of the portmanteau. But Rozinante, who was naturally slow and phlegmatic, was in too weak a case besides to run races with so swift an apparition: yet the Knight of the Woeful Figure resolved to find out that unhappy creature, though he were to bestow a whole year in the search; and to that intent he ordered Sancho to beat one side of the mountain, while he hunted the other. "In good sooth," quoth Sancho, "your worship must excuse me as to that; for if I but offer to stir an inch from you, I am almost frightened out of my seven senses: and let this serve you hereafter for a warning, that you may not send me a nail's breadth from your presence."—"Well," said the knight, "I will take thy case into consideration; and it does not displease me, Sancho, to see thee thus rely upon my valour, which, I dare assure thee, shall never

fail thee, though thy very soul should be scared out of thy body. Follow me, therefore, step by step, with as much haste as is consistent with good speed: and let thy eyes pry every where while we search every part of this rock, where, it is probable, we may meet with that wretched mortal, who doubtless is the owner of the portmanteau."

"Odsnigs, sir," quoth Sancho, "I had rather get out of his way; for, should we chance to meet him, and he lay claim to the portmanteau, it is a plain case I shall be forced to part with the money: and therefore I think it much better, without making so much ado, to let me keep it *bona fide*, till we can light on the right owner some more easy way, and without dancing after him; which may not happen till we have spent all the money; and in that case I am free from the law, and he may go whistle for it."—"Thou art mistaken, Sancho," cried Don Quixote; "for, seeing we have some reason to think, that we know who is the owner, we are bound in conscience to endeavour to find him out, and restore it to him; the rather, because should we not now strive to meet him, yet the strong presumption we have that the goods belong to him, would make us possessors of them *mala fide*, and render us as



guilty as if the party whom we suspect to have lost the things were really the right owner; therefore, friend Sancho, do not think much of searching for him, since, if we find him out, it will extremely ease my mind."

With that he spurred Rozinante; and Sancho, not very well pleased, followed him, comforting himself, however, with the hopes of the three asses which his master had promised him. So when they had rode over the greatest part of the mountain, they came to a brook, where they found a mule lying dead, with her saddle and bridle about her, and herself half devoured by beasts and birds of prey; which discovery further confirmed them in their suspicion, that the man who fled so nimbly from them was the owner of the mule and portmanteau. Now as they paused and pondered upon this, they heard a whistling like that of some shepherd keeping his flocks; and presently after, upon their left hand, they spied a great number of goats with an old herdsman after them, on the top of the mountain. Don Quixote called out to him, and desired him to come down; but the goat-herd, instead of answering him, asked them in as loud a tone, how they came thither in those deserts, where scarce any living creatures resorted except goats, wolves, and other wild

beasts? Sancho told him, they would satisfy him as to that point if he would come where they were. With that the goat-herd came down to them; and seeing them look upon the dead mule, "That dead mule," said the old fellow, "has lain in that very place this six months; but pray tell me, good people, have you not met the master of it by the way?"—"We have met nobody," answered Don Quixote; "but we found a portmanteau and a saddle-cushion not far from this place."—"I have seen it too," quoth the goat-herd, "but I never durst meddle with it, nor so much as come near it, for fear of some misdemeanour, lest I should be charged with having stolen somewhat out of it: for who knows what might happen? the devil is subtle, and sometimes lays baits in our way to tempt us, or blocks to make us stumble."—"It is just so with me, gaffer," quoth Sancho; "for I saw the portmanteau too, d'ye see, but the devil a bit would I come within a stone's throw of it; no, there I found it, and there I left it: i'faith it shall e'en lie there still for me. He that steals a bellweather shall be discovered by the bell."—"Tell me, honest friend," asked Don Quixote, "dost thou know who is the owner of those things?"—"All I know of the matter,"



answered the goat-herd, "is, that it is now six months, little more or less, since to a certain sheep-fold, some three leagues off, there came a young well-featured proper gentleman in good clothes, and under him this same mule that now lies dead here, with the cushion and cloak-bag, which you say you met but touched not. He asked us which was the most desert and least frequented part of these mountains? and we told him this where we are now; and in that we spoke the plain truth, for should you venture to go but half a league further, you would hardly be able to get back again in haste; and I marvel how you could get even thus far; for there is neither high-way nor foot-path that may direct a man this way. Now, as soon as the young gentleman had heard our answer, he turned about his mule, and made to the place we shewed him, leaving us all with a hugeous liking to his comeliness, and strangely marveling at his demand, and the haste he made towards the middle of the mountain. After that we heard no more of him in a great while, till one day by chance one of the shepherds coming by, he fell upon him without saying why or wherefore, and beat him without mercy: after that he went to the ass that carried our victuals, and, taking away all the bread and

cheese that was there, he tripped back again to the mountain with wondrous speed. Hearing this, a good number of us together resolved to find him out; and when we had spent the best part of two days in the thickest of the forest, we found him at last lurking in the hollow of a huge cork-tree, from whence he came forth to meet us as mild as could be. But then he was so altered, his face was so disfigured, wan, and sun-burnt, that, had it not been for his attire, which we made shift to know again, though it was all in rags and tatters, we could not have thought it had been the same man. He saluted us courteously, and told us in few words, mighty handsomely put together, that we were not to marvel to see him in that manner, for that it behoved him so to be, that he might fulfil a certain penance enjoined him for the great sins he had committed. We prayed him to tell us who he was, but he would by no means do it; we likewise desired him to let us know where we might find him, that whensoever he wanted victuals we might bring him some, which we told him we would be sure to do, for otherwise he would be starved in that barren place; requesting him, that if he did not like that motion neither, he would at leastwise come and ask us for what he wanted, and



not take it by force as he had done. He thanked us heartily for our offer, and begged pardon for that injury, and promised to ask it henceforwards as an alms, without setting upon any one. As for his place of abode, he told us he had none certain, but wherever night caught him, there he lay: and he ended his discourse with such bitter moans, that we must have had hearts of flint had we not had a feeling of them, and kept him company therein; chiefly considering we beheld him so strangely altered from what we had seen him before; for, as I said, he was a very fine comely young man, and by his speech and behaviour, we could guess him to be well-born, and a courtlike sort of a body: for though we were but clowns, yet such was his genteel behaviour, that we could not help being taken with it. Now as he was talking to us, he stopped of a sudden, as if he had been struck dumb, fixing his eyes stedfastly on the ground; whereat we all stood in amaze. After he had thus stared a good while, he shut his eyes, then opened them again, bit his lips, knit his brows, clutched his fists; and then rising from the ground, whereon he had thrown himself a little before, he flew at the man that stood next to him with such a fury, that if we had not pulled him off by main force, he would

have bit and thumped him to death; and all the while he cried out, "Ah! traitor Ferdinand, here, here thou shalt pay for the wrong thou hast done me; I must rip up that false heart of thine;" and a deal more he added, all in dispraise of that same Ferdinand. After that he flung from us without saying a word, leaping over the bushes and brambles at such a strange rate, that it was impossible for us to come at him; from which we gathered, that his madness comes on him by fits, and that some one called Ferdinand had done him an ill turn, that hath brought the poor young man to this pass. And this hath been confirmed since that many and many times: for when he is in his right senses, he will come and beg for victuals, and thank us for it with tears: but when he is in his mad fit, he will beat us though we proffer him meat civilly: and to tell you the truth, sirs," added the goat-herd, "I and four others, of whom two are my men, and the other two my friends, yesterday agreed to look for him till we should find him out, either by fair means or by force to carry him to Almodover town, that is but eight leagues off; and there we will have him cured, if possible, or at least we shall learn what he is when he comes to his wits, and whether he has any friends to



whom he may be sent back. This is all I know of the matter; and I dare assure you, that the owner of those things which you saw in the way, is the self-same body that went so nimbly by you;" for Don Quixote had by this time acquainted the goat-herd of his having seen that man skipping among the rocks.

The knight was wonderfully concerned when he had heard the goat-herd's story, and renewed his resolution of finding out that distracted wretch, whatever time and pains it might cost him. But fortune was more propitious to his desires than he could reasonably have expected; for just as they were speaking they spied him right against the place where they stood, coming towards them out of the cleft of a rock, muttering somewhat to himself, which they could not well have understood had they stood close by him, much less could they guess his meaning at that distance. His apparel was such as has already been said, only Don Quixote observed when he drew nearer, that he had on a shamoy waistcoat torn in many places, which yet the knight found to be perfumed with amber; and by this, as also by the rest of his clothes, and other conjectures, he judged him to be a man of some quality. As soon as the unhappy creature came near them, he saluted

them very civilly, but with a hoarse voice. Don Quixote returned his civilities, and, alighting from Rozinante, accosted him in a very graceful manner, and hugged him close in his arms, as if he had been one of his intimate acquaintances. The other, whom we may venture to call the Knight of the Ragged Figure, as well as Don Quixote the Knight of the Woeful Figure, having got loose from that embrace, could not forbear stepping back a little, and laying his hands on the companion's shoulders, he stood staring in his face, as if he had been striving to call to mind whether he had known him before, probably wondering as much to behold Don Quixote's countenance, armour, and strange figure, as Don Quixote did to see his tattered condition: but the first that opened his mouth after this pause was the Ragged Knight, as you shall find by the sequel of the story.