

CHAPTER XV

AN ACCOUNT OF WHAT HAPPENED IN THE INN, WITH
SEVERAL OTHER OCCURRENCES WORTH NOTICE

HERE the stranger ended his story, and Don Ferdinand, by way of compliment, in the behalf of the whole company, said, "Truly, captain, the wonderful and surprising turns of your fortune are not only entertaining, but the pleasing and graceful manner of your relation is as extraordinary as the adventures themselves. We are all bound to pay you our acknowledgments, and I believe we could be delighted with a second recital, though it were to last till to-morrow, provided it were made by you." Cardenio and the rest of the company joined with him in offering their utmost service in the re-establishment of his fortune, and that with so much sincerity and earnestness, that the captain had reason to be satisfied of their affection. Don Ferdinand particularly proposed to engage the Marquis his brother to stand godfather to Zoraida, if he would return with him; and, farther, promised to provide

him with all things necessary to support his figure and quality in town; but the captain, making them a very handsome compliment for their obliging favours, excused himself from accepting those kind offers at that time.

It was now growing towards the dark of the evening, when a coach stopped at the inn, and with it some horsemen, who asked for a lodging. The hostess answered, they were as full as they could pack. "Were you ten times fuller," answered one of the horsemen, "here must be room made for my Lord Judge, who is in this coach." The hostess, hearing this, was very much concerned; said she, "The case, sir, is plain; we have not one bed empty in the house; but if his lordship brings a bed with him, as perhaps he may, he shall command my house with all my heart, and I and my husband will quit our own chamber to serve him."—"Do so, then," said the man; and by this time a gentleman alighted from the coach, easily distinguishable for a man of dignity and office, by his long gown and great sleeves. He led a young lady by the hand, about sixteen years of age, dressed in a riding suit; her beauty and charming air attracted the eyes of every body with admiration; and had not the other ladies been present, any one might

have thought it difficult to have matched her outward graces.

Don Quixote, seeing them come near the door, "Sir," said he, "you may enter undismayed, and refresh yourselves in this castle, which, though little, and indifferently provided, must nevertheless allow a room, and afford accommodation to arms and learning; and more especially to arms and learning, that, like yours, bring beauty for their guide and conductor. For certainly, at the approach of this lovely damsel, not only castles ought to open and expand their gates, but even rocks divide their solid bodies, and mountains bow their ambitious crests and stoop to entertain her. Come in, therefore, sir; enter this paradise, where you shall find a bright constellation, worthy to shine in conjunction with that heaven of beauty which you bring. Here shall you find arms in their height, and beauty in perfection." Don Quixote's speech, mien, and garb, put the judge to a strange nonplus; and he was not a little surprised, on the other hand, at the sudden appearance of the three ladies, who, being informed of the judge's coming, and the young lady's beauty, were come out to see and entertain her. But Don Ferdinand, Cardenio, and the curate, addressing

him in a style very different from the knight, soon convinced him that he had to do with gentlemen, and persons of note; though Don Quixote's figure and behaviour put him to a stand, not being able to make any reasonable conjecture of his extravagance. After the usual civilities passed on both sides, they found, upon examination, that the women must all lie together in Don Quixote's apartment, and the men remain without to guard them. The judge consented that his daughter should go with the ladies, and so, what with his own bed, and what with the innkeeper's, he and the gentlemen made a shift to pass the night.

The captain, upon the first sight of the judge, had a strong presumption that he was one of his brothers, and presently asked one of his servants his name and country. The fellow told him, his name was Juan Peres de Viedma, and that, as he was informed, he was born in the Highlands of Leon. This, with his own observation, confirmed his opinion, that this was the brother who had made study his choice; whereupon, calling aside Don Ferdinand, Cardenio, and the curate, he told them with great joy what he had learned, with what the servant further told him, that his

master being made a judge of the court of Mexico, was then upon his journey to the Indies; that the young lady was his only daughter, whose mother, dying in child-birth, settled her dowry upon her daughter for her portion; and that the father had still lived a widower, and was very rich. Upon the whole matter he asked their advice, whether they thought it proper for him to discover himself presently to his brother, or by some means try how his pulse beat first in relation to his loss, by which he might guess at his reception. "Why should you doubt of a kind one, sir?" said the curate. "Because I am poor, sir," said the captain, "and would therefore by some device fathom his affections; for, should he prove ashamed to own me, I should be more ashamed to discover myself."—"Then leave the management to me," said the curate; "the affable and courteous behaviour of the judge seems to me so very far from pride, that you need not doubt a welcome reception; but however, because you desire it, I will engage to find a way to sound him." Supper was now upon the table, and all the gentlemen sat down, but the captain, who eat with the ladies in the next room. When the company had half supped, "My Lord Judge," said the

curate, "I remember about some years ago, I was happy in the acquaintance and friendship of a gentleman of your name, when I was a prisoner in Constantinople. He was a captain of as much worth and courage as any in the Spanish infantry, but as unfortunate as brave."—"What was his name, pray, sir?" said the judge. "Ruy Peres de Viedma," answered the curate, "of a town in the mountains of Leon. I remember he told me a very odd passage between his father, his two brothers, and himself; and truly had it come from any man of less credit and reputation, I should have thought it no more than a story. He said, that his father made an equal dividend of his estate among his three sons, giving them such advice as might have fitted the mouth of Cato; that he made arms his choice, and with such success, that within a few years, by the pure merit of his bravery, he was made captain of a foot company, and had a fair prospect of being advanced to a colonel; but his fortune forsook him where he had most reason to expect her favour; for, in the memorable battle of Lepanto, where so many Christians recovered their liberty, he unfortunately lost his. I was taken at Goletta, and, after different turns of fortune, we became companions at Constan-

tinople; thence we were carried to Algiers, where one of the strangest adventures in the world befell this gentleman." The curate then briefly ran through the whole story of the captain and Zoraida, (the judge sitting all the time more attentive than he ever did on the bench,) to their being taken and stripped by the French; and that he had heard nothing of them after that, nor could ever learn whether they came into Spain, or were carried prisoners into France.

The captain stood listening in a corner, and observed the motions of his brother's countenance, while the curate told his story; which, when he had finished, the judge, breathing out a deep sigh, and the tears standing in his eyes, "O sir!" said he, "if you knew how nearly your relation touches me, you would easily excuse the violent eruption of these tears. The captain you spoke of is my eldest brother, who, being of a stronger constitution of body, and more elevated soul, made the glory and fame of war his choice, which was one of the three proposals made by my father, as your companion told you. I applied myself to study, and my younger brother has purchased a vast estate in Peru, out of which he has transmitted to my father enough to support his liberal disposition; and to me, wherewithal to continue my studies,

and advance myself to the rank and authority which I now maintain. My father is still alive, but dies daily for grief he can learn nothing of his eldest son, and importunes Heaven incessantly, that he may once more see him before death close his eyes. It is very strange, considering his discretion in other matters, that neither prosperity nor adversity could draw one line from him, to give his father an account of his fortunes. For had he or we had the least hint of his captivity, he needed not staid for the miracle of the Moorish Lady's cane for his deliverance. Now am I in the greatest uneasiness in the world, lest the French, the better to conceal their robbery, may have killed him; the thoughts of this will damp the pleasure of my voyage, which I thought to prosecute so pleasantly. Could I but guess, dear brother," continued he, "where you might be found, I would hazard life and fortune for your deliverance! could our aged father once understand you were alive, though hidden in the deepest and darkest dungeon in Barbary,¹ his estate, mine, and my brother's, all should fly for your ransom! And for the fair and liberal Zoraida, what thanks, what recompense, could we provide? O might I see the happy day of her spiritual birth and

¹ See Appendix, Note 1, Book IV., Chapter XV.

baptism; to see her joined to him in faith and marriage, how should we all rejoice?" These and such like expressions the judge uttered with so much passion and vehemency, that he raised a concern in every body.

The curate, foreseeing the happy success of his design, resolved to prolong the discovery no farther; and, to free the company from suspense, he went to the ladies' room, and, leading out Zoraida, followed by the rest, he took the captain by the other hand, and, presenting them to the judge, "Suppress your grief, my lord," said he, "and glut your heart with joy. Behold what you so passionately desired, your dear brother, and his fair deliverer; this gentleman is Captain Viedma, and this the beautiful Algerine. The French have only reduced them to this low condition, to make room for your generous sentiments and liberality." The captain then approaching to embrace the judge, he held him off with both his hands, to view him well; but, once knowing him, he flew into his arms with such affection, and such abundance of tears, that all the spectators sympathized in his passions. The brothers spoke so feelingly, and their mutual affection was so moving, the surprise so wonderful, and their joy so transporting, that it must be left purely to imagin-

ation to conceive. Now they tell one another the strange turns and mazes of their fortunes, then renew their caresses to the height of brotherly tenderness. Now the judge embraces Zoraida, then makes her an offer of his whole fortune; next makes his daughter embrace her; then the sweet and innocent converse of the beautiful Christian and the lovely Moor, so touched the whole company, that they all wept for joy. In the meantime, Don Quixote was very solidly attentive, and, wondering at these strange occurrences, attributed them purely to something answerable to the chimerical notions which are incident to chivalry. The captain and Zoraida, in concert with the whole company, resolved to return with their brother to Seville, and thence to advise their father of his arrival and liberty, that the old gentleman should make the best shift he could to get so far to see the baptism and marriage of Zoraida, while the judge took his voyage to the Indies, being obliged to make no delay, because the Indian fleet was ready at Seville, to set sail in a month for New Spain.

Everything being now settled to the universal satisfaction of the company and being very late, they all agreed for bed, except Don Quixote, who would needs guard the castle while

they slept, lest some tyrant or giant, covetous of the great treasure of beauty which it inclosed, should make some dangerous attempt. He had the thanks of the house, and the judge, being further informed of his humour, was not a little pleased. Sancho Panza was very uneasy and waspish for want of sleep, though the best provided with a bed, bestowing himself on his pack-saddle; but he paid dearly for it, as we shall hear presently. The ladies being retired to their chamber, and every body else retired to rest, and Don Quixote planted sentinel at the castle gate, a voice was heard of a sudden singing so sweetly, that it allured all their attentions, but chiefly Dorothea's, with whom the judge's daughter, Donna Clara de Viedma, lay. None could imagine who could make such pretty music without an instrument. Sometimes it sounded as from the yard, sometimes as from the stable. With this Cardenio knocked softly at their door: "Ladies, ladies," said he, "are you awake? Can you sleep when so charmingly serenaded? Do not you hear how sweetly one of the footmen sings?"—"Yes, sir," said Dorothea, "we hear him plainly." Then Dorothea, hearkening as attentively as she could, heard this song.

CHAPTER XVI

THE PLEASANT STORY OF THE YOUNG MULETEER,
WITH OTHER STRANGE ADVENTURES THAT HAPPENED IN THE INN

A SONG

I

"Toss'd in doubts and fears I rove
On the stormy seas of love;
Far from comfort, far from port,
Beauty's prize, and fortune's sport:
Yet my heart disclaims despair,
While I trace my leading star.

II

"But reservedness, like a cloud,
Does too oft her glories shroud.
Pierce to the gloom, reviving light!
Be auspicious as you're bright.
As you hide or dart your beams,
Your adorer sinks or swims."

Dorothea thought it would not be much amiss to give Donna Clara the opportunity of hearing so excellent a voice, wherefore jogging her gently, first on one side, and then on the other, and the young lady waking, "I ask your pardon, my dear," cried Dorothea, "for thus