

“Conjure me no more,” answered Don Quixote, “but ask freely, for I have promised to answer punctually.”—“That is what I want,” said Sancho, “and you must tell me the truth, and the whole truth, neither more nor less, upon the honour of your knighthood.”—“Pr’ythee, no more of your preliminaries or preambles,” cried Don Quixote, “I tell thee I will answer to a tittle.”—“Then,” said Sancho, “I ask, with reverence be it spoken, whether your worship, since your being caged up, or enchanted, if you will have it so, has not had a motion, more or less, as a man may say?”—“I understand not that phrase,” answered the knight.—“Heigh-day!” quoth Sancho, “don’t you know what I mean? Why there is never a child in our country, that understands the christ-cross-row but can tell you. I mean, have you had a mind to do what another cannot do for you?”—“O now I understand thee, Sancho,” said the knight; “and to answer directly to thy question, positively yes, very often; and therefore prythee help me out of this strait; for, to be free with you, I am not altogether so sweet and clean as I could wish.”

CHAPTER XXII

A RELATION OF THE WISE CONFERENCE BETWEEN
SANCHO AND HIS MASTER

“AH! sir,” said Sancho, “have I caught you at last? This is what I wanted to know from my heart and soul. Come, sir, you cannot deny, that when any body is out of sorts, so as not to eat, or drink, or sleep, or do any natural occasions that you guess, then we say commonly they are bewitched or so; from whence may be gathered, that those who can eat their meat, drink their drink, speak when they are spoken to, and go to the back-side when they have occasion for it, are not bewitched or enchanted.”—“Your conclusion is good,” answered Don Quixote, “as to one sort of enchantment; but, as I said to thee, there is variety of enchantments, and the changes in them through the alterations of times and customs branch them into so many parts, that there is no arguing from what has been to what may be now. For my part I am verily persuaded of my enchantment, and this sup-

presses any uneasiness in my conscience, which might arise upon any suggestions on the contrary. To see myself thus idly and dishonourably borne about in a cage, and withheld like a lazy idle coward from the great offices of my function, when at this hour, perhaps, hundreds of wretches may want my assistance, would be unsupportable, if I were not enchanted.”—“Yet, for all that, your worship should try to get your heels at liberty,” said Sancho. “Come, sir, let me alone, I will set you free, I warrant you; and then get you on your trusty Rozinante’s back, and a fig for them all. The poor thing here jogs on as drooping and heartless, as if he were enchanted too. Take my advice for once now, and if things do not go as your heart could wish, you have time enough to creep into your cage again; and on the word of a loyal squire I will go in with you, and be content to be enchanted as long as you please.”

“I commit the care of my freedom to thy management,” said Don Quixote; “lay hold on the opportunity, friend Sancho, and thou shalt find me ready to be governed in all particulars, though I am still afraid thou wilt find thy cunning strangely over-reached in thy pretended discovery.” The knight and squire had laid their plot, when they reached the

place that the canon, curate, and barber had pitched upon to alight in. The cage was taken down, and the oxen unyoked to graze; when Sancho, addressing the curate, “Pray,” said he, “will you do so much, as let my lord and master come out a little to slack a point, or else the prison will not be so clean as the presence of so worthy a knight as my master requires.” The curate understanding him, answered that he would comply, but that he feared Don Quixote, finding himself once at liberty, would give them the slip. “I will be bail for him,” said Sancho, “body for body, sir.”—“And I,” said the canon, “upon his bare parole of honour.”—“That you shall have,” said the knight; “besides, you need no security beyond the power of art, for enchanted bodies have no power to dispose of themselves, nor to move from one place to another, without permission of the necromancer, in whose charge they are: the magical charms might rivet them for three whole centuries to one place, and fetch them back swift as the wind, should the enchanted have fled to some other region.” Lastly, as a most convincing argument for his release, he urged that unless they would free him, or get farther off, he should be necessitated to offend their sense of smelling. They guessed

his meaning presently, and gave him his liberty; and the first use he made of it, was to stretch his benumbed limbs three or four times; then marching up to Rozinante, slapped him twice or thrice on the buttocks: "I trust in heaven, thou flower and glory of horse-flesh," said he, "that we shall soon be restored to our former circumstances; I mounted on thy back, and thou between my legs, while I exercise the function for which heaven has bestowed me on the world." Then walking a little aside with Sancho, he returned, after a convenient stay, much lighter in body and mind, and very full of his squire's project.

The canon gazed on him, admiring his unparalleled sort of madness, the rather because in all his words and answers he displayed an excellent judgment; and, as we have already observed, he only raved when the discourse fell upon knight-errantry: which moving the canon to compassion, when they had all seated themselves on the grass, expecting the coming up of his sumpter-mule; "Is it possible, sir," said he, addressing himself to Don Quixote, "that the unhappy reading of books of knight-errantry should have such an influence over you as to destroy your reason, making you believe you are now enchanted, and many other such

extravagances, as remote from truth, as truth itself is from falsehood? How is it possible that human sense should conceive there ever were in the world such multitudes of famous knights-errant, so many emperors of Trebizond, so many Amadis, Felixmarte of Hircania, palfreys, rambling damsels, serpents, monsters, giants, unheard-of adventures, so many sorts of enchantments, so many battles, terrible encounters, pompous habits and tournaments, amorous princesses, earls, squires, and jesting-dwarfs, so many love-letters and gallantries, so many Amazonian ladies, and, in short, such an incredible number of extravagant passages, as are contained in books of knight-errantry? As for my own particular, I confess, that while I read them, and do not reflect that they are nothing but falsehood and folly, they give me some satisfaction; but I no sooner remember what they are, but I cast the best of them from me, and would deliver them up to the flames if I had a fire near me; as well deserving that fate, because, like impostors, they act contrary to the common course of nature. They are like broachers of new sects, and a new manner of living, that seduce the ignorant vulgar to give credit to all their absurdities: nay, they presume to disturb the brains of ingenious and

well-bred gentlemen, as appears by the effect they have wrought on your judgment, having reduced you to such a condition, that it is necessary to shut you up in a cage, and carry you in a cart drawn by oxen, like some lion or tiger that is carried about from town to town to be shewn. Have pity on yourself, good Don Quixote, retrieve your lost judgment, and make use of those abilities heaven has blessed you with, applying your excellent talent to some other study, which may be safer for your conscience, and more for your honour; but if, led away by your natural inclination, you will read books of heroism and great exploits, read in the Holy Scripture the book of Judges, where you will find wonderful truths and glorious actions not to be questioned. Lusitania had a Viriatus, Rome a Cæsar, Carthage an Hannibal, Greece an Alexander, Castile a Count Fernan Gonzalez,* Valencia a Cid, Andalusia a Gonzalo Fernandes, Estremadura a Diego Garcia de Perdez, Xerez a Gracia Perez de Vargas, Toledo a Garcilasso, and Seville a Don Manuel de Leon, the reading of whose brave actions diverts, instructs, pleases, and surprises the most judicious readers. This will be a study worthy your talent, and by

* Fernan Gonzalez, Cid, and the rest here mentioned, were Spanish commanders of note.—See Note 1, Chapter XXII., Book IV.

which you will become well read in history, in love with virtue, knowing in goodness, improved in manners, brave without rashness, and cautious without cowardice; all which will redound to the glory of God, your own advancement, and the honour of the province of La Mancha, whence I understand you derive your original."

Don Quixote listened with great attention to the canon's discourse, and perceiving he had done, after he had fixed his eyes on him for a considerable space, "Sir," said he, "all your discourse, I find, tends to signify to me, there never were any knights-errant; that all the books of knight-errantry are false, fabulous, useless, and prejudicial to the public; that I have done ill in reading, erred in believing, and been much to blame in imitating them, by taking upon me the most painful profession of chivalry. And you deny that ever there were any Amadis of Gaul or Greece, or any of those knights mentioned in those books?"—"Even as you have said, sir," quoth the canon.—"You also were pleased to add," continued Don Quixote, "that those books had been very hurtful to me, having deprived me of my reason and reduced me to be carried in a cage; that therefore, it would be for my advantage to take up

in time, and apply myself to the reading of other books, where I might find more truth, more pleasure, and better instruction."—"You are in the right," said the canon.—"Then I am satisfied," replied Don Quixote, "you yourself are the man that raves and is enchanted, since you have thus boldly blasphemed against a truth so universally received, that whosoever presumes to contradict it, as you have done, deserves the punishment you would inflict on those books, which in reading offend and tire you. For it were as easy to persuade the world that the sun does not enlighten, the frost cool, and the earth bear us, as that there never was an Amadis, or any of the other adventurous knights, whose actions are the subjects of so many histories. What mortal can persuade another, that there is no truth in what is recorded of the Infanta Floripes, and Guy of Burgundy; as also Fierabras at the bridge of Mantible in the reign of Charlemagne? which passages, I dare swear, are as true as that now it is day. But if this be false, you may as well say there was no Hector, nor Achilles; nor a Trojan war, nor twelve peers of France, nor a King Arthur of Britain, who is now converted into a crow, and hourly expected in his kingdom. Some also may presume to say, that

the History of Guerin Meschino, and that the attempt of St. Grial¹ are both false; that the amours of Sir Tristan and Queen Iseo are apocryphal, as well as those of Guinever and Sir Lancelot of the Lake; whereas there are people living who can almost remember they have seen the old lady Quintanona, who had the best hand at filling a glass of wine of any woman in all Britain. This I am so well assured of, that I can remember my grandmother, by my father's side, whenever she saw an old waiting-woman with her reverend veil, used to say to me, Look yonder, grandson, there is a woman like the old Lady Quintanona; whence I infer, she knew her, or at least had seen her picture. Now, who can deny the veracity of the History of Pierres, and the lovely Malagona, when to this day the pin, with which the brave Pierres turned his wooden horse that carried him through the air, is to be seen in the king's armoury? which pin is somewhat bigger than the pole of a coach, by the same token it stands just by Babieca's saddle. At Roncesvalles they keep Orlando's horn, which is as big as a great beam: Whence it follows, that there were twelve peers, that there were such men as Pierres, and the

¹ See Appendix, Note 2, Chapter XXII., Book IV.

famous Cid, besides many other adventurous knights, whose names are in the mouths of all people. You may as well tell me that the brave Portuguese, John de Merlo,¹ was no knight-errant; that he did not go into Burgundy, where, in the city of Ras, he fought the famous Moses Pierre, Lord of Charney; and in the city of Basil, Moses Henry de Ramestan, coming off in both victorious, and loaded with honour. You may deny the adventures and combats of the two heroic Spaniards, Pedro Barba and Gutierre Quixada, from whose male line I am lineally descended, who in Burgundy overcame the sons of the Earl of St. Paul. You may tell me that Don Ferdinand de Guevara never went into Germany to seek adventures, where he fought Sir George,* a knight of the Duke of Austria's court. You may say the tilting of Suero de Quinones del Passo, and the exploits of Moses Lewis de Falses, against Don Gonzalo de Guzman, a Castilian knight, are mere fables; and so of many other brave actions performed by Christian knights, as well Spaniards as foreigners; which are so authentic and true, that I say it over again, he who denies them has neither sense nor reason."

¹ See Appendix, Note 3, Chapter XXII., Book IV.

* In the original it is *Micer*, i.e., *Messire George*.

The canon was much astonished at the medley Don Quixote made of truths and fables, and no less to see how well read he was in all things relating to the achievements of knights-errant; "And therefore I cannot deny, sir," answered he, "but that there is some truth in what you have said, especially in what relates to the Spanish knights-errant; and I will grant there were twelve peers of France, yet I will not believe they performed all those actions Archbishop Turpin ascribes to them: I rather imagine they were brave gentlemen made choice of by the kings of France, and called peers, as being all equal in valour and quality; or if they were not, at least they ought to have been so; and these composed a sort of military order, like those of Saint Jago, or Calatrava among us, into which all that are admitted, are supposed, or ought to be, gentlemen of birth and known valour. And as now we say a knight of St. John, or of Alcantara, so in those times they said, a knight one of the twelve peers, because there were but twelve of this military order. Nor is it to be doubted but that there were such men as Barnardo del Carpi and the Cid, yet we have reason to question whether ever they performed those great exploits that are ascribed to them. As

to the pin, Count Pierres's pin which you spoke of, and which you say stands by Babieca's saddle, I own my ignorance, and confess I was so short-sighted, that though I saw the saddle, yet I did not perceive the pin, which is somewhat strange, if it be so large as you describe it."—"It is there without doubt," replied Don Quixote; "by the same token, they say it is kept in a leathern case to keep it from rusting"—"That may very well be," said the canon; "but upon the word of a priest, I do not remember I ever saw it: yet grant it were there, that does not enforce the belief of so many Amadis, nor of such a multitude of knights-errant as the world talks of; nor is there any reason so worthy a person, so judicious, and so well qualified as you are, should imagine there is any truth in the wild extravagancies contained in all the fabulous nonsensical books of knight errantry."

CHAPTER XXIII

THE NOTABLE DISPUTE BETWEEN THE CANON AND
DON QUIXOTE; WITH OTHER MATTERS

"VERY well," cried Don Quixote, "then all those books must be fabulous, though licensed by kings, approved by the examiners, read with general satisfaction, and applauded by the better sort and the meaner, rich and poor, learned and unlearned, gentry and commonalty; and, in short, by all sorts of persons of what state and condition soever, and though they carry such an appearance of truth, setting down the father, mother, country, kindred, age, place and actions to a tittle, and day by day, of the knight and knights of whom they treat? For shame, sir," continued he, "forbear uttering such blasphemies; and believe me, in this I advise you to behave yourself as becomes a man of sense, or else read them and see what satisfaction you will receive. As for instance, pray tell me, can there be any thing more delightful, than to read a lively description, which, as it were, brings before your eyes