

CHAPTER III

THE PLEASANT DISCOURSE BETWEEN DON QUIXOTE,
SANCHO PANZA, AND THE BACHELOR SAMSON
CARRASCO

DON QUIXOTE remained strangely pensive, expecting the bachelor Carrasco, from whom he hoped to hear news of himself, recorded and printed in a book, as Sancho had informed him: He could not be persuaded that there was such a history extant, while yet the blood of those enemies he had cut off, had scarce done reeking on the blade of his sword; so that they could not have already finished and printed the history of his mighty feats of arms. However, at last he concluded, that some learned sage had, by the way of enchantment, been able to commit them to the press, either as a friend, to extol his heroic achievements above the noblest performances of the most famous knights-errant; or as an enemy, to sully and annihilate the lustre of his great exploits, and debase them below the most inferior actions that ever were mentioned of any of the

meanest squires. Though, thought he to himself, the actions of squires were never yet recorded; and after all, if there were such a book printed, since it was the history of a knight-errant, it could not choose but be pompous, lofty, magnificent, and authentic. This thought yielded him a while some small consolation; but then he relapsed into melancholic doubts and anxieties, when he considered that the author had given himself the title of Cid, and consequently must be a Moor; a nation from whom no truth could be expected, they all being given to impose on others with lies and fabulous stories, to falsify and counterfeit, and very fond of their own chimeras. He was not less uneasy, lest that writer should have been too lavish in treating of his amours, to the prejudice of his Lady Dulcinea del Toboso's honour. He earnestly wished, that he might find his own inviolable fidelity celebrated in the history, and the reservedness and decency which he had always so religiously observed in his passion for her; slighting queens, empresses, and damsels of every degree for her sake, and suppressing the dangerous impulses of natural desire. Sancho and Carrasco found him thus agitated and perplexed with a thousand melancholic fancies, which

yet did not hinder him from receiving the stranger with a great deal of civility.

This bachelor, though his name was Samson, was none of the biggest in body, but a very great man at all manner of drollery; he had a pale and bad complexion, but good sense. He was about four-and-twenty years of age, round visaged, flat nosed, and wide mouthed, all signs of a malicious disposition, and of one that would delight in nothing more than in making sport for himself, by ridiculing others; as he plainly discovered when he saw Don Quixote. For, falling on his knees before him, "Admit me to kiss your honour's hand," cried he, "most noble Don Quixote; for by the habit of St Peter, which I wear, though indeed I have as yet taken but the four first of the holy orders,¹ you are certainly one of the most renowned knights-errant that ever was, or ever will be, through the whole extent of the habitable globe. Blest may the sage Cid Hamet Benengeli be, for enriching the world with the history of your mighty deeds; and more than blest, that curious virtuoso, who took care to have it translated out of the Arabic into our vulgar tongue, for the universal entertainment of mankind!"

¹ See Appendix, Note 1, Chapter III.

"Sir," said Don Quixote, making him rise, "is it then possible that my history is extant, and that it was a Moor, and one of the sages that penned it?"—"It is so notorious a truth," said the bachelor, "that I do not in the least doubt but at this day there have already been published above twelve thousand copies of it. Portugal, Barcelona, and Valencia, where they have been printed, can witness that, if there were occasion. It is said, that it is also now in the press at Antwerp. And I verily believe there is scarce a language into which it is not to be translated."—"Truly, sir," said Don Quixote, "one of the things that ought to yield the greatest satisfaction to a person of eminent virtue, is to live to see himself in good reputation in the world, and his actions published in print. I say, in good reputation, for otherwise there is no death but would be preferable to such a life."—"As for a good name and reputation," replied Carrasco, "your worship has gained the palm from all the knights-errant that ever lived: for, both the Arabian in his history, and the Christian in his version, have been very industrious to do justice to your character; your peculiar gallantry; your intrepidity and greatness of spirit in confronting danger; your constancy,

in adversities, your patience in suffering wounds and afflictions, and modesty and continence in that amour, so very platonic, between your worship and my lady Donna Dulcinea del Toboso."—"Odsbobs!" cried Sancho, "I never heard her called so before; that Donna is a new kick; for she used to be called only my Lady Dulcinea del Toboso; in that, the history is out already."—"That is no material objection," said Carrasco.—"No, certainly," added Don Quixote: "but pray, good Mr Bachelor, on which of all my adventures does the history seem to lay the greatest stress of remark?—"As to that," answered Carrasco, "the opinions of men are divided according to their taste: some cry up the adventure of the wind-mills,¹ which appeared to your worship so many Briareus's and giants. Some are for that of the fulling-mills: others stand up for the description of the two armies, that afterwards proved two flocks of sheep. Others prize most the adventure of the dead corpse that was carrying to Segovia. One says, that none of them can compare with that of the galley-slaves; another, that none can stand in competition with the adventure of the Benedictine giants, and the valorous Biscayner."

¹ See Appendix, Note 2, Chapter III.

"Pray, Mr Bachelor," quoth Sancho, "is there nothing said of that of the Yanguesians, an please you, when our precious Rozinante was so mauled for offering to take a little carnal recreation with the mares?"—"There is not the least thing omitted," answered Carrasco; "the sage has inserted all with the nicest punctuality imaginable; so much as the capers which honest Sancho fetched in the blanket."—"I fetched none in the blanket," quoth Sancho, "but in the air; and that, too, oftener than I could have wished, the more my sorrow."—"In my opinion," said Don Quixote, "there is no manner of history in the world, where you shall not find variety of fortune, much less any story of knight-errantry, where a man cannot always be sure of good success."—"However," said Carrasco, "some who have read your history, wish that the author had spared himself the pains of registering some of that infinite number of drubs which the noble Don Quixote received."—"There lies the truth of the history," quoth Sancho.—"Those things in human equity," said Don Quixote, "might very well have been omitted; for actions that neither impair nor alter the history, ought rather to be buried in silence than related, if they redound to the discredit

of the hero of the history. Certainly Æneas was never so pious as Virgil represents him, nor Ulysses so prudent as he is made by Homer."—"I am of your opinion," said Carrasco; "but it is one thing to write like a poet, and another thing to write like an historian. It is sufficient for the first to deliver matters as they ought to have been, whereas the last must relate them as they were really transacted, without adding or omitting any thing, upon any pretence whatever."—"Well," quoth Sancho, "if this same Moorish lord be once got into the road of truth, a hundred to one but among my master's rib-roastings he has not forgot mine: for they never took measure of his worship's shoulders, but they were pleased to do as much for my whole body: but it was no wonder; for it is his own rule, that if once his head aches, every limb must suffer too."

"Sancho," said Don Quixote, "you are an arch unlucky knave; upon my honour you can find memory when you have a mind to have it."—"Nay," quoth Sancho, "though I were minded to forget the rubs and drubs I have suffered, the bumps and tokens that are yet fresh on my ribs would not let me."—"Hold your tongue," said Don Quixote, "and let the

learned bachelor proceed, that I may know what the history says of me."—"And of me too," quoth Sancho, "for they tell me I am one of the top parsons in it."—"Persons, you should say, Sancho," said Carrasco, "and not parsons."—"Heydey!" quoth Sancho, "have we got another corrector of hard words? If this be the trade, we shall never have done."—"May I be cursed," said Carrasco, "if you be not the second person in the history, honest Sancho; nay, and some there are who had rather hear you talk than the best there; though some there are again that will say, you were horribly credulous, to flatter yourself with having the government of that island, which your master here present promised you."—"While there is life there is hope," said Don Quixote: "when Sancho is grown mature with time and experience, he may be better qualified for a government than he is yet."—"Odsbodikins! Sir," quoth Sancho, "if I be not fit to govern an island at these years, I shall never be a governor, though I live to the years of Methusalem; but there the mischief lies, we have brains enough, but we want the island."—"Come Sancho," said Don Quixote, "hope for the best; trust in providence; all will be well, and perhaps better than you imagine: but

know, there is not a leaf on any tree that can be moved without the permission of Heaven."—"That is very true," said Carrasco; "and I dare say, Sancho shall not want a thousand islands to govern, much less one; that is, if it be Heaven's will."—"Why not?" quoth Sancho; "I have seen governors in my time, who, to my thinking, could not come up to me passing the sole of my shoes, and yet forsooth, they called them your honour, and they eat their victuals all in silver."—"Ay," said Carrasco, "but these were none of your governors of islands, but of other easy governments: why man, these ought, at least, to know their grammar."—"Gramercy, for that," quoth Sancho, "give me but a grey mare* once, and I shall know her well enough, I'll warrant ye. But leaving the government in the hands of him that will best provide for me, I must tell you, Master Bachelor Samson Carrasco, I am huge glad, that, as your author has not forgot me, so he has not given an ill character of me; for by the faith of a trusty squire, had he said any thing that did not become an old Christian† as I am, I had rung him such a peal,

* This jingle of the words *grammar*, *gramercy*, and *grey mare*, is done in conformity to the original, which would not admit of a literal translation.

† A name by which the Spaniards desire to be distinguished from the Jews and Moors.

that the deaf should have heard me."—"That were a miracle," said Carrasco.—"Miracle me no miracles," cried Sancho; "let every man take care how he talks, or how he writes of other men, and not set down at random, higgledy-piggledy, whatever comes into his noddle."

"One of the faults found with this history," said Carrasco, "is, that the author has thrust into it a novel, which he calls *The Curious Impertinent*; not that it is ill writ, or the design of it be misliked, but because it is not in its right place, and has no coherence with the story of Don Quixote."—"I will lay my life," quoth Sancho, "the son of a mongrel has made a gallimawfry of it all."—"Now," said Don Quixote, "I perceive that he who attempted to write my history is not one of the sages, but some ignorant prating fool, who would needs be meddling, and set up for a scribbler without the least grain of judgment to help him out; and so he has done like Orbaneja, the painter of Ubeda, who, being asked what he painted, answered, 'As it may hit;' and when he had scrawled out a mis-shapen cock, was forced to write underneath, in Gothic letters, *This is a cock*. At this rate, I believe, he has performed in my history, so that it will require a commentary to explain it."—"Not at all," answered

Carrasco, "for he has made every thing so plain, that there is not the least thing in it but what any one may understand. Children handle it, youngsters read it, grown men understand it, and old people applaud it. In short, it is universally so thumbed, so gleaned, so studied, and so known, that if the people do but see a lean horse, they presently cry, 'There goes Rozinante.' But none apply themselves to the reading of it more than your pages; there is never a nobleman's ante-chamber where you shall not find a Don Quixote. No sooner has one laid it down, but another takes it up. One asks for it here, and there it is snatched up by another. In a word, it is esteemed the most pleasant and least dangerous diversion that ever was seen, as being a book that does not betray the least indecent expression, nor so much as a profane thought."—"To write after another manner," said Don Quixote, "were not to write truth but falsehood; and those historians who are guilty of that, should be punished like those who counterfeit the lawful coin.* But I cannot conceive what could move the author to stuff his history with foreign novels and adventures, not at all to the purpose, while there was a sufficient number of my own to have

* Clippers and coiners in Spain are burnt.

exercised his pen. But, without doubt, we may apply the proverb, With hay or with straw,* &c. for verily, had he altogether confined himself to my thoughts, my sighs, my tears, my laudable designs, my adventures, he might yet have swelled his book to as great a bulk, at least, as all Tostatus's† works. I have also reason to believe, Mr Bachelor, that to compile a history, or write any book whatsoever, is a more difficult task than men imagine. There is need of a vast judgment, and a ripe understanding. It belongs to none but great geniuses to express themselves with grace and elegance, and to draw the manners and actions of others to the life. The most artful part in a play is the fool's, and therefore a fool must not attempt to write it. On the other side, history is in a manner a sacred thing, so far as it contains truth; for where truth is, the supreme father of it may also be said to be, at least, in as much as concerns truth. However, there are men that will make you books, and turn them loose into the world, with as much dispatch as they would do a dish of fritters."

"There is no book so bad," said the bachelor,

* The proverb entire is, *De paja o de heno el jergon ileno*, i.e. 'The bed or tick full of hay or straw,' so it be filled, no matter with what.

† A famous Spaniard, who wrote many volumes of divinity.

“but something good may be found in it.”—
 “That is true,” said Don Quixote; “yet it is a quite common thing for men, who have gained a very great reputation by their writings, before they printed them, to lose it afterwards quite, or at least the greatest part.”—“The reason is plain,” said Carrasco; “their faults are more easily discovered after their books are printed, as being then more read, and more narrowly examined, especially if the author had been much cried up before, for then the severity of the scrutiny is so much the greater. All those that have raised themselves a name by their ingenuity, great poets and celebrated historians, are most commonly, if not always, envied by a sort of men, who delight in censuring the writings of others, though they never publish any of their own.”—“That is no wonder,” said Don Quixote, “for there are many divines, that could make but very dull preachers, and yet are very quick at finding faults and superfluities in other men’s sermons.”—“All this is truth,” replied Carrasco; “and therefore I could wish these censurers would be more merciful and less scrupulous, and not dwell ungenerously upon small spots, that are in a manner but so many atoms on the face of the clear sun which they murmur at. And if *aliquando bonus dormitat*

Homerus, let them consider how many nights he kept himself awake to bring his noble works to light, as little darkened with defects as might be. Nay many times it may happen that what is censured for a fault, is rather an ornament, like moles that sometimes add to the beauty of the face. And when all is said, he that publishes a book runs a very great hazard, since nothing can be more impossible than to compose one that may secure the approbation of every reader.”—“Sure,” said Don Quixote, “that which treats of me can have pleased but few.”—“Quite contrary,” said Carrasco; “for as *Stultorum infinitus est numerus*, so an infinite number has admired your history. Only some there are who have taxed the author with want of memory or sincerity; because he forgot to give an account who it was that stole Sancho’s Dapple; for that particular is not mentioned there; only we find by the story that it was stolen; and yet, by and by, we find him riding the same ass again, without any previous light given us into the matter. Then they say, that the author forgot to tell the reader, what Sancho did with those hundred pieces of gold he found in the portmanteau in the Sierra Morena; for there is not a word said of them more; and many people have a great mind to

know what he did with them, and how he spent them; which is one of the most material points in which the work is defective."

"Master Samson," quoth Sancho, "I am not now in a condition to call up the accounts, for I am taken ill of a sudden with such a wambling in the stomach, and find myself so mawkish, that if I do not see and fetch it up with a sup or two of good old bub, I shall waste like the snuff of a farthing candle.* I have that cordial at home, and my chuck stays for me. When I have had my dinner, I am for you, and will satisfy you, or any man that wears a head, about any thing in the world, either as to the loss of the ass, or the laying out of those same pieces of gold." This said, without a word more, or waiting for a reply, away he went. Don Quixote desired, and entreated the bachelor to stay and do penance with him. The bachelor accepted his invitation, and staid. A couple of pigeons were got ready to mend their commons. All dinner time they discoursed about knight-errantry, Carrasco humouring him all the while. After they had slept out the heat of the day,¹ Sancho came back, and they renewed their former discourse.

* I shall be stuck upon St. Lucia's thorn, supposed to be a cant phrase for the rack; for which the royal Spanish dictionary produces no other voucher but this passage.

¹ See Appendix, Note 3, Chapter III.

CHAPTER IV

SANCHO PANZA SATISFIES THE BACHELOR SAMSON CARRASCO IN HIS DOUBTS AND QUERIES: WITH OTHER PASSAGES FIT TO BE KNOWN AND RELATED

SANCHO returned to Don Quixote's house, and beginning again where he left off; "Now," quoth he, "as to what Master Samson wanted to know; that is, when, where, and by whom my ass was stolen, I answer, that the very night that we marched off to the Sierra Morena, to avoid the hue and cry of the holy brotherhood, after the rueful adventure of galley slaves, and that of the dead body that was carrying to Segovia, my master and I slunk into a wood; where he leaning on his lance, and I without alighting from Dapple, both sadly bruised and tired with our late skirmishes, fell fast asleep, and slept as soundly as if we had four featherbeds under us; but I especially was as serious at it as any dormouse; so that the thief, whoever he was, had leisure enough to clap four stakes under the four corners of