

pickers.”* By this somebody knocked at the door, and being asked who it was, Sancho answered it was he. Whereupon the house-keeper slipped out of the way, not willing to see him, and the niece let him in. Don Quixote received him with open arms; and locking themselves both in the closet, they had another dialogue as pleasant as the former.

* *Palillo de dientes*, i. e. a little stick for the teeth. Tooth-pickers in Spain are made of long shavings of boards, split and reduced to a straw's breadth, and wound up like small wax-lights.

CHAPTER VII

AN ACCOUNT OF DON QUIXOTE'S CONFERENCE WITH HIS SQUIRE, AND OTHER MOST FAMOUS PASSAGES

THE house-keeper no sooner saw her master and Sancho locked up together, but she presently surmised the drift of that close conference, and concluding that no less than villainous knight-errantry and another sally would prove the result of it, she flung her veil over her head, and, quite cast down with sorrow and vexation, trudged away to seek Samson Carrasco, the bachelor of arts; depending on his wit and eloquence, to dissuade his friend Don Quixote from his frantic resolution. She found him walking in the yard of his house, and fell presently on her knees before him in a cold sweat, and with all the marks of a disordered mind. “What is the matter, woman,” said he, somewhat surprised at her posture and confusion, “what has befallen you, that you look as if you were ready to give up the ghost?”—“Nothing,” said she, “dear sir, but that my master is departing!

he is departing, that is most certain."—"How," cried Carrasco, "what do you mean? Is his soul departing out of his body?"—"No," answered the woman, "but all his wits are quite and clean departing. He means to be gadding again into the wide world, and is upon the spur now the third time to hunt after ventures, as he calls them,* though I don't know why he calls those chances so. The first time he was brought home, was athwart an ass, and almost cudgelled to pieces. The other bout he was forced to ride home in a waggon, cooped up in a cage, where he would make us believe he was enchanted; and the poor soul looked so dismally, that the mother that bore him would not have known the child of her bowels; so meagre, wan, and withered, and his eyes so sunk and hid in the utmost nook and corner of his brain, that I am sure I spent about six hundred eggs to cocker him up again; ay, and more too, as heaven and all the world is my witness, and the hens that laid them cannot deny it."—"That I believe," said the bachelor, "for your hens are so well-bred, so fat, and so good, that they won't say one thing and think another for the world. But is this all? Has no other ill luck befallen you,

* *Venturn*, signifies both good luck, and also adventures.

besides this of your master's intended ramble?"—"No other, sir," quoth she. "Then trouble your head no farther," said he, "but get you home, and as you go, say me the prayer of St Apollonia, if you know it; then get me some warm bit for breakfast, and I will come to you presently, and you shall see wonders."—"Dear me," quoth she, "the prayer of St Polonia! Why, it is only good for the tooth-ache; but his ailing lies in his skull."—"Mistress," said he, "do not dispute with me; I know what I say. Have I not commenced bachelor of arts at Salamanca, and do you think there is any *bachelorizing* beyond that?" With that away she goes, and he went presently to find the curate, to consult with him about what shall be declared in due time.

When Sancho and his master were locked up together in the room, there passed some discourse between them, of which the history gives a very punctual and impartial account. "Sir," quoth Sancho to his master, "I have at last reluced my wife, to let me go with your worship wherever you will have me."—"Reduced you would say, Sancho," said Don Quixote, "and not reluced,"*—"Look you, sir," quoth Sancho,

* But just now Sancho corrected his wife for saying devolved, instead of resolved.

“if I am not mistaken, I have wished you once or twice not to stand correcting my words, if you understand my meaning: if you do not, why then do but say to me, Sancho, devil, or what you please, I understand thee not; and if I do not make out my meaning plainly, then take me up; for I am so forcible——” “I understand you not,” said Don Quixote, interrupting him, “for I cannot guess the meaning of your forcible.”—“Why, so forcible,” quoth Sancho, “is as much as to say, forcible; that is, I am so and so, as it were.”—“Less and less do I understand thee,” said the knight.—“Why then,” quoth Sancho, “there is an end of the matter: it must even stick there for me, for I can speak no better.”—“O! now,” quoth Don Quixote, “I fancy I guess your meaning; you mean *docible*, I suppose, implying that you are so ready and apprehensive, that you will presently observe what I shall teach you.”—“I will lay any even wager now,” said the squire, “you understood me well enough at first, but you had a mind to put me out, merely to hear me put your fine words out a joint.”—“That may be,” said Don Quixote, “but prythee tell me, what says Teresa?”—“Why, an’t please you,” quoth Sancho, “Teresa bids me make sure work with your worship, and that we may

have less talking and more doing; that a man must not be his own carver; that he who cuts does not shuffle; that it is good to be certain; that paper speaks when beards never wag; that a bird in hand is worth two in the bush. One hold-fast is better than two I will give thee. Now, I say, a woman’s counsel is not worth much, yet he that despises it, is no wiser than he should be.”—“I say so too,” said Don Quixote; “but pray, good Sancho, proceed; for thou art in an excellent strain; thou talkest most sententiously to-day.”—“I say,” quoth Sancho, “as you know better yourself than I do, that we are all mortal men, here to-day and gone to-morrow; as soon goes the young lamb to the spit, as the old wether; no man can tell the length of his days; for death is deaf, and when he knocks at the door, mercy on the porter. He is in post-haste, neither fair words nor foul, crowns nor mitres can stay him, as the report goes, and as we are told from the pulpit.”—“All this I grant,” said Don Quixote; “but what would you infer from hence?”—“Why, sir,” quoth Sancho, “all I would be at is, that your worship allow me so much a* month for my wages, whilst I stay with you, and that the aforesaid wages be

* The custom of Spain is to pay their servants’ wages by the month.

paid me out of your estate. For I will trust no longer to rewards, that mayhaps may come late, and mayhaps not at all. I would be glad to know what I get, be it more or less. A little in one's own pocket, is better than much in another man's purse. It is good to keep a nest egg. Every little makes a mickle; while a man gets he never can lose. Should it happen, indeed, that your worship should give me this same island, which you promised me, though it is what I dare not so much as hope for, why then I an't such an ungrateful, nor so unconscionable a muckworm, but that I am willing to strike off upon the income, for what wages I receive, cantity for cantity."—"Would not quantity have been better than cantity?" asked Don Quixote.—"Ho! I understand you now," cried Sancho: "I dare lay a wager I should have said quantity and not cantity: but no matter for that, since you knew what I meant."—"Yes, Sancho," quoth the knight, "I have dived to the very bottom of your thought, and understand now the aim of all your numerous shot of proverbs.—Look you, friend Sancho, I should never scruple to pay thee wages, had I any example to warrant such a practice. Nay, could I find the least glimmering of a precedent through all the

books of chivalry that ever I read, for any yearly or monthly stipend, your request should be granted. But I have read all, or the greatest part of the histories of knights-errant, and find that all their squires depended purely on the favour of their masters for a subsistence; till by some surprising turn in the knight's fortune the servants were advanced to the government of some island, or some equivalent gratuity; at least, they had honour and a title conferred on them as a reward.—Now, friend Sancho, if you will depend on these hopes of preferment, and return to my service, it is well; if not, get you home, and tell your impertinent wife, that I will not break through all the rules and customs of chivalry, to satisfy her sordid diffidence and yours; and so let there be no more words about the matter, but let us part friends; and remember this, that if there be vetches in my dovehouse, it will want no pigeons. Good arrears are better than ill pay; and a fee in reversion is better than a farm in possession. Take notice too, there is proverb for proverb, to let you know that I can pour out a volley of them as well as you. In short, if you will not go along with me upon courtesy, and run the same fortune with me, heaven be with you, and make you a saint; I do not question but

I shall get me a squire, more obedient, more careful, and less saucy and talkative than you."

Sancho hearing his master's firm resolution, it was cloudy weather with him in an instant; he was struck dumb with disappointment, and down sunk at once his heart to his girdle; for he verily thought he could have brought him to any terms, through a vain opinion, that the knight would not for the world go without him. While he was thus dolefully buried in thought, in came Samson Carrasco, and the niece, very eager to hear the bachelor's arguments to dissuade Don Quixote from his intended sally. But Samson, who was a rare comedian, presently embracing the knight, and beginning in a high strain, soon disappointed her. "O flower of chivalry," cried he, "refulgent glory of arms, living honour and mirror of our Spanish nation, may all those who prevent the third expedition which thy heroic spirit meditates, be lost in the labyrinth of their perverse desires; and find no thread to lead them to their wishes!" Then turning to the house-keeper, "You have no need now to say the prayer of St Apollonia," said he, "for I find it written in the stars, that the illustrious champion must no longer delay the prosecution of glory; and I should injure

my conscience, should I presume to dissuade him from the benefits that shall redound to mankind, by exerting the strength of his formidable arm, and the innate virtues of his heroic soul. Alas! his stay deprives the oppressed orphans of a protector, damsels of a deliverer, champions of their honour, widows of an obliging patron, and married women of a vigorous comforter; nay, also delays a thousand other important exploits and achievements, which are the duty and necessary consequences of the honourable order of knight errantry. Go on then, my graceful, my valorous Don Quixote, rather this very day than the next: let your greatness be upon the wing, and if any thing be wanting towards the completing of your equipage, I stand forth to supply you with my life and fortune, and ready, if it be thought expedient, to attend your excellence as a squire, an honour which I am ambitious to attain."—"Well, Sancho," said Don Quixote, hearing this, and turning to his squire, "did I not tell thee I should not want squires? behold who offers me his service! the most excellent bachelor of arts, Samson Carrasco, the perpetual darling of the muses, and glory of the Salamanca schools, sound and active of body, patient of labour, inured to abstinence, silent in mis-

fortune, and, in short, endowed with all the accomplishments that constitute a squire. But forbid it heaven, that to indulge my private inclinations I should presume to weaken the whole body of learning, by removing from it so substantial a pillar, so vast a repository of sciences, and so eminent a branch of the liberal arts.—No, my friend, remain thou another Samson in thy country, be the honour of Spain, and the delight of thy ancient parents; I shall content myself with any squire, since Sancho does not vouchsafe to go with me.”—“I do, I do,” cried Sancho, relenting with tears in his eyes, “I do vouchsafe; it shall never be said of Sancho Panza, no longer pipe no longer dance. Nor have I heart of flint, sir; for all the world knows, and especially our town, what the whole generation of the Panzas has ever been: Besides, I well know, and have already found by many good turns, and more good words, that your worship has had a good will towards me all along; and if I have done otherwise than I should, in standing upon wages, or so, it were merely to humour my wife, who, when once she is set upon a thing, stands digging and hammering at a man like a cooper at a tub, till she clinches the point. But hang it, I am

the husband, and will be her husband, and she is but a wife, and shall be a wife. None can deny but I am a man every inch of me, wherever I am, and I will be a man at home in spite of any body; so that you have no more to do, but to make your will and testament; but be sure you make the conveyance so firm, that it cannot be rebuked, and then let us be gone as soon as you please, that Master Samson's soul may be at rest; for he says his conscience wont let him be quiet, till he has set you upon another journey through the world; and I here again offer myself to follow your worship, and promise to be faithful and loyal, as well, nay, and better, than all the squires that ever waited on knights-errant.” The bachelor was amazed to hear Sancho Panza express himself after that manner; and though he had read much of him in the first part of his history, he could not believe him to be so pleasant a fellow as he is there represented. But hearing him now talk of rebuking instead of revoking testaments and conveyances, he was induced to credit all that was said of him, and to conclude him one of the oddest compounds of the age; nor could he imagine that the world ever saw before so extravagant a couple as the master and man.

Don Quixote and Sancho embraced, becoming as good friends as ever; and so, with the approbation of the grand Carrasco, who was then the knight's oracle, it was decreed, that they should set out at the expiration of three days; in which time all necessaries should be provided, especially a whole helmet, which Don Quixote said he was resolved by all means to purchase. Samson offered him one which he knew he could easily get of a friend, and which looked more dull with the mould and rust, than bright with the lustre of the steel. The niece and the house-keeper made a woful outcry; they tore their hair, scratched their faces, and howled like common mourners at funerals, lamenting the knight's departure, as it had been his real death; and cursing Carrasco most unmercifully, though his behaviour was the result of a contrivance plotted between the curate, the barber, and himself. In short, Don Quixote and his squire having got all things in a readiness, the one having pacified his wife, and the other his niece and house-keeper; towards the evening, without being seen by anybody but the bachelor, who would needs accompany them about half a league from the village, they set forward for Toboso. The knight mounted his Rozinante,

and Sancho his trusty Dapple, his wallet well stuffed with provisions, and his purse with money, which Don Quixote gave him to defray expenses. At last Samson took his leave, desiring the champion to give him, from time to time, an account of his success, that according to the laws of friendship, he might sympathize in his good or evil fortune. Don Quixote made him a promise, and then they parted; Samson went home, and the knight and squire continued their journey for the great city of Toboso.