

CHAPTER XVI

WHAT HAPPENED TO DON QUIXOTE WITH A SOBER
GENTLEMAN OF LA MANCHA

DON QUIXOTE pursued his journey, full, as we said before, of joy and satisfaction; his late victory made him esteem himself the most valiant knight-errant of the age. He counted all his future adventures as already finished and happily achieved. He defied all enchantments and enchanters. No longer did he remember the innumerable blows he had received in the course of his errantry, nor the shower of stones that had dashed out half of his teeth, nor the ingratitude of the galley-slaves, nor the insolence of the Yanguesian carriers, that had so abominably battered his ribs with their pack-staves. In short, he concluded with himself, that if he could but by any manner of means dissolve the enchantment of his adored Dulcinea, he should have no need to envy the greatest felicity that ever was, or could be attained by the most fortunate knight in the habitable globe.

While he was wholly employed in these pleasing imaginations; "Sir," quoth Sancho to him, "is it not a pleasant thing that I cannot, for the blood of me, put out of my mind that huge unconscionable nose, and whapping nostrils, of Thomas Cecial my gossip?"—"How, Sancho," answered Don Quixote, "do'st thou still believe, that the Knight of the Mirrors was the bachelor Carrasco, and that Thomas Cecial was his squire?"—"I do not know what to say to it," quoth Sancho, "but this I am sure of, that nobody but he could give me those items of my house, and of my wife and children, as he did. Besides, when his hugeous nose was off, he had Tom Cecial's face to a hair. I ought to know it, I think: I have seen it a hundred and a hundred times, for we are but next-door neighbours; and then he had his speech to a tittle."—"Come on," returned Don Quixote; "let us reason upon this business. How can it enter into any one's imagination, that the bachelor Samson Carrasco should come armed at all points like a knight-errant, on purpose to fight with me? have I ever been his enemy, or given him any occasion to be mine? am I his rival? or has he taken up the profession of arms, in envy of the glory which I have purchased by my sword."—"Ay,

but then," replied Sancho, "what shall we say to the resemblance between this same knight, whoever he be, and the bachelor Carrasco, and the likeness between his squire and my gossip? If it is an enchantment, as your worship says, were there no other people in the world but they two, to make them like?"—"All, all," cried Don Quixote, "is the artifice and delusion of those malevolent magicians that persecute me, who, foreseeing that I should get the victory, disguised their vanquished property under the resemblance of my friend the bachelor; that at the sight, my friendship might interpose between the edge of my sword, and moderate my just resentment, and so rescue him from death, who basely had attempted on my life. But thou, Sancho, by experience, which could not deceive thee, knowest how easy a matter it is for magicians to transmute the face of any one into another resemblance, fair into foul, and foul again into fair; since, not two days ago, with thy own eyes thou beheldest the peerless Dulcinea in her natural state of beauty and proportion; when I, the object of their envy, saw her in the homely disguise of a blear-eyed, fetid, ugly country wench. Why then shouldst thou wonder so much at the frightful transformation

of the bachelor and thy neighbour Cecial? but however, this is a comfort to me, that I got the better of my enemy, whatsoever shape he assumed."—"Well," quoth Sancho, "heaven knows the truth of all things."—This was all the answer he thought fit to make; for as he knew that the transformation of Dulcinea was only a trick of his own, he was willing to waive the discourse, though he was the less satisfied in his master's chimeras; but feared to drop some word that might have betrayed his roguery.

While they were in this conversation, they were overtaken by a gentleman, mounted on a very fine flea-bitten mare. He had on a riding-coat of fine green cloth, faced with murrey-coloured velvet, a hunter's cap of the same. The furniture of his mare was country-like, and after the jennet fashion, and also murrey and green. By his side hung a Moorish scimitar, in a large belt of green and gold. His buskins were of the same work with his belt: his spurs were not gilt, but burnished so well with a certain green varnish, that they looked better, to suit with the rest of his equipage, than if they had been of pure gold. As he came up with them, he very civilly saluted them, and, clapping spurs to his mare,

began to leave them behind him. Thereupon Don Quixote called to him: "Sir," cried he, "if you are not in too much haste, we should be glad of the favour of your company, so far as you travel this road."—"Indeed," answered the gentleman, "I had not thus rid by you, but that I am afraid your horse may prove unruly with my mare."—"If that be all, sir," quoth Sancho, "you may hold in your mare; for our horse here is the honestest and soberest horse in the world; he is not in the least given to do any naughty thing on such occasions. Once upon a time, indeed, he happened to forget himself, and go astray; but then he, and I, and my master, rued for it, with a vengeance. I tell you again, sir, you may safely stay if you please, for if your mare were to be served up to him in a dish, I will lay my life he would not so much as touch her." Upon this, the traveller stopped his mare, and did not a little gaze at the figure and countenance of our knight, who rode without his helmet, which, like a wallet, hung at the saddle-bow of Sancho's ass. If the gentleman in green gazed on Don Quixote, Don Quixote looked no less on him, judging him to be some man of consequence. His age seemed about fifty; he had some grey hairs, a sharp look, and a grave yet

pleasing aspect. In short, his mien and appearance spoke him a man of quality. When he looked on Don Quixote, he thought he had never beheld before such a strange appearance of a man. He could not but admire at the lankness of his horse; he considered then the long-backed, raw-boned thing that bestrid him; his wan, meagre face, his air, his gravity, his arms and equipage; such a figure, as perhaps had not been seen in that country time out of mind.

Don Quixote observed how intent the travelling gentleman had been in surveying him, and reading his desire in his surprise, as he was the very pink of courtesy, and fond of pleasing every one, without staying till he should question him, he thought fit to prevent him.—"Sir," said he, "that you are surprised at this figure of mine, which appears so new and exotic, I do not wonder in the least; but your admiration will cease when I have informed you, that I am one of those knights who go in quest of adventures. I have left my country, mortgaged my estate, quitted my pleasures, and thrown myself into the arms of fortune. My design was to give a new life to knight-errantry, that so long has been lost to the world; and thus, after infinite toils and

hardships; sometimes stumbling, sometimes falling; casting myself headlong in one place, and rising again in another, I have compassed a great part of my desire, relieving widows, protecting damsels, assisting married women and orphans, the proper and natural office of knights-errant; and so by many valorous and Christian-like achievements, I have merited the honour of the press in almost all the nations of the world. Thirty thousand volumes of my history have been printed already, and thirty thousand millions more are like to be printed, if heaven prevent not. In short, to sum up all in one word, know, I am Don Quixote de la Mancha, otherwise called the Knight of the Woeful Figure; I own it lessens the value of praise, to be the publisher of its own self; yet it is what I am sometimes forced to do, when there is none present to do me justice. And now, good sir, no longer let this steed, this lance, this shield, this armour, nor this squire, nor the paleness of my looks, nor my exhausted body, move your admiration, since you know who I am, and the profession I follow."

Having said this, Don Quixote was silent, and the gentleman in green, by his delaying to answer him, seemed as if he did not intend to make any return. But at last, after some

pause; "Sir Knight," said he, "you were sensible of my curiosity by my looks, and were pleased to say my wonder would cease when you had informed me who you was; but I must confess, since you have done that, I remain no less surprised and amazed than ever. For is it possible there should be at this time any knights-errant in the world, or that there should be a true history of a living knight-errant in print? I cannot persuade myself there is any body now upon earth that relieves widows, protects damsels, or assists married women and orphans; and I should still have been of the same mind, had not my eyes afforded me a sight of such a person as yourself. Now, heaven be praised, for this history of your true and noble feats of arms, which you say is in print, will blot out the memory of all those idle romances of pretended knights-errant that have so filled and pestered the world, to the detriment of good education, and the prejudice and dishonour of true history.—"There is a great deal to be said," answered Don Quixote, "for the truth of histories of knight-errantry, as well as against it."—"How!" returned the gentleman in green, "is there any body living who makes the least scruple but that they are false?"—"Yes, sir, myself for one," said Don Quixote; "but let

that pass: if we continue any time together on the road, I hope to convince you that you have been to blame in suffering yourself to be carried away with the stream of mankind, that generally disbelieves them."

The traveller, at this discourse, began to have a suspicion that Don Quixote was distracted, and expected the next words would confirm him in that opinion: but before they entered into any further conversation, Don Quixote begged him to acquaint him who he was, since he had given him some account of his own life and condition.

"Sir Knight of the Woeful Figure," answered the other, "I am a gentleman, born at a village, where, God willing, we shall dine by and by. My name is Don Diego de Miranda. I have a reasonable competency; I pass my time contentedly with my wife, my children, and my friends; my usual diversions are hunting and fishing; yet I keep neither hawks nor hounds, but some tame partridges and a ferret. I have about three or fourscore books, some Spanish, some Latin; some of history, others of divinity. But for books of knight-errantry, none ever came within my doors. I am more inclinable to read those that are profane than those of devotion, if they be such as yield an innocent

amusement, and are agreeable for their style, and surprising for their invention, though we have but few of them in our language. Sometimes I eat with my neighbours and friends, and often I invite them to do the like with me. My treats are clean and handsome, neither penurious nor superfluous. I am not given to murmur and backbite, nor do I love to hear others do it. I am no curious inquirer into the lives and actions of other people. Every day I hear divine service, and give to the poor, without making a show of it, or presuming on my good deeds, lest I should give way to hypocrisy and vain-glory; enemies that too easily possess themselves of the best guarded hearts. I endeavour to reconcile those that are at variance. I pay my devotions to the blessed Virgin, and ever trust in Heaven's infinite mercy."

Sancho listened with great attention to this relation of the gentleman's way of living; and believing that a person who had led so good and pious a life, was able to work miracles, he jumped in haste from his ass, and catching hold of his right stirrup, with tears in his eyes, and devotion in his heart, fell a kissing his foot.—"What is the matter, friend?" cried the gentleman, wondering at his proceeding; "what is the meaning of this kissing?"—"Oh! good

sir," quoth Sancho, "let me kiss that dear foot of yours, I beseech you; for you are certainly the first saint on horseback I ever saw in my born days."—"Alas!" replied the gentleman, "I am no saint but a great sinner: you, indeed, friend, I believe are a good soul, as appears by your simplicity."—With that Sancho returned to his pack-saddle, having by this action provoked the profound gravity of his master to smile, and caused new admiration in Don Diego. And now Don Quixote inquires of him, how many children he had, telling him at the same time, that among the things in which the ancient philosophers, who had not the true knowledge of God, made happiness consist, as the advantages of nature and fortune, one was, to have many friends and a numerous and virtuous offspring.—"I have a son, Sir Knight," answered the gentleman; "and perhaps if I had him not, I should not think myself the more unhappy; not that he is so bad neither; but because he is not so good as I would have him. He is eighteen years of age; the last six he has spent at Salamanca to perfect himself in his Latin and Greek. But, when I would have him to have proceeded to the study of other sciences, I found him so engaged in that of poetry, if it may be called a science, that it was impossible

to make him look either to the study of the law, which I intended him for, or of divinity, the noblest part of all learning. I was in hopes he might have become an honour to his family, living in an age in which good and virtuous literature is highly favoured and rewarded by princes; for learning without virtue, is like a pearl upon a dunghill. He now spends whole days in examining, whether Homer, in such a verse of his Iliads, says well or no? Whether such an epigram in Martial ought not to be expunged for obscenity? and whether such and such verses in Virgil are to be taken in such a sense, or otherwise? In short, his whole converse is with the celebrated poets, with Horace and Persius, Juvenal, and Tibullus. But as for modern rhymers, he has but an indifferent opinion of them. And yet for all this disgust of Spanish poetry, he is now breaking his brain upon a paraphrase or gloss on four verses that were sent him from the university, and which I think are designed for a prize."

"Sir," replied Don Quixote, "children are the flesh and blood of their parents, and, whether good or bad, are to be cherished as part of ourselves. It is the duty of a father to train them up from their tenderest years in the paths of virtue, in good discipline and

Christian principles, that when they advance in years they may become the staff and support of their parents' age, and the glory of their posterity. But as for forcing them to this or that study, it is a thing I do not so well approve. Persuasion is all, I think, that is proper in such a case; especially when they are so fortunate as to be above studying for bread, as having parents that can provide for their future subsistence, they ought in my opinion, to be indulged in the pursuit of that science to which their own genius gives them the most inclination. For though the art of poetry is not so profitable as delightful, yet it is none of those that disgrace the ingenious professor. Poetry, sir, in my judgment, is like a tender virgin in her bloom, beautiful and charming to amazement: all the other sciences are so many virgins, whose care it is to enrich, polish, and adorn her; as she is to make use of them all, so are they all to have from her a grateful acknowledgment. But this virgin must not be roughly handled, nor dragged along the streets, nor exposed to every market-place, and corner of great men's houses. A good poet is a kind of an alchemist, who can turn the matter he prepares into the purest gold and an inestimable treasure. But he

must keep his muse within the rules of decency, and not let her prostitute her excellency in lewd satires and lampoons, nor in licentious sonnets. She must not be mercenary, though she need not give away the profits she may claim from heroic poems, deep tragedies, and pleasant and artful comedies. She is not to be attempted by buffoons, nor by the ignorant vulgar, whose capacity can never reach to a due sense of the treasures that are locked up in her. And know, sir, that when I mention the vulgar, I do not mean only the common rabble; for whoever is ignorant, be he lord or prince, is to be listed in the number of the vulgar. But whoever shall apply himself to the muses with those qualifications, which, as I said, are essential to the character of a good poet, his name shall be famous, and valued in all the polished nations of the world. And as to what you say, sir, that your son does not much esteem our modern poetry; in my opinion, he is somewhat to blame; and my reason is this: Homer never wrote in Latin, because he was a Grecian; nor did Virgil write in Greek, because Latin was the language of his country. In short, all your ancient poets wrote in their mother-tongue, and did not seek other languages to express their lofty thoughts. And thus, it

would be well that custom should extend to every nation; there being no reason that a German poet should be despised, because he writes in his own tongue; or a Castilian or Biscayner, because they write in theirs. But I suppose, your son does not dislike modern poetry, but such modern poets as have no tincture of any other language or science, that may adorn, awaken, and assist their natural impulse. Though even in this too there may be error. For it is believed, and not without reason, that a poet is naturally a poet from his mother's womb, and that, with the talent which heaven has infused into him, without the help of study or art, he may produce these compositions that verify that saying, *Est Deus in nobis, &c.* Not but that a natural poet, that improves himself by art, shall be much more accomplished, and have the advantage of him that has no title to poetry but by his knowledge in the art; because art cannot go beyond nature, but only adds to its perfection. From which it appears, that the most perfect poet is he whom nature and art combine to qualify. Let then your son proceed and follow the guidance of his stars, for being so good a student as I understand he is, and already got up the first step of the sciences, the knowledge of the learned tongues, he will easily

ascend to the pinnacle of learning, which is no less an honour and an ornament to a gentleman, than a mitre is to a bishop, or the long robe is to a civilian. Should your son write satires to lessen the reputation of any person, you would do well to take him to task, and tear his defamatory rhymes; but if he studies to write such discourses in verse, to ridicule and explode vice in general, as Horace so elegantly did, then encourage him: for a poet's pen is allowed to inveigh against envy and envious men, and so against other vices, provided it aim not at particular persons. But there are poets so abandoned to the itch of scurrility, that rather than lose a villainous jest, they will venture being banished to the islands of Pontius.* If a poet is modest in his manners, he will be so in his verses. The pen is the tongue of the mind; the thoughts that are formed in the one, and those that are traced by the other, will bear a near resemblance. And when kings and princes see the wonderful art of poetry shine in prudent, virtuous, and solid subjects, they honour, esteem, and enrich them, and even crown them with leaves of that tree, which is never offended by the thunder-bolt, as a token that nothing shall offend those whose brows are honoured and adorned with such crowns."

* As Ovid was.

The gentleman, hearing Don Quixote express himself in this manner, was struck with so much admiration, that he began to lose the bad opinion he had conceived of his understanding. As for Sancho, who did not much relish this fine talk, he took an opportunity to slink aside in the middle of it, and went to get a little milk of some shepherds that were hard by keeping their sheep. Now when the gentleman was going to renew his discourse, mightily pleased with these judicious observations, Don Quixote lifting up his eyes, perceived a waggon on the road, set round with little flags, that appeared to be the king's colours; and believing it to be some new adventure, he called out to Sancho to bring him his helmet. Sancho, hearing him call aloud, left the shepherds, and, clapping his heels vigorously to Dapple's sides, came trotting up to his master, to whom there happened a most terrifying and desperate adventure.

CHAPTER XVII

WHERE YOU WILL FIND SET FORTH THE HIGHEST AND UTMOST PROOF THAT GREAT DON QUIXOTE EVER GAVE, OR COULD GIVE, OF HIS INCREDIBLE COURAGE; WITH THE SUCCESSFUL ISSUE OF THE ADVENTURE OF THE LIONS

THE history relates, that Sancho was chaffering with the shepherds for some curds, when Don Quixote called to him; and finding that his master was in haste, he did not know what to do with them, nor what to bring them in; yet loth to lose his purchase (for he had already paid for them) he bethought himself at last of clapping them into the helmet, where having them safe, he went to know his master's pleasure. As soon as he came up to him, "Give me that helmet, friend," said the knight, "for if I understand any thing of adventures, I descry one yonder that obliges me to arm."

The gentleman in green, hearing this, looked about to see what was the matter, but could perceive nothing but a waggon, which made towards them; and by the little flags