

mature deliberation, he resolved to do it on foot, lest Rozinante, not used to lions, should be put into disorder. Accordingly he quitted his horse, threw aside his lance, grasped his shield, and drew his sword; then advancing with a deliberate motion, and an undaunted heart, he posted himself just before the door of the cage, commending himself to heaven, and afterwards to his lady Dulcinea.

Here the author of this faithful history could not forbear breaking the thread of his narration, and raised by wonder to rapture and enthusiasm, makes the following exclamation.¹ "O thou most magnanimous hero! Brave and unutterably bold Don Quixote de la Mancha! Thou mirror and grand exemplar of valour! Thou second, and new Don Emmanuel de Leon, the late glory and honour of all Spanish cavaliers! What words, what colours shall I use to express, to paint in equal lines, this astonishing deed of thine! What language shall I employ to convince posterity of the truth of this thy more than human enterprize! What praises can be coined, and eulogies invented, that will not be outvied by thy superior merit, though hyperboles were piled on hyperboles! Thou, alone, on foot, intrepid and

¹ See Appendix, Note 1, Chapter XVII.

magnanimous, with nothing but a sword, and that none of the sharpest,¹ with thy single shield, and that none of the brightest, stood'st ready to receive and encounter the savage force of two vast lions, as fierce as ever roared within the Lybian deserts. Then let thy own unrivalled deeds, that best can speak thy praise, amaze the world, and fill the mouth of fame, brave champion of la Mancha: while I am obliged to leave off the high theme, for want of vigour to maintain the flight." Here ended the author's exclamation, and the history goes on.

The keeper observing the posture Don Quixote had put himself in, and that it was not possible for him to prevent letting out the lions, without incurring the resentment of the desperate knight, set the door of the foremost cage wide open; where, as I have said, the male lion lay, who appeared of a monstrous bigness, and of a hideous frightful aspect. The first thing he did was to roll and turn himself round in his cage; in the next place, he stretched out one of his paws, put forth his claws, and roused himself. After that he gaped and yawned for a good while, and showed his dreadful fangs, and then thrust out half a

¹ See Appendix, Note 2, Chapter XVII.

yard of broad tongue, and with it licked the dust out of his eyes and face. Having done this, he thrust his head quite out of the cage, and stared about with his eyes that looked like two live coals of fire; a sight and motion enough to have struck terror into temerity itself. But Don Quixote only regarded it with attention, wishing his grim adversary would leap out of his hold, and come within his reach, that he might exercise his valour, and cut the monster piece-meal. To this height of extravagance had his folly transported him; but the generous lion, more gentle than arrogant, taking no notice of his vapouring and bravados, after he had looked about him a while, turned his tail, and having showed Don Quixote his posteriors, very contentedly lay down again in his apartment.

Don Quixote, seeing this, commanded the keeper to rouse him with his pole, and force him out whether he would or no. "Not I, indeed sir," answered the keeper; "I dare not do it for my life; for if I provoke him, I am sure to be the first he will tear to pieces. Let me advise you, sir, to be satisfied with your day's work. 'Tis as much as the bravest he that wears a head can pretend to do. Then pray go no farther, I beseech you: the door

stands open, the lion is at his choice, whether he will come out or no. You have waited for him, you see he does not care to look you in the face; and since he did not come out at the first, I dare engage he will not stir out this day. You have shown enough the greatness of your courage. No man is obliged to do more than challenge his enemy, and wait for him in the field. If he comes not, that is his own fault, and the scandal is his, as the honour the challenger's."

"'Tis true," replied Don Quixote. "Come, shut the cage-door, honest friend, and give me a certificate under thy hand, in the amplest form thou canst devise, of what thou hast seen me perform; how thou didst open the cage for the lion; how I expected his coming, and he did not come out; how, upon his not coming out then, I staid his own time, and instead of meeting me, he turned tail and lay down. I am obliged to do no more. So, enchantments, avaunt! and heaven prosper truth, justice, and knight-errantry! Shut the door, as I bid thee, while I make signs to those that ran away from us, and get them to come back, that they may have an account of this exploit from thy own mouth." The keeper obeyed, and Don Quixote clapping on the point of his lance

the handkerchief, with which he had wiped off the curds from his face, waved it in the air, and called as loud as he was able to the fugitives, who fled nevertheless, looking behind them all the way, and trooped on in a body with the gentleman in green at the head of them.

At last, Sancho observed the signal of the white flag, and calling out to the rest, "Hold," cried he, "my master calls to us; I will be hanged if he has not got the better of the lions." At this they all faced about, and perceived Don Quixote flourishing his ensign; whereupon recovering a little from their fright, they leisurely rode back, till they could plainly distinguish Don Quixote's voice; and then they came up to the waggon. As soon as they were got near it, "Come on, friend," said he to the carter; "put thy mules to the waggon again, and pursue thy journey; and, Sancho, do thou give him two ducats for the lion-keeper and himself, to make them amends for the time I have detained them."—"Ay, that I will with all my heart," quoth Sancho; "but what is become of the lions? Are they dead or alive?" Then the keeper very formally related the whole action, not failing to exaggerate, to the best of his skill, Don Quixote's

courage; how at his sight alone the lion was so terrified, that he neither would nor durst quit his stronghold, though for that end his cage-door was kept open for a considerable time; and how at length upon his remonstrating to the knight, who would have had the lion forced out, that it was presuming too much upon heaven, he had permitted, though with great reluctancy, that the lion should be shut up again. "Well, Sancho," said Don Quixote to his squire, "what dost thou think of this? Can enchantment prevail over true fortitude? No, these magicians may perhaps rob me of success, but never of my invincible greatness of mind.

In short, Sancho gave the waggoner and the keeper the two pieces. The first harnessed his mules, and the last thanked Don Quixote for his noble bounty, and promised to acquaint the king himself with his heroic action when he came to court. "Well," said Don Quixote, "if his majesty should chance to inquire who the person was that did this thing, tell him it was the Knight of the Lions; a name I intend henceforth to take up, in lieu of that which I hitherto assumed, of the Knight of the Woeful Figure; in which proceeding I do but conform to the ancient custom of knights-errant, who

changed their names as often as they pleased, or as it suited with their advantage."

After this, the waggon made the best of its way, as Don Quixote, Sancho, and the gentleman in green, did of theirs. The latter for a great while was so taken up with making his observations on Don Quixote, that he had not time to speak a syllable; not knowing what opinion to have of a person, in whom he discovered such a mixture of good sense and extravagance. He was a stranger to the first part of his history; for, had he read it, he could not have wondered either at his words or actions: But not knowing the nature of his madness, he took him to be wise and distracted by fits; since in his discourse he still expressed himself justly and handsomely enough; but in his actions all was wild, extravagant, and unaccountable. "For," said the gentleman to himself, "can there be any thing more foolish, than for this man to put on his helmet full of curds, and then believe them conveyed there by enchanters; or any thing more extravagant than forcibly to endeavour to fight with lions?"

In the midst of this soliloquy, Don Quixote interrupted him. "Without doubt, sir," said he, "you take me for a downright madman,

and indeed my actions may seem to speak me no less. But for all that, give me leave to tell you, I am not so mad, nor is my understanding so defective, as I suppose you may fancy. What a noble figure does the gallant knight make,¹ who in the midst of some spacious place transfixes a furious bull with his lance in the view of his prince! What a noble figure makes the knight, who before the ladies, at a harmless tournament, comes prancing through the lists inclosed in shining steel; or those court champions, who in exercises of martial kind, or that at least are such in appearance, shew their activity: and though all they do is nothing but for recreation, are thought the ornament of a prince's court! But a much nobler figure is the knight-errant, who, fired with the thirst of a glorious fame, wanders through deserts, through solitary wildernesses, through woods, through cross-ways, over mountains and valleys, in quest of perilous adventures, resolved to bring them to a happy conclusion. Yes, I say, a nobler figure is a knight-errant succouring a widow in some depopulated place, than the court-knight making his addresses to the city dames. Every knight has his particular employment. Let

¹ See Appendix, Note 3, Chapter XVII.

the courtier wait on the ladies; let him with splendid equipage adorn his prince's court, and with a magnificent table support poor gentlemen. Let him give birth to feasts and tournaments, and shew his grandeur, and liberality, and munificence, and especially his piety; in all these things he fulfils the duties of his station. But as for the knight-errant, let him search into all the corners of the world, enter into the most intricate labyrinths, and every hour be ready to attempt impossibilities itself: Let him in desolate wilds baffle the rigour of the weather, the scorching heat of the sun's fiercest beams, and the inclemency of winds and snow: Let lions never fright him, dragons daunt him, nor evil spirits deter him. To go in quest of these, to meet, to dare, to conflict, and to overcome them all, is his principal and proper office. Since then my stars have decreed me to be one of those adventurous knights, I think myself obliged to attempt every thing that seems to come within the verge of my profession. This, sir, engaged me to encounter those lions just now, judging it to be my immediate business, though I was sensible of the extreme rashness of the undertaking. For well I know, that valour is a virtue situate between the two vicious extremes of cowardice

and temerity. But certainly it is not so ill for a valiant man to rise to a degree of rashness, as it is to fall short, and border upon cowardice. For as it is easier for a prodigal to become liberal, than a miser; so it is easier for the hardy and rash person to be reduced to true bravery, than for the coward ever to rise to that virtue: And therefore, in thus attempting adventures, believe me, Signor Don Diego, it is better to exceed the bounds a little, and overdo, rather than underdo the thing; because it sounds better in people's ears to hear it said, how that such a knight is rash and hardy, than such a knight is dastardly and timorous."

"For my part, sir," answered Don Diego, "I think all you have said and done is agreeable to the exactest rules of reason; and I believe, if the laws and ordinances of knight-errantry were lost, they might be all recovered from you, your breast seeming to be the safe repository and archive where they are lodged. But it grows late; let us make a little more haste to get to our village, and to my habitation, where you may rest yourself after the fatigues, which doubtless you have sustained, if not in body, at least in mind, whose pains often afflict the body too."—"Sir," answered Don Quixote, "I esteem your offer as a singular

favour;" and so, putting on a little faster than they had done before, about two in the afternoon they reached the village, and got to the house of Don Diego, whom now Don Quixote called the Knight of the Green Coat.

CHAPTER XVIII

HOW DON QUIXOTE WAS ENTERTAINED AT THE CASTLE OR HOUSE OF THE KNIGHT OF THE GREEN COAT, WITH OTHER EXTRAVAGANT PASSAGES

DON QUIXOTE found, that Don Diego de Miranda's house was spacious, after the country manner; the arms of the family were over the gate in rough stone, the buttery in the fore-yard, the cellar under the porch, and all around several great jars of that sort commonly made at Toboso; the sight of which bringing to his remembrance his enchanted and transformed Dulcinea, he heaved a deep sigh, and neither minding what he said, nor who was by, broke out into the following exclamation:

"* O! pledges, once my comfort and relief,
Though pleasing still, discovered now with grief."

"O ye Tobosian urns, that awaken in my mind the thoughts of the sweet pledge of my most bitter sorrows!" Don Diego's son, who, as it has been said, was a student, and poetically

* *O dulces prendas*, the beginning of a sonnet in the *Diana* of Montemayor.