

is natural to fathers and mothers not to think their own children ugly; and this error is nowhere so common as in the offspring of the mind."

Don Diego and his son were again surprised to hear this medley of good sense and extravagance, and to find the poor gentleman so strongly bent on the quest of these unlucky adventures, the only aim and object of his desires.

After this, and many compliments, and mutual reiterations of offers of service, Don Quixote having taken leave of the lady of the castle, he on Rozinante, and Sancho on Dapple, set out, and pursued their journey.

CHAPTER XIX

THE ADVENTURE OF THE AMOROUS SHEPHERD, AND
OTHER TRULY COMICAL PASSAGES

DON QUIXOTE had not travelled far, when he was overtaken by two men that looked like students or ecclesiastics, with two farmers, all mounted upon asses. One of the scholars had behind him a small bundle of linen, and two pair of stockings, trussed up in green buckram like a portmanteau; the other had no other luggage but a couple of foils and a pair of fencing pumps. And the husbandmen had a parcel of other things, which shewed, that having made their market at some adjacent town, they were now returning home with their ware. They all admired (as indeed all others did that ever beheld him) what kind of a fellow Don Quixote was, seeing him make a figure so different from any thing they had ever seen. The knight saluted them, and perceiving their road lay the same way, offered them his company, entreating them, however, to move an easier pace, because their asses went faster

than his horse; and to engage them the more, he gave them a hint of his circumstances and profession; that he was a knight-errant travelling round the world in quest of adventures; that his proper name was Don Quixote de la Mancha, but his titular denomination, the Knight of the Lions.

All this was Greek, or pedlar's French, to the countrymen;¹ but the students presently found out his blind side. However, with a respectful distance, "Sir Knight," said one of them, "if you are not fixed to any set stage, as persons of your function seldom are, let us beg the honour of your company; and you shall be entertained with one of the finest and most sumptuous weddings, that ever was seen, either in La Mancha, or many leagues round it."—"The nuptials of some young prince, I presume?" said Don Quixote.—"No sir," answered the other, "but of a yeoman's son, and a neighbour's daughter; he the richest in all this country, and she the handsomest you ever saw. The entertainment at the wedding will be new and extraordinary; it is to be kept in a meadow near the village where the bride lives. They call her Quiteria the Handsome, by reason of her beauty; and the bridegroom Camacho

¹ See Appendix, Note 1, Chapter XIX.

the Rich, on account of his wealth. They are well matched as to age, for she draws towards eighteen, and he is about two and twenty, though some nice folks, that have all the pedigrees in the world in their heads, will tell ye, that the bride comes of a better family than he; but that is not minded now-a-days, for money, you know, will hide many faults. And, indeed, this same Camacho is as free as a prince, and designs to spare no cost upon his wedding. He has taken a fancy to get the meadow shaded with boughs, that are to cover it like an arbour, so that the sun will have much ado to peep through, and visit the green grass underneath. There are also provided for the diversion of the company, several sorts of antics and morrice-dancers,¹ some with swords, and some with bells; for there are young fellows in his village can manage them cleverly. I say nothing of those that play tricks with the soles of their shoes when they dance, leaving that to the judgments of their guests. But nothing that I have told or might tell you of this wedding, is like to make it so remarkable as the things which I imagine poor Basil's despair will do. This Basil is a young fellow, that lives next door to Quiteria's father.

¹ See Appendix, Note 2, Chapter XIX.

Hence love took occasion to give birth to an amour, like that of old, between Pyramus and Thisbe; for Basil's love grew up with him from a child, and she encouraged his passion with all the kind return that modesty could grant; insomuch, that the mutual affection of the two little ones was the common talk of the village. But Quiteria coming to years of maturity, her father began to deny Basil the usual access to his house; and, to cut off his farther pretence, declared his resolution of marrying her to Camacho, who is indeed his superior in estate, though far short of him in all other qualifications; for Basil, to give the devil his due, is the cleverest fellow we have; he will pitch ye a bar, wrestle, or play at tennis with the best he in the country; he runs like a stag, leaps like a buck, plays at nine-pins so well, you would think he tips them down by witchcraft; sings like a lark; touches a guitar so rarely, he even makes it speak; and to complete his perfections, he handles a sword like a fencer."

"For that very single qualification," said Don Quixote, "he deserves not only Quiteria the Handsome, but a princess; nay, Queen Guinever herself, were she now living, in spite of Sir Lancelot and all that would oppose it."

"Well," quoth Sancho, who had been silent, and listening all the while, "my wife used to tell me, she would have everyone marry with their match. Like to like, quoth the devil to the collier, and every sow to her own trough, as the other saying is: As for my part, all I would have is, that honest Basil e'en marry her! for methinks I have a huge liking to the young man; and so heaven bless them together, say I, and a murrain seize those that will spoil a good match between those that love one another!"—"Nay," said Don Quixote, "if marriage should be always the consequence of mutual love, what would become of the prerogative of parents, and their authority over their children? If young girls might always choose their own husbands, we should have the best families intermarry with coachmen and grooms; and young heiresses would throw themselves away upon the first wild young fellows, whose promising outsides and assurance make them set up for fortunes, though all their stock consists in impudence. For the understanding, which alone should distinguish and choose in these cases as in all others, is apt to be blinded or biased by love and affection; and matrimony is so nice and critical a point, that it requires not only our own cautious manage-

ment, but even the direction of a superior power to choose right. Whoever undertakes a long journey, if he be wise, makes it his business to find out an agreeable companion. How cautious then should he be, who is to take a journey for life, whose fellow-traveller must not part with him but at the grave; his companion at bed and board, and sharer of all the pleasures and fatigues of his journey; as the wife must be to the husband! She is no such sort of ware, that a man can be rid of when he pleases: When once that is purchased, no exchange, no sale, no alienation can be made: she is an inseparable accident to man: marriage is a noose, which, fastened about the neck, runs the closer, and fits more uneasy by our struggling to get loose: it is a Gordian knot which none can untie, and being twisted with our thread of life, nothing but the scythe of death can cut it. I could dwell longer on this subject, but that I long to know from the gentleman, whether he can tell us any thing more of Basil."

"All I can tell you," said the student, "is, that he is in the case of all desperate lovers; since the moment he heard of this intended marriage, he has never been seen to smile or talk rationally; he is in a deep melancholy,

that might indeed rather be called a dozing frenzy; he talks to himself, and seems out of his senses; he hardly eats or sleeps, and lives like a savage in the open fields; his only sustenance a little fruit, and his only bed the hard ground; sometimes he lifts up his eyes to heaven, then fixes them on the ground, and in either posture stands like a statue. In short, he is reduced to that condition, that we who are his acquaintance verily believe, that the consummation of this wedding to-morrow will be attended by his death."

"Heaven forbid, marry and amen!" cried Sancho. "Who can tell what may happen? he that gives a broken head can give a plaister. This is one day, but to-morrow is another, and strange things may fall out in the roasting of an egg. After a storm comes a calm. Many a man that went to bed well, has found himself dead in the morning when he awaked. Who can put a spoke in fortune's wheel? nobody here, I am sure. Between a woman's yea and nay, I would not engage to put a pin's-point, so close they be one to another. If Mrs Quiteria love Mr Basil, she will give Camacho the bag to hold: for this same love, they say, looks through spectacles, that makes copper like gold, a cart like a coach, and a shrimp like a lobster."

—“Whither, in the name of ill-luck, art thou running now, Sancho?” said Don Quixote. “When thou fallest to threading thy proverbs and old wives sayings, the devil (who I wish had thee) can’t stop thee. What dost thou know, poor animal, of fortune, or her wheel, or any thing else?”—“Why truly, sir,” quoth Sancho, “if you don’t understand me, no wonder if my sentences be thought nonsense. But let that pass, I understand myself; and I am sure I have not talked so much like a ninny. But you, forsooth, are so sharp a cricket.”—“A critic, blockhead,” said Don Quixote, “thou confounded corrupter of human speech!”—“By yea and by nay,” quoth Sancho, “what makes you so angry, sir? I was never brought up at school nor varsity, to know when I murder a hard word. I was never at court to learn to spell, sir. Some are born in one town, some in another; one at St Jago, another at Toledo;¹ and even there all are not so nicely spoke.”

“You are in the right, friend,” said the student: “those natives of that city, who live among the tanners, or about the market of Zocodover, and are confined to mean conversation, cannot speak so well as those that frequent

¹ See Appendix, Note 3, Chapter XIX.

the polite part of the town, and yet they are all of Toledo. But propriety, purity, and elegance of style, may be found among men of breeding and judgment, let them be born where they will; for their judgment is in the grammar of good language, though practice and example will go a great way. As for my part, I have had the happiness of good education; it has been my fortune to study the civil law at Salamanca, and I have made it my business all along to express myself properly, neither like a rustic nor a pedant.”—“Ay, ay, sir,” said the other student, “your parts might have qualified you for a master of arts degree, had you not misemployed them in minding so much those foolish foils you carry about with you, and that make you lag behind your juniors.”—“Look you, good Sir Bachelor,” said the other, “your mean opinion of these foils is erroneous and absurd; for I can deduce the usefulness of the art of fencing from several undeniable axioms.”—“Psha,” said Corchuelo, for so was the other called, “don’t tell me of axioms: I will fight you, sir, at your weapons. Here am I that understand neither quart, nor tierce; but I have an arm, I have strength, and I have courage. Give me one of your foils, and in spite of all your distances, circles,

falsifies, angles, and all other terms of your art, I will shew you there is nothing in it, and will make reason glitter in your eyes. That man breathes not vital air, that I will turn my back on. And he must have more than human force, that can stand his ground against me."—"As for standing ground," said the artist, "I won't be obliged to it. But have a care, sir, how you press upon a man of skill, for ten to one, at the very first advance, but he is in your body up to the hilt."—"I will try that presently," said Corchuelo; and springing briskly from his ass, snatched one of the foils which the student carried. "Hold, hold, sir," said Don Quixote, "I will stand judge of the field, and see fair play on both sides;" and interposing with his lance, he alighted, and gave the artist time to put himself in his posture, and take his distance.

Then Corchuelo flew at him like a fury, helter skelter, cut and thrust, backstroke and forestroke, single and double, and laid on like any lion. But the student stopped him in the middle of his career with such a dab in the teeth, that he made Corchuelo foam at the mouth. He made him kiss the button of his foil, as if it had been a relic, though not altogether with so much devotion. In short,

he told all the buttons of his short cassock with pure clean thrusts, and made the skirts of it hang about him in rags like fish tails. Twice he struck off his hat, and in fine, so mauled and tired him, that through perfect vexation Corchuelo took the foil by the hilt, and hurled it from him with such violence, that one of the countrymen that were by, happening to be a notary-public, has it upon record to this day, that he threw it almost three quarters of a league; which testimony has served, and yet serves to let posterity know that strength is overcome by art.

At last Corchuelo, puffing and blowing, sat down to rest himself, and Sancho, coming up to him, "Mr Bachelor," quoth he, "henceforward take a fool's advice, and never challenge a man to fence, but to wrestle or pitch the bar; you seem cut out for those sports: but this fencing is a ticklish point, sir, meddle no more with it; for I have heard some of your masters of the science say, they can hit the eye of a needle with the point of a sword." Corchuelo acknowledged himself convinced of an error by experience, and embracing the artist, they became the better friends for this tilting. So, without staying for the notary that went for the foil, and could

not be back in a great while, they put on to the town where Quiteria lived, they all dwelling in the same village.

By the way the student held forth upon the excellency of the noble science of defence, with so many plain and convincing reasons, drawn from expressive figures and mathematical demonstrations, that all were satisfied of the excellency of the art, and Corchuelo was reclaimed from his incredulity. It was now pretty dark; but before they got to the village, there appeared an entire blazing constellation: Their ears were entertained with the pleasing, but confused sounds of several sorts of music, drums, fiddles, pipes, tabors and bells; and as they approached nearer still, they found a large arbour at the entrance of the town stuck full of lights, which burnt undisturbed by the least breeze of wind. The musicians, which are the life and soul of diversion at a wedding, went up and down in bands about the meadow. In short, some danced, some sung, some played, and mirth and jollity revelled through that delicious seat of pleasure. Others were employed in raising scaffolds for the better view of the shows and entertainments prepared for the happy Camacho's wedding, and likewise to solemnize

poor Basil's funeral. All the persuasions and endeavours of the students and countrymen could not move Don Quixote to enter the town; urging for his reason the custom of knights-errant, who chose to lodge in fields and forests under the canopy of heaven, rather than in soft beds under a gilded roof; and therefore he left them, and went a little out of the road, full sore against Sancho's will, who had not yet forgot the good lodging and entertainment he had at Don Diego's house or castle.