

duchess came as far as the door to receive him, and with them a grave clergyman, one of those that assume to govern great men's houses, and who, not being nobly born themselves, do not know how to instruct those that are, but would have the liberality of the great measured by the narrowness of their own souls, making those whom they govern stingy when they pretend to teach them frugality. One of these, in all likelihood, was this grave ecclesiastic, who came with the duke to receive Don Quixote.

After a thousand courtly compliments on all sides, Don Quixote at last approached the table, between the duke and the duchess; and here arose a fresh contest; for the knight, being offered the upper end of the table, thought himself obliged to decline it. However, he could not withstand the duke's pressing importunities, but was forced at last to comply. The parson sat right against him, and the duke and the duchess on each side.

Sancho stood by all the while, gaping with wonder to see the honour done his master; and observing how many ceremonies passed, and what entreaties the duke used to prevail with him to sit at the upper end of the table, "With your worship's good leave," quoth he, "I will tell you what happened once in our

town, in reference to this stir and ado that you have had now about places." The words were scarce out of his mouth, when Don Quixote began to tremble, as having reason to believe he was going to throw up some impertinent thing or other. Sancho had his eyes upon him, and, presently understanding his motions, "Sir," quoth he, "don't fear; I won't be unmannerly, I warrant you. I will speak nothing but what shall be pat to the purpose; I han't so soon forgot the lesson you gave me about talking sense or nonsense, little or much."—"I don't know what thou meanest," said Don Quixote; "say what thou wilt, so thou do it quickly."—"Well," quoth Sancho, turning to the duke, "what I am going to tell you is every tittle true. Should I trip never so little in my story, my master is here to take me up, and give me the lie."—"Pr'ythee," said Don Quixote, "lie as much as thou wilt for all me; I won't be thy hinderance; but take heed, however, what thou sayest."—"Nay, nay," quoth Sancho, "let me alone for that: I have heeded it and reheeded it over and over, and that you shall see, I warrant you."—"Truly, my lord," said Don Quixote, "it were convenient that your grace should order this fellow to be turned out of the

room, for he will plague you with a thousand impertinences."—"O! as for that, you must excuse us," said the duchess; "for, by the duke's life,* I swear Sancho must not stir a step from me; I'll engage for him, he shall say nothing but what is very proper."—"Many and many proper years," quoth Sancho, "may your holiness live, Madam Duchess, for your good opinion of me, though it is more your goodness than my desert. Now then for my tale.

"Once upon a time a gentleman in our town, of a good estate and family, for he was of the blood of the Alamos of Medina del Campo, and married one Donna Mencia de Quinones, who was the daughter of Don Alonzo de Maranon,¹ a knight of the order of St Jago, the very same that was drowned in the Herradura, about whom that quarrel happened formerly in our town, in which I heard say, that my master, Don Quixote, was embroiled, and little Tom, the madcap, who was the son of old Balvastro, the farrier, happened to be sorely hurt—Is not all this true now, master? Speak the truth and shame the devil, that their worship's graces may know that I am neither a prater

* A custom in Spain to swear by the life of those they love and honour.

¹ See Appendix, Note 4, Chapter XXXI.

nor a liar."—"Thus far," said the clergyman, "I think thou art the first rather than the latter; I can't tell what I shall make of thee by and by."—"Thou producest so many witnesses, Sancho," said Don Quixote, "and mentionest so many circumstances, that I must needs own I believe what thou sayest to be true. But go on, and shorten thy story; for, as thou beginnest, I'm afraid thou'lt not have done these two days."—"Pray, don't let him shorten it," said the duchess; "let him go on his own way, though he were not to make an end of it these six days: I shall hear him with pleasure, and think the time as pleasantly employed as any I ever passed in my life."—"I say then, my masters," quoth Sancho, "that this same gentleman I told you of at first, and I know him as well as I know my right hand from my left, for it is not a bow-shot from my house to his; this gentleman invited a husbandman to dine with him, who was a poor man, but main honest——"

"On, friend," said the chaplain; "at the rate you proceed you won't have made an end before you come to the other world."—"I shall stop short of half way," quoth Sancho, "and if it be heaven's blessed will: A little more of your Christian patience, good doctor!—Now

this same husbandman, as I said before, coming to this same gentleman's house, who had given him the invitation, heaven rest his soul, poor heart! for he is now dead and gone; and more than that, they say he died the death of an angel. For my part, I was not by him when he died, for I was gone to harvest-work at that very time, to a place called Temblique."—"Pr'ythee, honest friend," said the clergyman, "leave your harvest-work, and come back quickly from Temblique, without staying to bury the gentleman, unless you have a mind to occasion more funerals; therefore, pray, make an end of your story."—"You must know then," quoth Sancho, "that as they two were ready to sit down at table,—I mean the husbandman and the gentleman—Methinks I see them now before my eyes plainer than ever I did in my born days."—The duke and the duchess were infinitely pleased to find how Sancho spun out his story, and how the clergyman fretted at his prolixity, and Don Quixote spent himself with anger and vexation.

"Well," quoth Sancho, "to go on with my story, when they were going to sit down, the husbandman would not sit till the gentleman had taken his place; but the gentleman made

him a sign to put himself at the upper end. 'By no means, sir,' quoth the husbandman. 'Sit down,' said the other. 'Good your worship,' quoth the husbandman. 'Sit where I bid thee,' said the gentleman. Still the other excused himself, and would not; and the gentleman told him he should, as meaning to be master in his own house. But the over-mannerly looby, fancying he should be huge well bred and civil in it, scraped, and cringed, and refused, till at last the gentleman, in a great passion, e'en took him by the shoulders, and forced him into the chair. 'Sit there, clodpate,' cried he, 'for, let me sit wherever I will, that still will be the upper end, and the place of worship to thee.' And now you have my tale, and I think I have spoke nothing but what is to the purpose."

Don Quixote's face was in a thousand colours, that speckled its natural brown, so that the duke and duchess were obliged to check their mirth when they perceived Sancho's roguery, that Don Quixote might not be put too much out of countenance. And therefore to turn the discourse, that Sancho might not run into other fooleries, the duchess asked Don Quixote, what news he had of the lady Dulcinea, and how long it was since he had

sent her any giants or robbers for a present, not doubting but that he had lately subdued many such. "Alas! madam," answered he, my misfortunes have had a beginning, but, I fear, will never have an end. I have vanquished giants, elves, and cut-throats, and sent them to the mistress of my soul, but where shall they find her? She is enchanted, madam, and transformed to the ugliest piece of rusticity that can be imagined."—"I don't know, sir," quoth Sancho, "when I saw her last she seemed to be the finest creature in the varsal world; thus far, at least, I can safely vouch for her upon my own knowledge, that for activity of body, and leaping, the best tumbler of them all does not go beyond her. Upon my honest word, Madam Duchess, she will vault from the ground upon her ass like a cat."—"Have you seen her enchanted?" said the duke. "Seen her?" quoth Sancho; "and who the devil was the first that hit upon this trick of her enchantment, think you, but I? She is as much enchanted as my father."

The churchman, hearing them talk of giants, elves, and enchantments, began to suspect this was Don Quixote de la Mancha, whose history the duke so often used to read, though he had several times reprehended him for it,

telling him it was a folly to read such follies. Being confirmed in his suspicion, he addressed himself very angrily to the duke. "My lord," said he, "your grace will have a large account to give one day for soothing this poor man's follies. I suppose this same Don Quixote, or Don Quite Sot, or whatever you are pleased to call him, cannot be quite so besotted as you endeavour to make him, by giving him such opportunities to run on in his fantastical humours?" Then, directing his discourse to Don Quixote, "Hark ye," said he, "Goodman Addlepat. Who has put it into your crown that you are a knight-errant, that you vanquish giants and robbers? Go, go, get you home again, look after your children, if you have any, and what honest business you have to do, and leave wandering about the world, building castles in the air, and making yourself a laughing-stock to all that know you, or know you not. Where have you found, in the name of mischief, that there ever has been, or are now, any such things as knights-errant? Where will you meet with giants in Spain, or monsters in La Mancha? Where shall one find your enchanted Dulcineas, and all those legions of whimsies and chimeras that are talked of in your account, but in your own empty skull?"

Don Quixote gave this reverend person the hearing with great patience. But at last, seeing him silent, without minding his respect to the duke and duchess, up he started with indignation and fury in his looks, and said—
But his answer deserves a chapter by itself.

CHAPTER XXXII

DON QUIXOTE'S ANSWER TO HIS REPROVER, WITH
OTHER GRAVE AND MERRY ACCIDENTS

DON QUIXOTE being thus suddenly got up, shaking from head to foot for madness, as if he had quicksilver in his bones, cast an angry look on his indiscreet censor, and, with an eager delivery, sputtering and stammering with choler, "This place," cried he, "the presence of these noble persons, and the respect I have always had for your function, check my just resentment, and tie up my hands from taking the satisfaction of a gentleman. For these reasons, and since every one knows that you gown-men, as well as women, use no other weapons but your tongues, I will fairly engage you upon equal terms, and combat you at your own weapon. I should rather have expected sober admonitions from a man of your cloth, than infamous reproaches. Charitable and wholesome correction ought to be managed at another rate, and with more moderation. The least that can be said of this reproof which you