

CHAPTER XLIII

THE SECOND PART OF DON QUIXOTE'S ADVICE TO
SANCHO PANZA

WHO would not have taken Don Quixote for a man of extraordinary wisdom, and as excellent morals, having heard him documentize his squire in this manner; only, as we have often observed in this history, the least talk of knight-errantry spoiled all, and made his understanding muddy; but in everything else his judgment was very clear, and his apprehension very nice, so that every moment his actions used to discredit his judgment, and his judgment his actions? But in these economical precepts which he gave Sancho, he shewed himself master of a pleasant fancy, and mingled his judgment and extravagance in equal proportions. Sancho lent him a great deal of attention, in hopes to register all those good counsels in his mind, and put them in practice; not doubting but by their means he should acquit himself of his duty like a man of honour.

“As to the government of thy person and family,” pursued Don Quixote, “my first injunction is cleanliness. Pair thy nails, nor let them grow as some do, whose folly persuades them that long nails add to the beauty of the hand; till they look more like castrils’ claws, than a man’s nails. It is foul and unsightly.

“Keep thy clothes tight about thee; for a slovenly looseness is an argument of a careless mind; unless such a negligence, like that of Julius Cæsar, be affected for some cunning design.

“Prudently examine what thy income may amount to in a year: And if sufficient to afford thy servants liveries, let them be decent and lasting, rather than gaudy and for show; and for the overplus of thy good husbandry, bestow it on the poor. That is, if thou canst keep six footmen, keep but three; and let what would maintain three more be laid out in charitable uses. By that means thou wilt have attendants in heaven as well as on earth, which our vain-glorious great ones, who are strangers to this practice, are not likely to have.

“Lest thy breath betray thy peasantry, defile it not with onions and garlic.

“Walk with gravity, and speak with delib-

eration, and yet not as if thou didst hearken to thy own words; for all affectation is a fault.

“Eat little at thy dinner, and less at supper; for the stomach is the storehouse, whence health is to be imparted to the whole body.

“Drink moderately; for drunkenness neither keeps a secret, nor observes a promise.

“Be careful not to chew on both sides, that is, fill not thy mouth too full, and take heed not to eruct before company.”

“Eruct?” quoth Sancho; “I do not understand that cramp word.”—“To eruct,” answered Don Quixote, “is as much as to say, to belch; but this being one of the most disagreeable and beastly words in our language, though very expressive and significant; the more polite, instead of belching, say eructing, which is borrowed from the Latin. Now, though the vulgar may not understand this, it matters not much; for use and custom will make it familiar and understood. By such innovations are languages enriched, when the words are adopted by the multitude, and naturalized by custom.”

“Faith and truth,” quoth Sancho, “of all your counsels, I will be sure not to forget this, for I have been mightily given to belching.”—“Say eructing,” replied Don Quixote, “and

leave off belching.”—“Well,” quoth Sancho, “be it as you say, eruct; I will be sure to remember.”

“In the next place, Sancho,” said the knight, “do not overlard your common discourse with that glut of proverbs which you mix in it continually; for though proverbs are properly concise and pithy sentences, yet as thou bringest them in, in such a huddle, by the head and shoulders, thou makest them look like so many absurdities.”—“Alas! Sir,” quoth Sancho, “this is a disease that Heaven alone can cure; for I have more proverbs than will fill a book; and when I talk, they crowd so thick and fast to my mouth, that they quarrel which shall get out first; so that my tongue is forced to let them out as fast, first come first served, though nothing to my purpose. But henceforwards I will set a watch on my mouth, and let none fly out, but such as shall befit the gravity of my place. For in a rich man’s house, the cloth is soon laid: Where there is plenty, the guests cannot be empty. A blot’s no blot till it is hit. He is safe who stands under the bells. You cannot eat your cake and have your cake: And store’s no sore.”

“Go on, go on, friend,” said Don Quixote, “thread, tack, stitch on, heap proverb upon

proverb, out with them, man, spew them out! there is nobody coming. My mother whips me, and I whip the gegg. I warn thee to forbear foisting in a rope of proverbs everywhere, and thou blunderest out a whole litany of old saws, as much to the purpose as the last year's snow! Observe me, Sancho, I condemn not the use of proverbs: but it is most certain, that such a confusion and hodge-podge of them, as thou throwest out and draggest in by the hair together, makes conversation fulsome and poor.

"When thou dost ride, cast not thy body all on the crupper, nor hold thy legs stiff down, and straddling from the horse's belly; nor yet so loose, as if thou wert still on Dapple; for the air and gracefulness of sitting a horse distinguishes sometimes a gentleman from a groom. Sleep with moderation; for he that rises not with the sun loses so much day. And remember this, Sancho, that diligence is the mother of good fortune: Sloth, on the contrary, never effected any thing that sprung from a good and reasonable desire.

"The advice which I shall conclude with, I would have thee to be sure to fix in thy memory, though it relate not to the adorning of thy person; for, I am persuaded, it will redound as much to thy advantage, as any I have yet given thee. And this it is:

"Never undertake to dispute, nor decide any controversies concerning the pre-eminence of families; since, in the comparison, one must be better than the other: for he that is lessened by thee will hate thee, and the other whom thou preferrest, will not think himself obliged to thee.

"As for thy dress, wear close breeches and hose, a long coat, and a cloak a little longer. I do not advise thee to wear wide-kneed breeches, or trunk-hose, for they become neither swordsmen, nor men of business.

"This is all the advice, friend Sancho, I have to give thee at present. If thou takest care to let me hear from thee hereafter, I shall give thee more, according as thy occasions and emergencies require."

"Sir," said Sancho, "I see very well that all you have told me is mighty good, wholesome, and to the purpose: But what am I the better, if I cannot keep it in my head? I grant you, I shall not easily forget that about paring my nails, and marrying again, if I should have the luck to bury my wife. But for all that other gallimaufry, and heap of stuff, I can no more remember one syllable of it, than the shapes of last year's clouds. Therefore let me have it in black and white, I beseech you. It

is true, I can neither write nor read, but I will give it to my father-confessor, that he may beat and hammer it into my noddle, as occasion serves."—"O Heaven!" cried Don Quixote, "how scandalous it looks in a governor not to be able to write or read! I must needs tell thee, Sancho, that for a man to be so illiterate, or to be left-handed, implies that either his parents were very poor and mean, or that he was of so perverse a nature, he could not receive the impressions of learning, nor any thing that is good. Poor soul, I pity thee! this is indeed a very great defect. I would have thee at least learn to write thy name."—"Oh! as for that," quoth Sancho, "I can do well enough: I can set my name: for when I served several offices in our parish, I learned to scrawl a sort of letters, such as they mark bundles of stuff with, which they told me spelt my name. Besides, I can pretend my right hand is lame, and so another shall sign for me; for there is a remedy for all things but death. And since I have the power, I will do what I list; for, as the saying is, he whose father is judge, goes safe to his trial. And, as I am a governor, I hope I am somewhat higher than a judge. New lords, new laws. Ay, ay, let them come as they will, and play at bo-peep. Let them backbite me to my face, I will

bite-back the biters. Let them come for wool, and I will send them home shorn. Whom God loves, his house happy proves. The rich man's follies pass for wise sayings in this world. So I, being rich, do you see, and a governor, and too free-hearted into the bargain, as I intend to be, I shall have no faults at all. It is so, daub yourself with honey, and you will never want flies. What a man has, so much he is sure of, said my old grannam: And who shall hang the bell about the cat's neck?"

"Confound thee," cried Don Quixote, "for an eternal proverb-voiding swagbelly! Three-score thousand Beelzebubs take thee, and thy damned nauseous rubbish! Thou hast been this hour stringing them together, like so many ropes of onions, and poisoning and racking* me with them. I dare say, these wicked proverbs will one day bring thee to the gallows; they will provoke thy islanders to pull thee down, or at least make them shun thee like a common nuisance. Tell me, thou essence of ignorance, where dost thou rake them up? and who taught thy codshead to apply them? For it makes me sweat, as if I were delving and

* The original is, "draughts of the rack." It alludes to a particular kind of torture in Spain, namely, a thin piece of gauze, moistened, and put to the lips of a person dying with thirst, who swallows it down by degrees, and then it is pulled up again by the end the executioner holds in his hand.

threshing, to speak but one, and apply it properly."

"Uds precious! my good master," quoth Sancho, "what a small matter puts you in a pelting case! why the devil should you grudge me the use of my own goods and chattels? I have no other estate. Proverbs on proverbs are all my stock. And now I have four ready to pop out, as pat to the purpose as pears to a panier;* but mum for that. Now silence is my name."†—"No," replied Don Quixote, "rather paste-roast and sauce-box, I should call thee; for thou art all tittle-tattle and obstinacy. Yet, methinks I would fain hear these four notable proverbs that come so pat to the purpose. I thank heaven I have a pretty good memory, and yet I cannot for my soul call one to mind."—"Why, sir," quoth Sancho, "what proverbs would you have better than these? Between two cheek-teeth never clap thy thumbs. And when a man says get out of my house; what would you have with my wife? there is no answer to be made. And again, whether the pitcher hit the stone, or the stone

* Pears sent to Madrid, from Daroca, in March, when they are scarce, and made up nicely, to prevent bruising.

† In the original, "to keep silence well, is called Sancho." The proverb is, "to keep silence well is called (*santo*) holy." But Sancho, out of archness or ignorance, changes *santo* to his own name Sancho.

the pitcher, it is bad for the pitcher. All these fit to a hair, sir; that is, let nobody meddle with his governor, or his betters, or he will rue for it, as sure as a gun; as he must expect who runs his finger between two cheek-teeth, (and though they were not cheek-teeth if they be but teeth that is enough). In the next place, let the governor say what he will, there is no gain-saying him; it is as much as when one says, get out of my house; what would you with my wife? and as for the stone and the pitcher, a blind man may see through it. And so he that sees a mote in another man's eye, should do well to take the beam out of his own; that people may not say, The pot calls the kettle black a—se, and the dead woman is afraid of her that is flayed. Besides, your worship knows, that a fool knows more in his house, than a wise body in another man's."—"That is a mistake, Sancho," replied Don Quixote, "for the fool knows nothing, neither in his own house, nor in another man's; for no substantial knowledge can be erected on so bad a foundation as folly. But let us break off this discourse: If thou dost not discharge the part of a good governor, thine will be the fault, though the shame and discredit will be mine. However, this is my comfort, I have done my duty in

giving thee the best and most wholesome advice I could: And so heaven prosper and direct thee in thy government, and disappoint my fears for thy turning all things upside down in that poor island; which I might indeed prevent, by giving the duke a more perfect insight into thee, and discovering to him, that all that gorbellied paunch-gutted little corpse of thine is nothing but a bundle of proverbs, and sackful of knavery."

"Look you, sir," quoth Sancho, "if you think me not fit for this government, I will think no more on it. Alas! the least snip of my soul's nails (as a body may say) is dearer to me than my whole body: And I hope I can live plain Sancho still, upon a luncheon of bread, and a clove of garlie, as contented as Governor Sancho upon capons and partridges. Death and sleep make us all alike, rich and poor, high and low. Do but call to mind what first put this whim of government into my noddle, you will find it was your own self; for, as for me, I know no more what belongs to islands and governors, than a blind buzzard. So if you fancy the devil will have me for being a governor, let me be plain Sancho still, and go to heaven, rather than my lord governor, and go to hell."

"These last words of thine, Sancho," said Don Quixote, "in my opinion, prove thee worthy to govern a thousand islands. Thou hast naturally a good disposition, without which all knowledge is insufficient. Recommend thyself to Divine Providence, and be sure never to depart from uprightness of intention; I mean, have still a firm purpose and design to be thoroughly informed in all the business that shall come before thee, and act upon just grounds, for Heaven always favours good desires. And so let us go to dinner, for I believe now the duke and duchess expect us."