

CHAPTER XLIV

HOW SANCHO PANZA WAS CARRIED TO HIS GOVERNMENT, AND OF THE STRANGE ADVENTURE THAT BEFEL DON QUIXOTE IN THE CASTLE

WE have it from the traditional account of this history, that there is a manifest difference between the translation and the Arabic in the beginning of this chapter; Cid Hamet having, in the original, taken an occasion of criticising on himself, for undertaking so dry and limited a subject, which must confine him to the bare history of Don Quixote and Sancho, and debar him the liberty of launching into episodes and digressions, that might be of more weight and entertainment. To have his fancy, his hand, and pen, bound up to a single design, and his sentiments confined to the mouths of so few persons, he urged as an unsupportable toil, and of small credit to the undertaker; so that, to avoid this inconveniency, he has introduced into the first part some novels, as *The Curious Impertinent*, and that of *The Captive*,¹ which were in a manner distinct from the design,

¹ See Appendix, Note 1, Chapter XLIV.

though the rest of the stories which he brought in there, fall naturally enough in with Don Quixote's affairs, and seem of necessity to claim a place in the work. It was his opinion, likewise, as he told us, that the Adventures of Don Quixote requiring so great a share of the reader's attention, his novels must expect but an indifferent reception, or, at most, but a cursory view, not sufficient to discover their artificial contexture; which must have been very obvious had they been published by themselves, without the interludes of Don Quixote's madness, or Sancho's impertinence. He has, therefore, in this Second Part, avoided all distinct and independent stories, introducing only such as have the appearance of episodes, yet flow naturally from the design of the story, and these but seldom, and with as much brevity as they can be expressed. Therefore, since he has tied himself up to such narrow bounds, and confined his understanding and parts, otherwise capable of the most copious subjects, to the pure matter of this present undertaking, he begs it may add a value to his work, and that he may be commended, not so much for what he has written, as for what he has forborne to write. And then he proceeds in his history as follows:

After dinner, Don Quixote gave Sancho, in writing, the copy of his verbal instructions, ordering him to get somebody to read them to him. But the squire had no sooner got them, than he dropt the paper, which fell into the duke's hands, who communicating the same to the duchess, they found a fresh occasion of admiring the mixture of Don Quixote's good sense and extravagance; and so, carrying on the humour, they sent Sancho that afternoon, with a suitable equipage, to the place he was to govern, which, wherever it lay, was to be an island to him.

It happened that the management of this affair was committed to a steward of the duke's, a man of a facetious humour, and who had not only wit to start a pleasant design, but discretion to carry it on; two qualifications which make an agreeable consort when they meet, nothing being truly agreeable without good sense. He had already personated the Countess Trifaldi very successfully; and, with his master's instructions in relation to his behaviour towards Sancho, could not but discharge his trust to a wonder. Now, it fell out, that Sancho no sooner cast his eyes on the steward, than he fancied he saw the very face of Trifaldi; and turning to his master, "The

devil fetch me, sir," quoth he, "if you don't own that this same steward of the duke's here has the very phiz of my Lady Trifaldi." Don Quixote looked very earnestly on the steward, and having perused him from top to toe, "Sancho," said he, "thou needest not give thyself to the devil to confirm this matter; I see their faces are the very same. Yet, for all that, the steward and the Disconsolate Lady cannot be the same person, for that would imply a very great contradiction, and might involve us in more abstruse and difficult doubts than we have conveniency now to discuss or examine. Believe me, friend, our devotion cannot be too earnest, that we may be delivered from the power of these cursed enchantments."—"Adad, sir," quoth Sancho, "you may think I am in jest, but I heard him open just now, and I thought the very voice of Madam Trifaldi sounded in my ears. But mum is the word; I say nothing, though I shall watch his waters, to find out whether I am right or wrong in my suspicion."—"Well, do so," said Don Quixote, "and fail not to acquaint me with all the discoveries thou canst make in this affair, and other occurrences in thy government."

At last, Sancho set out with a numerous

train. He was dressed like a man of the long-robe, and wore over his other clothes a white sad-coloured coat or gown, of watered camblet, and a cap of the same stuff. He was mounted on a he-mule, and rode short, after the gannett fashion.¹ Behind him, by the duke's order, was led his Dapple, bridled and saddled like a horse of state, in gaudy trappings of silk; which so delighted Sancho, that every now and then he turned his head about to look upon him, and thought himself so happy, that now he would not have changed fortunes with the Emperor of Germany. He kissed the duke and duchess's hand at parting, and received his master's benediction, while the Don wept, and Sancho blubbered abundantly.

Now, reader, let the noble governor depart in peace, and speed him well. His administration in his government may perhaps make you laugh to some purpose, when it comes in play. But, in the meantime, let us observe the fortune of his master the same night, for though it do not make you laugh outright, it may chance to make you draw in your lips, and show your teeth like a monkey; for it is the property of his adventures to create always either surprise or merriment.

¹ See Appendix, Note 2, Chapter XLIV.

It is reported then, that immediately upon Sancho's departure, Don Quixote found the want of his presence; and, had it been in his power, he would have revoked his authority, and deprived him of his commission. The duchess, perceiving his disquiet, and desiring to understand the cause of his melancholy, told him, that if it was Sancho's absence made him uneasy, she had squires enough, and damsels in her house, that should supply his place in any service he would be pleased to command them. "It is true, madam," answered Don Quixote, "I am somewhat concerned for the absence of Sancho; but there is a more material cause of my present uneasiness, and I must beg to be excused, if among the many obligations your grace is pleased to confer on me, I decline all but the good intention that has offered them. All I have further to crave, is your grace's permission to be alone in my apartment, and to be my own servant."—"Your pardon, sir," replied the duchess, "I cannot consent you should be alone. I have four damsels, blooming as so many May roses, that shall attend you."—"They will be no roses to me," returned Don Quixote, "but so many prickles to my conscience; and if they come into my chamber, they must fly in at the window. If

your grace would crown the many favours you have heaped on this worthless person, I beseech you to leave him to himself, and the service of his own hands. No desires, madam, must enter my doors; for the walls of my chamber have always been a bulwark to my chastity, and I shall not infringe my rule for all the bounty you can lavish on me. In fine, rather than think of being undressed by any mortal, I would lie rough the whole night.”—“Enough, enough, noble sir,” said the duchess; “I desist, and will give orders that not so much as the buzzing of a fly, much less the impertinence of a damsel, shall disturb your privacy. I am far from imposing anything, sir, that should urge Don Quixote to a transgression in point of decency; for, if I conjecture right, among the many virtues that adorn him, his modesty is the most distinguishable. Dress, therefore, and undress by yourself, how you please, when you will, and nobody shall molest you. Nay, that you may not be obliged to open your doors upon the account of any natural necessity, care shall be taken that you may find in your room whatever you may have occasion for in the night. And, may the great Dulcinea del Toboso live a thousand ages, and her fame be diffused all over the

habitable globe, since she has merited the love of so valorous, so chaste, and loyal a knight; and may the indulgent Heavens incline the heart of our governor, Sancho Panza, to put a speedy end to his discipline, that the beauties of so great a lady may be restored to the view of the admiring world!”—“Madam,” retorted Don Quixote, “your grace has spoken like yourself; so excellent a lady could utter nothing but what denotes the goodness and generosity of her mind: And, certainly, it will be Dulcinea’s peculiar happiness to have been praised by you, for it will raise her character more to have had your grace for her panegyrist, than if the best orators in the world had laboured to set it forth.”—“Sir,” said the duchess, waiving this discourse, “it is supper-time, and my lord expects us. Come, then, let us to supper that you may go to bed betimes, for you must needs be weary still with the long journey you took to Candaya yesterday.”—“Indeed, madam,” answered Don Quixote, “I feel no manner of weariness; for I can safely swear to your grace, that I never rode an easier beast, nor a better goer, than Clavileno. For my part, I cannot imagine what could induce Malambruno to part with so swift and gentle a horse, and to burn him too,