

followed. The knight and squire then mounted again, and the music and procession went on, till they arrived at their conductor's house, which, by its largeness and beauty, bespoke the owner master of a great estate; where we leave him for the present, because it is Cid Hamet's will and pleasure it should be so.

CHAPTER LXII

THE ADVENTURE OF THE ENCHANTED HEAD, WITH
OTHER IMPERTINENCES NOT TO BE OMITTED

THE person who entertained Don Quixote was called Don Antonio Moreno, a gentleman of good parts, and plentiful fortune, loving all those diversions that may innocently be obtained without prejudice to his neighbours, and not of the humour of those, who would rather lose their friend than their jest. He therefore resolved to make his advantage of Don Quixote's follies, without detriment to his person.

In order to this, he persuaded the knight to take off his armour, and, in his strait-laced chamois clothes, (as we have already shewn him,) to stand in a balcony that looked into one of the principal streets of the city, where he stood exposed to the rabble that were got together, especially the boys, who gaped and stared on him, as if he had been some overgrown baboon. The several brigades and cavaliers in their liveries began afresh to fetch

their careers about him, as if the ceremony were rather performed in honour of Don Quixote, than any solemnity of the festival. Sancho was highly pleased, fancying he had chopped upon another Camacho's wedding, or another house like that of Don Diego de Miranda, or some castle like the duke's.

Several of Don Antonio's friends dined with him that day; and all of them honouring and respecting Don Quixote as a knight-errant, they puffed up his vanity to such a degree, that he could scarce conceal the pleasure he took in their adulation. As for Sancho, he made such sport to the servants of the house, and all that heard him, that they watched every word that came from his mouth. Being all very merry at table, "Honest Sancho," said Don Antonio, "I am told you admire capons and sausages so much, that you cannot be satisfied with a bellyful, and when you can eat no more, you cram the rest into your breeches against the next morning."—"No, sir, if it like you," answered Sancho, "it is all a story; I am more cleanly than greedy, I would have you to know; here is my master can tell you, that many times he and I used to live for a week together upon a handful of acorns and walnuts. The truth is, I am not over nice; in such a

place as this, I eat what is given me; for a gift-horse should not be looked in the mouth. But whosoever told you I was a greedy-gut and a sloven, has told you a fib; and, were it not for respect to the company, I would tell him more of my mind, so I would."—"Verily," said Don Quixote, "the manner of Sancho's feeding ought to be delivered to succeeding ages on brazen monuments, as a future memorial of his abstinence, and cleanliness, and an example to posterity. It is true, when he satisfies the call of hunger, he seems to do it somewhat ravenously; indeed he swallows apace, uses his grinders very notably, and chews with both jaws at once. But, in spite of the charge of slovenliness now laid upon him, I must declare he is so nice an observer of neatness, that he ever makes a clear conveyance of his food. When he was governor, his nicety in eating was remarkable, for he would eat grapes, and even pomegranate seeds, with the point of his fork."—"How," cried Antonio, "has Sancho been a governor?"—"Ay, marry has he," answered Sancho, "governor of the island of Baratavia! Ten days I governed, and who but I! but I was so broken of my rest all the time, that all I got by it was to learn to hate the trade of governing

from the bottom of my soul. So that I made such haste to leave it, I fell into a deep hole, where I was buried alive, and should have lain till now, had not Providence pulled me out of it." Don Quixote then related the circumstances of Sancho's government; and the cloth being taken away, Don Antonio took the knight by the hand, and carried him into a private chamber, wherein there was no kind of furniture, but a table that seemed to be of jasper, supported by feet of the same, with a brazen head set upon it, from the breast upwards, like the effigies of one of the Roman emperors. Don Antonio having walked with Don Quixote several turns about the room, "Signor Don Quixote," said he, "being assured that we are very private, the door fast, and nobody listening, I shall communicate to you one of the most strange and wonderful adventures that ever was known, provided you treasure it up, as a secret, in the closest apartment of your breast."—"I shall be as secret as the grave," answered the knight, "and will clap a tomb-stone over your secret, for farther security; besides, assure yourself, Don Antonio," continued he, for by this time he had learned the gentleman's name, "you converse with a person whose ears are open to receive what his

tongue never betrays. So that whatever you commit to my trust, shall be buried in the depth of bottomless silence, and lie as secure as in your own breast."—"In confidence of your honour," said Don Antonio, "I doubt not to raise your astonishment, and disburden my own breast of a secret, which has long lain upon my thoughts, having never found hitherto any person worthy to be made a confidant in matters to be concealed."—This cautious proceeding raised Don Quixote's curiosity strangely; after which Don Antonio led him to the table and made him feel and examine all over the brazen head, the table, and jasper supporters. "Now, sir," said he, "know that this head was made by one of the greatest enchanters or necromancers in the world. If I am not mistaken, he was a Polander by birth, and the disciple of the celebrated Escotillo,* of whom so many prodigies are related. This wonderful person was here in my house, and by the intercession of a thousand crowns, was wrought upon to frame me this head, which has the wonderful property of answering in

* Or, Little Scot. Cervantes means Michael Scotus, who, being more knowing in natural and experimental philosophy than was common in the dark ages of ignorance, passed for a magician; as Friar Bacon and Albert the Great did; of the first of whom (Friar Bacon) a like story of a brazen head is told.

your ear to all questions. After long study, erecting of schemes, casting of figures, consultations with the stars, and other mathematical operations, this head was brought to the aforesaid perfection; and to-morrow, (for on Fridays it never speaks,) it shall give you proof of its knowledge; till when, you may consider of your most puzzling and important doubts, which will have a full and satisfactory solution." Don Quixote was amazed at this strange virtue of the head, and could hardly credit Don Antonio's account; but, considering the shortness of the time that deferred his full satisfaction in the point, he was content to suspend his opinion till next day; and only thanked the gentleman for making him so great a discovery. So out of the chamber they went; and Don Antonio having locked the door very carefully, they returned into the room, where the rest of the company were diverted by Sancho's relating to them some of his master's adventures.

That afternoon they carried Don Quixote abroad without his armour, mounted, not on Rozinante, but on a large easy mule, with genteel furniture, and himself dressed after the city fashion, with a long coat of tawny-coloured cloth, which, with the present heat of the

season, was enough to put frost itself into a sweat. They gave private orders that Sancho should be entertained within doors all that day, lest he should spoil their sport by going out. The knight being mounted, they pinned to his back, without his knowledge, a piece of parchment, with these words, written in large letters, "This is Don Quixote de la Mancha." As soon as they began their walk, the sight of the parchment drew the eyes of everybody to read the inscription; so that the knight, hearing so many people repeat the words, "This is Don Quixote de la Mancha," wondered to hear himself named and known by every one that saw him. Thereupon, turning to Don Antonio, that rode by his side, "How great," said he, "is this single prerogative of knight-errantry, by which its professors are known and distinguished through all the confines of the universe! Do not you hear, sir," continued he, "how the very boys in the street, who have never seen me before, know me?"—"It is very true, sir," answered Don Antonio; "like fire, that always discovers itself by its own light, so virtue has that lustre that never fails to display itself, especially that renown which is acquired by the profession of arms."

During this procession of the knight and his applauding followers, a certain Castilian, reading the scroll at Don Quixote's back, cried out aloud, "Now, the devil take thee for Don Quixote de la Mancha! Who would have thought to have found thee here, and still alive, after so many hearty drubbings that have been laid about thy shoulders? Cannot you be mad in private, and among your friends, with a pox to you, but you must run about the world at this rate, and make every body that keeps you company as arrant coxcombs as yourself? Get you home to your wife and children, blockhead; look after your house, and leave off playing the fool, and distracting thy senses at this rate with a parcel of nonsensical whimsies."—"Friend," said Don Antonio, "go about your business, and keep your advice for them that want it. Signor Don Quixote is a man of too much sense not to be above your counsel, and we know our business without your intermeddling. We only pay the respect due to virtue. So, in the name of ill-luck, go your ways, and do not meddle where you have no business."—"Truly, now," said the Castilian, "you are in the right; for it is but striving against the stream to give him advice, though it grieves me to think this whim of

knight-errantry should spoil all the good parts which they say this madman has. But ill-luck light on me, as you would have it, and all my generation, if ever you catch me advising him or any one else again, though I were desired, and were to live the years of Methusalem." So saying, the adviser went his ways, and the cavalcade continued; but the rabble pressed so very thick to read the inscription, that Don Antonio was forced to pull it off, under pretence of doing something else.

Upon the approach of night, they returned home, where Don Antonio's wife, a lady of quality, and every way accomplished, had invited several of her friends to a ball, to honour her guest, and share in the diversion his extravagances afforded. After a noble supper, the dancing began about ten o'clock at night. Among others, were two ladies, of an airy waggish disposition, such as, though virtuous enough at the bottom, would not stick to strain a point of modesty for the diversion of good company. These two made their court chiefly to Don Quixote, and plied him so with dancing, one after another, that they tired not only his body, but his very soul. But the best was to see what an unaccountable figure the grave Don made, as he hopped and stalked

about, a long, sway-back, starved-looking, thin-flanked, two-legged thing, wainscot-complexioned, stuck up in his close doublet, awkward enough a-conscience, and certainly none of the lightest at a saraband. The ladies gave him several private hints of their inclination to his person, and he was not behind-hand in intimating to them as secretly, that they were very indifferent to him; till at last, being almost teased to death, "*Fugite, partes adversæ,*" cried he aloud, "and avaunt temptation! Pray, ladies, play your amorous pranks with somebody else; leave me to the enjoyment of my own thoughts, which are employed and taken up with the peerless Dulcinea del Toboso, the sole queen of my affections;" and, so saying, he sat himself down on the ground, in the midst of the hall, to rest his wearied bones. Don Antonio gave order that he should be taken up and carried to bed; and the first who was ready to lend a helping hand was Sancho; and, as he was lifting him up, "By Our Lady, sir master of mine, you have shook your heels most facetiously! Do you think we, who are stout and valiant, must be caperers, and that every knight-errant must be a snapper of castanets? If you do, you are woundily deceived, let me tell you. Gadzookers, I know

those who would sooner cut a giant's wind-pipe than a caper. Had you been for the shoe-jig,* I had been your man, for I slap it away like any jer-faulcon; but, as for regular dancing, I cannot work a stitch at it." This made diversion for the company, till Sancho led out his master, in order to put him to bed, where he left him covered over head and ears, that he might sweat out the cold he had caught by dancing.

The next day, Don Antonio, resolving to make his intended experiment on the Enchanted Head, conducted Don Quixote into the room where it stood, together with Sancho, a couple of his friends, and the two ladies that had so teased the knight at the ball, and who had staid all night with his wife; and having carefully locked the door, and enjoined them secrecy, he told them the virtue of the head, and that this was the first time he ever made proof of it; and, except his two friends, nobody did know the trick of the enchantment, and, had not they been told of it before, they had been drawn into the same error with the rest; for the contrivance of the machine was so artful, and so cunningly managed, that it was

* Shoe-jig, in which the dancers slap the sole of their shoe with the palm of their hand, in time and measure.