

what I have to do: Only help to get me to bed, for I find myself somewhat out of order. However, do not trouble your heads; whether I be a knight-errant or an errant-shepherd, you shall always find that I will provide for you." The niece and maid, who, without doubt, were good-natured creatures, undressed him, put him to bed, brought him something to eat, and tended him with all imaginable care.

CHAPTER LXXIV

HOW DON QUIXOTE FELL SICK, MADE HIS LAST WILL
AND DIED

As all human things, especially the lives of men, are transitory, their very beginnings being but steps to their dissolution; so Don Quixote, who was no way exempted from the common fate, was snatched away by death, when he least expected it. Whether his sickness was the effect of his melancholy reflections, or whether it was so preordained by Heaven, most certain it is, he was seized with a violent fever that confined him to his bed six days.

All that time his good friends, the curate, bachelor, and barber, came often to see him, and his trusty squire Sancho Panza never stirred from his bedside.

They conjectured that his sickness proceeded from the regret of his defeat, and his being disappointed of Dulcinea's disenchantment; and accordingly they left nothing unessayed to divert him. The bachelor begged him to pluck up a good heart, and rise, that they might be-

gin their pastoral life; telling him, that he had already written an eclogue to that purpose, not inferior to those of Sanazaro, and that he had bought, with his own money, of a shepherd of Quintanar, two tearing dogs to watch their flock, the one called Barcino, and the other Butron; but this had no effect on Don Quixote, for he still continued dejected. A physician was sent for, who, upon feeling his pulse, did not very well like it; and therefore desired him of all things to provide for his soul's health, for that of his body was in a dangerous condition. Don Quixote heard this with much more temper than those about him; for his niece, his housekeeper, and his squire, fell aweeping as bitterly as if he had been laid out already. The physician was of opinion, that mere melancholy and vexation had brought him to his approaching end. Don Quixote desired them to leave him a little, because he found himself inclinable to rest; they retired, and he had a hearty sleep of about six hours, which the maid and niece were afraid had been his last.

At length he awaked, and, with a loud voice, "Blessed be the Almighty," cried he, "for this great benefit he has vouchsafed to do me! Infinite are his mercies; they are greater, and more in number, than the sins of men." The niece

hearkening very attentively to these words of her uncle, and finding more sense in them than there was in his usual talk, at least since he had fallen ill; "What do you say, sir," said she, "has anything extraordinary happened? What mercies are those you mention?"—"Mercies," answered he, "that Heaven has this moment vouchsafed to shew me, in spite of all my iniquities. My judgment is returned clear and undisturbed, and that cloud of ignorance is now removed, which the continual reading of those damnable books of knight-errantry had cast over my understanding. Now I perceive their nonsense and impertinence, and am only sorry the discovery happens so late, when I want time to make amends, by those studies that should enlighten my soul, and prepare me for futurity. I find, niece, my end approaches; but I would have it such, that though my life has got me the character of a madman, I may deserve a better at my death. Dear child," continued he, "send for my honest friend the curate, the bachelor Carrasco, and Master Nicholas the barber, for I intend to make my confession and my will." His niece was saved the trouble of sending, for presently they all three came in; which Don Quixote perceiving, "My good friends," said he, "I have happy news to tell

you; I am no longer Don Quixote de la Mancha, but Alonzo Quixano, the same whom the world, for his fair behaviour, has been formerly pleased to call *the Good*. I now declare myself an enemy to Amadis de Gaul, and his whole generation; all profane stories of knight-errantry, all romances, I detest. I have a true sense of the danger of reading them, and of all my past follies; and, through Heaven's mercy, and my own experience, I abhor them." His three friends were not a little surprised to hear him talk at this rate, and concluded some new frenzy had possessed him. "What now?" said Sampson to him: "What is all this to the purpose, Signor Don Quixote? We have just had the news that the Lady Dulcinea is disenchanted; and now we are upon the point of turning shepherds, to sing, and live like princes, you are dwindled down to a hermit!"

"No more of that, I beseech you," replied Don Quixote; "all the use I shall make of these follies at present, is to heighten my repentance; and though they have hitherto proved prejudicial, yet, by the assistance of Heaven, they may turn to my advantage at my death: I find it comes fast upon me; therefore, pray, gentleman, let us be serious. I want a priest to receive my confession, and a scrivener

to draw up my will. There is no trifling at a time like this; I must take care of my soul; and therefore, pray let the scrivener be sent for, while Mr Curate prepares me by confession."

Don Quixote's words put them all into such admiration, that they stood gazing upon one another; they thought they had reason to doubt of the return of his understanding, and yet they could not help believing him. They were also apprehensive he was near the point of death, considering the sudden recovery of his intellects; and he delivered himself after that with so much sense, discretion, and piety, and shewed himself so resigned to the will of Heaven, that they made no scruple to believe him restored to his perfect judgment at last. The curate thereupon cleared the room of all the company but himself and Don Quixote, and then confessed him. In the meantime, the bachelor ran for the scrivener, and presently brought him with him; and Sancho Panza, being informed by the bachelor, how ill his master was, and finding his niece and housekeeper all in tears, began to make wry faces and fall acrying. The curate, having heard the sick person's confession, came out and told them, that the good Alonzo Quixano

was very near his end, and certainly in his senses; and therefore they had best go in, that he might make his will. These dismal tidings opened the sluices of the housekeeper's, the niece's, and the good squire's swollen eyes, so that a whole inundation of tears burst out of those flood-gates, and a thousand sighs from their hearts; for indeed, either as Alonzo Quixano, or as Don Quixote de la Mancha, as it has been observed, the sick gentleman had always shewed himself such a good-natured man, and of so agreeable a behaviour, that he was not only beloved by his family, but by every one that knew him.

The scrivener, with the rest of the company, then went into the chamber; and the preamble and former part of the will being drawn, and the testator having recommended his soul to Heaven, and bequeathed his body to the earth, according to custom, he came to the legacies, as follows:—

“Item, I give and bequeath to Sancho Panza, whom in my madness I made my squire, whatever money he has or may have of mine in his hands: And, whereas there are reckonings and accounts to be adjusted between us, for what he has received and disbursed, my will and pleasure is, that whatever may

remain due to me, which can be but small, be enjoyed by him as my free gift, without any let or molestation, and much good may it do him. And as, when I was mad, he was through my means made governor of an island, I would now, in my right senses, give him the government of a kingdom, were it in my power, in consideration of his integrity and faithfulness.—And now, my friend,” said he, turning to Sancho, “pardon me that I have brought upon thee, as well as myself, the scandal of madness, by drawing thee into my own errors, and persuading thee that there have been and still are knights-errant in the world.”—“Woe's me, my dear master's worship!” cried Sancho, all in tears, “do not die this bout, but even take my counsel, and live on a many years; it is the maddest trick a man can ever play in his whole life, to let his breath sneak out of his body without any more ado, and without so much as a rap over the pate, or a kick in the guts; to go out like the snuff of a farthing-candle, and die merely of the mulligrubs or the sullens. For shame, sir, do not give way to sluggishness, but get out of your doleful dumps, and rise. Is this a time to lie honing and groaning a-bed, when we should be in the fields in our

shepherd's clothing, as we had resolved? Ten to one but behind some bush, or under some hedge, we may find the Lady Madam Dulcinea, stript of her enchanted rags, and as fine as a queen. Mayhaps you take it to heart, that you were unhorsed, and a little crupper-scratched the other day; but if that be all, lay the blame upon me, and say it was my fault in not girding Rozinante tight enough. You know too, there is nothing more common in your errantry-books, than for the knights to be every foot jostled out of the saddle. There is nothing but ups and downs in this world; and he that is cast down to-day, may be a cock-a-hoop to-morrow."—"Even so," said Sampson, "honest Sancho has a right notion of the matter."—"Soft and fair, gentlemen," replied Don Quixote, "never look for birds of this year in the nests of the last: I was mad, but now I am in my right senses; I was once Don Quixote de la Mancha, but I am now (as I said before) the plain Alonzo Quixano; and I hope the sincerity of my words, and my repentance, may restore me to the same esteem you have had for me before; and so, Mr Scrivener, pray go on."

"Item, I constitute and appoint Antonia Quixano, my niece here present, sole heiress

of all my estate real and personal, after all my just debts and legacies, bequeathed by these presents, shall have been paid, satisfied, and deducted, out of the best of my goods and chattels; and the first of that kind to be discharged shall be the salary due to my house-keeper, together with twenty ducats over and above her wages; which said sum I leave and bequeath her to buy her mourning.

"Item, I appoint Mr Curate, and Mr Sampson Carrasco, the bachelor, here present, to be the executors of this my last will and testament.

"Item, it is my will, that if my niece Antonia Quixano be inclinable to marry, it be with none but a person, who, upon strict inquiry, shall be found never to have read a book of knight-errantry in his life; and in case it appears that he has been conversant in such books, and that she persists in her resolution to marry him, she is then to forfeit all right and title to my bequest, which, in such a case, my executors are hereby empowered to dispose of to pious uses, as they shall think most proper.

"Item, I entreat the said executors, that if at any time they happen to meet with the author of a book now extant, entitled, The

Second Part of the Achievements of Don Quixote de la Mancha, they would from me most heartily beg his pardon, for my being undesignedly the occasion of his writing such a parcel of impertinences as is contained in that book; for it is the greatest burthen to my departing soul, that ever I was the cause of his making such a thing public."

Having finished the will, he fell into a swooning fit, and extended his body to the full length in the bed. All the company were troubled and alarmed, and ran to his assistance: However he came to himself at last: But relapsed into the like fits almost every hour, for the space of three days that he lived after he had made his will.

The whole family was in grief and confusion; and yet, after all, the niece continued to eat, the housekeeper drank, and washed down sorrow; and Sancho Panza made much of himself: For there is a strange charm in the thoughts of a good legacy, or the hopes of an estate, which wondrously removes, or at least alleviates, the sorrow that men would otherwise feel for the death of friends.

In short, Don Quixote's last day came, after he had made those preparations for death which good Christians ought to do; and by

many fresh and weighty arguments, shewed his abhorrence of books of knight-errantry. The scrivener, who was by, protested he had never read in any books of that kind of any knight-errant who ever died in his bed so quietly, and like a good Christian, as Don Quixote did. In short, amidst the tears and lamentations of his friends, he gave up the ghost, or, to speak more plainly, died; which, when the curate perceived, he desired the scrivener to give him a certificate, how Alonzo Quixano, commonly called *the Good*, and sometimes known by the name of Don Quixote de la Mancha, was departed out of this life into another, and died a natural death. This he desired, lest any other author but Cid Hamet Benengeli should take occasion to raise him from the dead, and presume to write endless histories of his pretended adventures.

Thus died that ingenious gentleman Don Quixote de la Mancha, whose native place Cid Hamet has not thought fit directly to mention, with design that all the towns and villages in La Mancha should contend for the honour of giving him birth, as the seven cities of Greece did for Homer. We shall omit Sancho's lamentations, and those of the niece and the housekeeper, as also several epitaphs that were

made for his tomb, and will only give you this, which the bachelor Carrasco caused to be put over it.

DON QUIXOTE'S EPITAPH.

The body of a knight lies here,
So brave, that, to his latest breath,
Immortal glory was his care,
And made him triumph over death.

His looks spread terror every hour;
He strove oppression to control;
Nor could all hell's united power
Subdue or daunt his mighty soul.

Nor has his death the world deceived
Less than his wondrous life surprised;
For if he like a madman lived,
At least he like a wise one died.

Here the sagacious Cid Hamet, addressing himself to his pen, "O thou, my slender pen!" says he, "thou of whose nib, whether well or ill cut, I dare not speak my thoughts! Suspended by this brass wire, remain upon this spit-rack where I lodge thee! There mayest thou claim a being many ages, unless presumptuous and wicked historians take thee down to profane thee! But, ere they lay their heavy hands upon thee, bid them beware, and, as well as thou canst, in their own style, tell them,

Avaunt, ye scoundrels, all and some! *
I'm kept for no such thing: .

* *Tate, tate, sollonzicos, &c.*, words borrowed from an old romance, says Don Gregorio, in the author's Life.

Defile me not; but hang yourselves;
And so, God save the king.

"For me alone was the great Quixote born, and I alone for him. Deeds were his task, and to record them mine. We two, like tallies for each other struck, are nothing when apart. In vain the spurious scribe of Tordesillas dared, with his blunt and bungling ostrich-quill, invade the deeds of my most valorous knight; his shoulders are unequal to the attempt; the task is superior to his frozen genius.

"And thou, reader, if ever thou canst find him out in his obscurity, I beseech thee advise him likewise to let the wearied bones of Don Quixote rest quiet in the earth that covers them. Let him not expose them in Old Castile, against the sanctions of death, impiously raking him out of the vault where he really lies stretched out beyond a possibility of taking a third ramble through the world. The two sallies that he has made already (which are the subject of these volumes, and have met with such universal applause in this and other kingdoms), are sufficient to ridicule the pretended adventures of knights-errant. Thus advising him for the best, thou shalt discharge the duty of a Christian, and do good to him that wishes thee evil. As for me, I must esteem myself

happy to have been the first that rendered those fabulous nonsensical stories of knight-errantry the object of the public aversion. They are already going down, and I do not doubt but they will drop and fall all together in good earnest, never to rise again. *Adieu.*"

NOTES ON DON QUIXOTE

NOTES TO VOLUME THIRD

Note 1 to Preface, Part ii., Page 1.

The first part of Don Quixote appeared in the year 1605; the sequel of the story (to which we are now come) was not published till 1615, the year before the death of Cervantes. In the year 1614, while Cervantes was preparing his second part for the press, there appeared at Tarragona a continuation of the Don's adventures, from the pen of a slavish imitator and base plagiarist, who assumed the name of Alonzo Fernandes de Avellenada, and designated himself a native of Tordesillas. There can be little doubt that this man had procured access to the MS. of Cervantes, or at least, that he had conversed with some one who had perused it; for the only parts of his book in which he does not betray very gross imitation of the first part, are those in which he introduces adventures that actually do appear in the second part of Cervantes' own work. The whole scheme of Sancho's government, and the character of Don Alvaro de Tarfo—who administers food and encouragement to all the madness of Don Quixote, exactly as the Duke does in Cervantes' second part—are of themselves instances of a coincidence that could by no means have been fortuitous. It appears that this work did not reach the hands of Cervantes till he had composed, if not printed, a considerable part of his sequel, for the allusions to Avellenada commence of a sudden, and are thenceforward continually repeated. The work of the imitator is every way inferior to that of Cervantes, yet it is by no means destitute of merit. But the vulgarity and obscenity, which Cervantes himself reprehends in the text, are altogether offensive; and few, I should imagine, can feel any great curiosity to peruse the composition of a man who was capable of attempting to turn into ridicule a great genius and a gallant soldier, by telling him that his hairs were grey, and that he had lost a limb at the battle of Lepanto.