

the spicy fragrance of my chocolate, warned me of the morning, and roused me from my cot: and in less than half an hour I was mounted, on my way; past the gates, across the foresaid Roman bridge; and my mule's head turned in the direction of the mountains.

But the words "past the gates" put me in mind of an occurrence worth relating: if enthusiasm for the work of Cervantes had not been the motive of my passing the gates, I should not have been permitted to pass them at all. This may seem an enigma; but its explanation is to be found in the pride which every Spaniard feels in Cervantes and his immortal work. I had no passport to go beyond Toledo, having intended to return to Madrid; and when I applied to the dispenser of passports for permission to cross the mountains to *La Mancha*, my request was met by a direct refusal. "But," said I, "my only object is to visit a country hallowed by the genius of Cervantes; I am going to travel in the footsteps of Don Quixote." Instantly the man's face relaxed; he could not resist the compliment paid to his

country. "See," said he, turning to his companion with a triumphant look, "how these English venerate our Cervantes!" and my passport was instantly made out, and delivered to me with the air of a man who receives rather than confers a favour.

---

## CHAPTER II.

WHEREIN THE AUTHOR SETS OUT ON HIS JOURNEY, AND THE  
MULETEER TELLS HIS STORY.

---

A more beautiful morning never dawned upon the hill-tops, than that which broke upon the Toledo mountains, when, as the early convent bells were chiming, I passed the bridge, turned up the bank of the "golden Tagus," and then striking sharp to the left, followed the mule track. The sun had newly risen into a cloudless sky; and looking back from the winding mountain-path upon the city, it seemed like a range of palaces floating in the air; for a sea of light vapour hung over the plain of the Tagus, and encircled the hill upon which Toledo stands; while the towers of its cathedral, and the massive wall of its Alcazar, and the numberless spires and minarets of its convents

and churches, lifted themselves above the mists, bathed in the golden light of morning.

I do not recollect to have ever set out on a journey, with half the buoyancy of spirit I felt that morning, no not even when at the first dawn of manhood, I trod the mountain solitudes of Norway, or the charmed precincts of Ardennes. Even if Don Quixote had never existed—for does he not exist in the imaginations of all men, as vividly, and with as much of a real existence, as the heroes of antiquity or the madmen of the Crusades, who all, to us, exist like him, in the imagination—even I say, if Don Quixote had no such existence, the scene might well have excused enthusiasm. The brightness of an early summer's morning, invests any scene with numberless charms: the Toledo mountains have not many features either of the grand, or the picturesque; but there is a wild and savage loneliness about them, more impressive perhaps, than either the beautiful or the picturesque; and the bright morning sun, filling with light, the deep hollows, and distant clefts, but revealing no living form, and no human habitation,

gave additional energy to the imagination of the solitary traveller through these remote and unvisited regions.

While slowly ascending the mountain, I had leisure, for the first time, to think of making acquaintance with my guide, and was ready with a couple of segars to secure his good will; but he chanced to be at that moment busily employed, like a good Catholic, in heaping stones upon a cross—a record of murder, that stood by the way side; I can hardly say *stood*, because it was laid prostrate by the weight of the stones that were heaped upon it. Nowhere in Spain, that I recollect, are these crosses so frequent, as among the Toledo mountains; and if one is to be murdered at all, it is fortunate to be murdered in the neighbourhood of so devout a city as Toledo; for if every prayer that accompanies a stone laid upon the cross wipes off a year of punishment, as every good Catholic believes, he must indeed be a very wicked man who is not speedily prayed out of purgatory. When my guide had finished his act of devotion, I entered into conversation

with him. He was a slight young man, of three or four and twenty; and it was evident by his dress, by the profusion of silk cord and gilt buttons that covered his jacket and waistcoat, and by the open gaiters and white stockings, and crimson sash, that he was no native of Toledo, but an Andalusian.

“Si Señor,” said he, in answer to my question, “I am an Andalusian.”

“And how,” I continued, “can you live elsewhere than in your own delightful country, with its delicious fruits and wines?”

“There are reasons for most things,” said he, expressing this in the words of a Spanish proverb which I have forgotten.

I was curious to know the reasons of the muleteer, and so dismounting from my mule, and giving him a poke with my stick which sent him trotting on, I walked up the mountain path with my guide: two segars had already opened his heart, and two more completed the conquest; and as we walked leisurely forward, he gave the following account of himself.

“I am a native of Malaga; my father was drowned in the bay, while smuggling some tobacco on shore, and at seventeen I was left heir to his brown cloak, and his *Guadix* knife, the only two things he had left at home. It is an easy matter to live in Malaga; a fine melon costs no more than a quarto, and four quartos will purchase as much wine as serves to wash down a dinner of melon; and as for oil, it may be had for the asking.

Things went on well with me for five years, and then all went wrong. Upon the day of the Feast of the Virgin of Rosalio I went with the only two quartos I had, and purchased a candle to carry in the procession. This I thought was only laying out my money to interest; for I had speculated this way before, and had always been presented with a few *reals* by the friars, for increasing the respectability of their procession. As the procession was crossing the *Plaza Real*, a small puff of wind blew out my candle, and I held it to that of my next neighbour to light it again. This fellow happened to be a scoundrel who had served

me a bad trick before, and whenever I lighted my candle, he slyly blew it out; till at last, one of the friars, thinking I was playing off a jest, told me I was a good-for-nothing fellow, to get about my business, and not disgrace the procession of the Virgin of Rosalio—and all the while, the rogue who blew out the candle laughed in my face: but I put an end to his laughing; I gave him my knife.”

“How,” said I, interrupting the muleteer, “did giving him your knife put an end to his laughing?”

“I see,” continued the muleteer, “you do not understand the *Andaluz* manner of talking; I stuck my knife into him.”

“What! murdered him for blowing out your candle?” said I.

“Oh no, I gave him my knife for making a jest of me. It was a long Guadix blade, but I did not remain to see what happened; for I had no money to bribe the *Escrivano*, and if the rogue died, I must have been hanged: whether he died or not, is more than I can tell; but to make all sure, I

have since paid for twelve masses for his soul, with some money of which I eased a merchant of Alicante ; and so got good absolution for whatever might have happened. The friars were too busy with the procession, and the crowd was too much occupied in looking at it, to notice an accident of this kind ; so I got away unperceived, and concealed myself two days in the ruins of the castle, till all was forgotten, and then I left Malaga, and begged my way to Madrid. There I gained a few *reals* by sprinkling every one that entered the church of *San Isidro* with holy water ; but in my zeal, I was so lavish of it, that the door-keepers thrust me out, and spoiled my trade ; so leaving that profession, I doubled my fortune by sitting near the *Prado*, with a bit of lighted rope for the use of the *Caballeros*, who wished to light their segars.

“ I had now amassed as many *reals* as bought me a basket and a couple of glasses, and I set up as a crier of *agua fresca*. This is a good trade ; the water costs nothing, and I got so many quartos that I never wanted for bread or grapes, or wine ;

and on feast days, I sometimes treated myself with a *puchero* : but this was too good to continue.

“One day, after I had filled my cask, I lay down under the shade of the wall that surrounds the fountain in the *Puerto del Sol*, and fell asleep, for it was the time of *siesta*. A great many others lay about the fountain also, and the one who was stretched next to me, I knew well had a grudge against me, because I wore a crimson sash and an embroidered jacket ; and suspecting he meditated some mischief, I was almost as much awake as asleep. He was a sly rogue, a Biscayan ; but he did not know he had to do with an *Andaluz*. I caught him making a hole in my cask to let the water out ; and, *picaro* ! I was not long in giving him my knife. The *Escrivanos* in Madrid are not so easily bribed as in Malaga ; and although I was not without money, I took advantage of the *siesta* to get out of Madrid without any one seeing me, which was no difficult matter, as everybody was asleep ; and, before night, I reached Toledo. This mule I picked up by accident. Weeding some pepper, a few months ago in a garden close

by the Tagus, I saw the mule swimming in the water, which was much swollen by the rains: this seemed a good opportunity to mend my fortune, and so by the aid of the Blessed Virgin I helped him out of the river, and I have made my bread by him ever since."

---

## CHAPTER III.

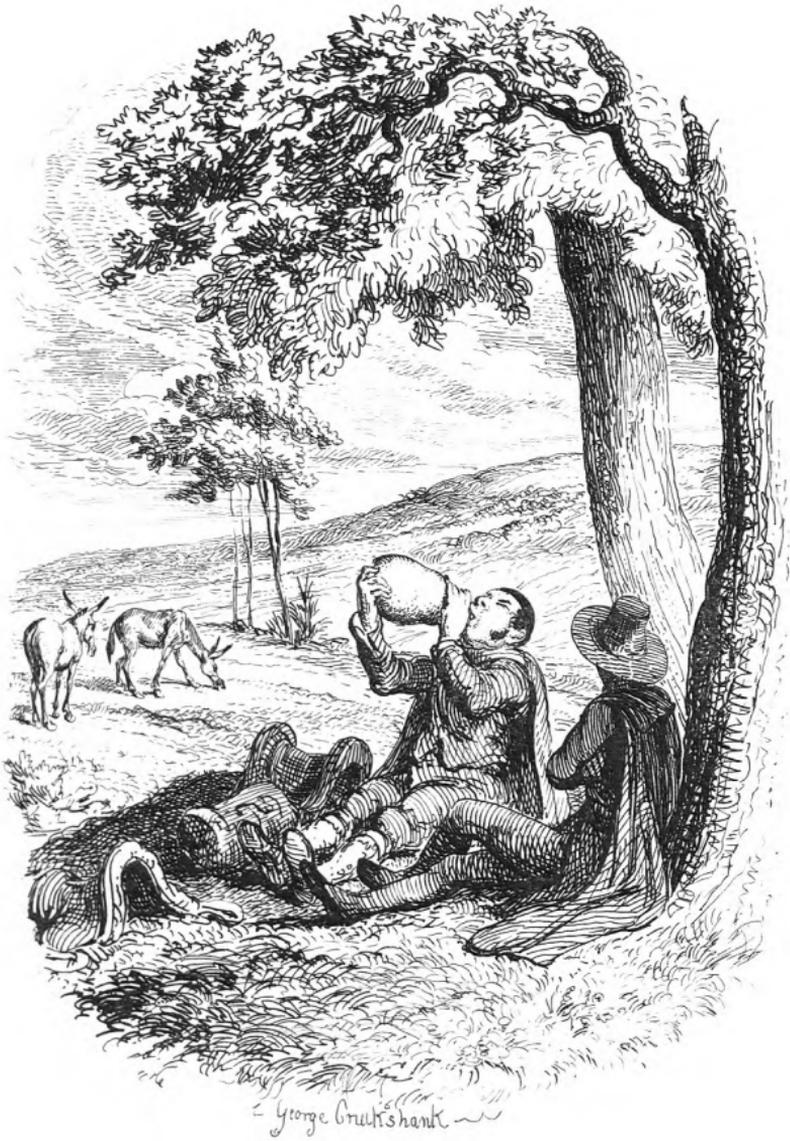
WHICH BRINGS THE AUTHOR, AND THE READER—(IF HE RELISH THE JOURNEY)—TO THE CONFINES OF LA MANCHA.

---

By the time the muleteer had finished his story, which afforded a true picture of life among the lower classes, and strikingly exemplified the irritability of the Andalusian character, we had reached the highest part of the road, and now began to descend into the heart of the mountains.

None of the mountains of Spain are wilder than these; not even the sierras of Granada, nor is there any mountain-path so little travelled. In former times this was different. When Toledo was a great and flourishing city, there was much intercourse with the south; and it will be seen in Don Quixote, that several of the adventures arose out of this traffic—among others, that with the six





*The Peasant & his Gourd*

merchants of Toledo who were going to Murcia to buy silks.

It was a desolate scene that lay in the heart of the mountains. A few aged trees—ilex, and round-headed pine, hung upon the defiles; but the wider valleys, and broad acclivities were treeless, being covered only with furze, and the esparto-rush, mingled with many charming varieties of heath, and with numberless aromatic plants, filling the air with a wild and strange fragrance. Among these I noticed rosemary in flower, sweet marjoram, lavender, thyme, and various shrubs unknown to me both in name and perfume. From eleven o'clock until three, when the heat was excessive, we rested in the dry bed of a mountain torrent, shaded from the sun by the gnarled branches of a single cork tree; and here our wallet became considerably lighter, and our wine-skin lost something of its rotundity.

The glare of broad day had withdrawn from the valleys, and a soberer light had descended on the mountain tops, when we reached the *Venta de la Garganta*, a solitary house standing in a cradle

of the *Sierra* of the same name. This *Venta* was probably the same a hundred years ago as it is now: it is equally primitive in its construction, and in the appearance and manners of its inmates. I found the old man and the old woman, the present master and mistress of the venta, their son and his wife, its future owners, and five children of various ages, all sitting doing nothing, upon a circular stone bench that surrounded the place on the ground where the faint embers of a rush fire were collected. The old man resigned his place to me, retiring to a sort of mattress which was spread upon a stone bench farther back, then occupied by two large lank dogs; and after I had won the heart of both the old and young man by a present of some tobacco, and quite conciliated the young woman, by giving a silver *real* to a ragged urchin about four years old, I thought it was time to broach the subject of supper: but the *Venta de la Garganta* was not accustomed to entertain travellers who were so improvident as to eat up the contents of their wallets before arriving; and I was forced to be content with a *gazpacho*,

the materials of which are every where to be found, and with a draught from my wine skin. A mattress on the floor, already somewhat numerously tenanted, and without any sheets, was spread for my repose, the only interruption to which was occasioned by one of the two large dogs having selected the lower part of my mattress for his bed; and so ominous were his growls when I attempted to shake him off, that I was forced to put up with his company till his own inclination rid me of it.

I will not detail my journey from this venta to La Mancha. Next morning we were off before sunrise, but not before we had done honour to the well spiced chocolate prepared for us; for however miserable the accommodations of a Spanish venta may be, and however meagre its larder, excellent chocolate is always to be had,—and leaving the straight road which leads to *Cuidad Real*, we struck to the left, and towards noon, reaching a small elevation above the river *Giguela*, the muleteer stopped, and pointing to the wide plain that stretched to the east and south, “There,” said he “is *La Mancha*.”

## CHAPTER IV.

WHICH, IF THE READER PLEASE TO PERUSE, WILL INFORM HIM IN WHAT CORNER OF LA MANCHA LIVED THE KNIGHT, AND HIS STEED ROZINANTE: AND WHEREIN ALSO, HE WILL BE INTRODUCED TO THE REPRESENTATIVE — PERHAPS THE DESCENDANT, OF BARBER NICHOLAS.

---

HE who may hereafter visit *La Mancha*, with the intention of travelling in the footsteps of Don Quixote, may probably say with me, it is a thousand pities that Cervantes has not told us the name of the village in “a certain corner of *La Mancha*,” where “there lately lived one of those country gentlemen who adorn their halls with a rusty lance and a worm-eaten target, and ride forth on the skeleton of a horse to course with a starved greyhound.” Cervantes has not however left us altogether in the dark, as to the corner of *La Mancha* in which this gentleman lived. *El Toboso*, the village of his Dulcinea, lay in its

neighbourhood; and in the course of one day's ride from his own house, the knight met the merchants on the road from Toledo to Murcia, and the Biscayan and the Lady on the road to Seville; and the same day that he quitted home, he encountered the windmills in the neighbourhood of *Puerto Lapiche*. The locality of Don Quixote's village is therefore sufficiently pointed out; and the villages in this part of *La Mancha* are not so thickly sown, but that, with these helps, we may even hit upon the precise spot that Cervantes had in his eye, when he tells us that "one morning before sunrise, unseen by anybody, in the scorching month of July, he buckled on his armour, mounted Rozinante, braced his target, seized his lance, and through the back door of his yard sallied into the field." This village could be no other than *Miguel Estevan*, situated a league and a half, or two leagues from *El Toboso*; within a day's ride of *Puerto Lapiche*; and half a day's journey from the road between Toledo and Seville.

The muleteer who had accompanied me from

Toledo, knew little of La Mancha, and less of the route of Don Quixote: not that any Spaniard is entirely ignorant of Cervantes, and his work; but he was not qualified to lead me in the knight's footsteps; and having, soon after mid-day reached the outposts of the Sierra, from one of the last of which my guide shewed me at a distance the church of *Miguel Estevan*, and the only road that led to it, I counted into his hand the number of *duros* agreed on; and he, having made them fast in his girdle, turned his mule's head in the direction of Toledo,—driving the other before him,—and with the usual salutation, pricked his beast forward, leaving me to pursue my way to *Miguel Estevan*.

It was towards the close of the day when, emerging from a small olive plantation which lay rather in a hollow, I saw within a quarter of a league, the little village of *Miguel Estevan*; and in another quarter of an hour, I entered the straggling street that composes the greater part of it. Here thought I, as I looked on every side, and saw hanging over a door the likeness of

Mambrino's helmet, here perhaps lived the barber; and there, within a few doors of him, might dwell the licentiate; and perceiving, a little apart from the other houses, one that might have suited a country gentleman, his housekeeper, and his niece, that house, I resolved in my own mind, must have been the habitation of no other than the *hidalgo* himself! So like reality indeed are the pictures presented to us by Cervantes, that we scarcely regard them in the light of fiction, even when we contemplate them at our fire-sides at home; and when actually travelling in the country of Don Quixote, and surrounded by such portraits of Spanish life and manners, and scenery, as are interwoven in the relation of his exploits, we cannot help giving a real existence to persons, and places, and adventures, instead of being contented with the belief that the fancy only of Cervantes selected real spots, as the scenes of his fiction: and this belief in the reality of the adventures of Don Quixote, is partaken also by the inhabitants of La Mancha, as will presently appear.

There was no Posada in the village; and as

night was approaching, it seemed probable that I might be obliged not only to follow in the footsteps of Don Quixote, but to imitate his example, by spending the night "under a tuft of trees;" and this, without the advantage possessed by him, who could sweetly employ the solemn hours "in musing upon his Dulcinea." But happening to cast my eye towards the bright barber's basin which I had already passed, and having a high opinion of the courtesy of barbers in all nations, I resolved to enter his shop, in the persuasion that he might assist me in my difficulty; and besides, like the courtier, who is said by Sterne to have been unable to distinguish between Yorick, the king of Denmark's jester, and Yorick who lived a century later, I confess I could not divest myself of the idea that this barber was in reality Master Nicholas, or if not absolutely that renowned personage, that he was at all events his direct descendant, and the inheritor of his shrewdness and oddities.

Business seemed to be slack with the barber this afternoon. Clothed in a pair of tight black

leather breeches, a long and ample brown cloak, and a small black cap fitting close to the head, he sat on the stone step of his door, looking up the street, and down the street, if perchance an unshaven peasant might approach; and as he saw me make directly towards the spot where he exercised his vocation, he retreated within the doorway; and when I reached it, the chair was set, the tin basin in one hand, ready to fit into the neck of the customer, and in the other, that weapon which a Spanish barber knows better than the barber of any other country, how to wield.

---

## CHAPTER V.

WHEREIN THE AUTHOR—AND THROUGH HIM, THE READER—  
RECEIVE SOME INFORMATION NOT UNWORTHY OF BEING  
KNOWN, AND AT THE CONCLUSION OF WHICH, THE AUTHOR  
IS LEFT ASLEEP IN THE REPUTED HOUSE OF DON QUIXOTE,  
TO THE ENVY, NO DOUBT, OF THE READER.

---

“Good evening, Master Nicholas,” said I, entering, and seating myself; “and how are your neighbours, the curate and the bachelor Sampson Curasco, and have you heard any tidings lately of the *hidalgo*, who is surnamed *Don Quixote*?” The cunning eye, and expressive smile of the barber, shewed at once that he understood me.

“And so,” said he, “you, who are a foreigner, have found out the village of Don Quixote, when travellers from our own towns and provinces go to Quintana, and Quero, and El Probencio, and Pedernoso, and every village of *La Mancha*, but the right one!”

“And this then,” said I, “is really the village from which the Knight of *La Mancha* set out in search of adventures?”

“Certes it is,” replied the barber, “what other village should it be than Miguel Estevan? Quintana it could not be, because there is not, and there never has been any barber’s shop in Quintana: as little could it be Quero, where there is not a house good enough for an hidalgo, scarcely even for a curate or a licentiate: El Probencio it could not be, because El Probencio is not in La Mancha; and neither could it be Pedernoso, because if the knight had gone from Pedernoso to the place where he encountered the windmills, he must have passed El Toboso, the village of Dulcinea, which would surely not have been omitted in the history of his sally.”

I perceived that the barber was a shrewd fellow, a true enthusiast in the work of Cervantes; and desirous of trying to what length the confusion between truth and fiction would carry him, I said, “But you speak of the house of the hidalgo as if he had really existed, and of the barber’s shop, as

if the barber had in reality consulted with the curate about burning the knight's books, whereas you know"—

“Oh I know very well,” interrupted the barber, evidently disconcerted; “but we always speak so here, and if you will step out with me to the corner of the street, I'll shew the identical house.” A curious morsel this, for the metaphysicians—an admirable illustration of the effect which thought, constantly directed in a wrong channel, may have in warping the judgment; and while I submitted to the operation of shaving, I reflected upon the extraordinary genius of Cervantes, in having drawn fictitious scenes with so much truth, as not only to beguile the reader into a temporary belief in their reality, but even to disturb one's settled convictions of truth and fiction.

Let none but bold men trust themselves into the hands of a Spanish barber; his short reign is truly a “reign of terror;” the extraordinary celerity of his motions, and the inconceivable sharpness of his instrument, suggest every instant the idea of “hair-breadth 'scapes,” and one glances furtively

into the tin basin, almost in expectation of seeing something like the tip of a nose in it.

It was now nearly dark, and I was still unprovided with a night's lodging; but as I expected, the barber set me at ease on this head. He clapped the little black cap upon his head, which had been uncovered in honour of so illustrious a customer as myself; and bidding me follow him, led the way down the street, and stopped at the door of a house which seemed rather taller and duskier than its neighbours. "This," said he, lifting his cap for a moment from his head, in reverence no doubt of the genius of Cervantes; "this is the house, the identical house I spoke of; 't is the only house in the village fit for an hidalgo, and here lives the widow of the late *Alcalde*, who will no doubt treat you well,"—and so saying, the barber pushed open the widow's door, and ushered me into a small room evidently the sanctum sanctorum of a devout Catholic, for in one corner, upon a small marble slab, stood an image of the Virgin in a glass case, and a small lamp burning before it. The widow, a portly dame clothed in

black, and without veil or mantilla, soon entered, with the usual light step, and graceful gait of the Spanish women; and being informed by the barber that I was a stranger, visiting this village because it was the village of Don Quixote, the widow of the Alcalde received me graciously, with many furlings and unfurlings of her fan, and assured me that her house was entirely at my disposal. In short, I was domesticated in a moment; my respect for her village opened her heart; a veneration for the house she lived in, won her altogether; a stew of mutton, moderately seasoned with garlic, sausages that would have shamed Epping, the unfailing *gazpacho*, and an abundant measure of *val de peñas*, formed the *refresco*; a conversation, pleasantly sprinkled with the gallantry without which all conversation is vapid in the ear of a Spanish woman, whiled away an hour; and the offer of the Alcalde's widow to give up her own chamber to a stranger of so much distinction, almost led me to think that I had carried my gallantry too far.

I am now in bed, in the reputed house of *Don*

*Quixote de la Mancha* ; and in the chamber once occupied by the hidalgo, or perhaps by his house-keeper, or his niece : and to-morrow, through “ the back door of his yard,” I shall sally into the fields, when “ rosy winged Aurora, stealing from her husband’s jealous couch, through the balconies and aerial gates of La Mancha, shall stand confessed to wondering mortals.”

---

## CHAPTER VI.

WHICH SEES THE AUTHOR FAIRLY IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF DON QUIXOTE; AND IN WHICH ALSO THE CHARACTERS OF THE KNIGHT AND HIS SQUIRE, ARE THE SUBJECT OF INSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE AUTHOR AND HIS COMPANION.

---

IT is well known to the readers of Don Quixote,—and who then is there to whom it is not known?—that the valiant Knight of La Mancha made two sallies from his own village; in the first of which he was knighted, in the inn which he mistook for a castle: and that, by the advice of the innkeeper, he returned to his village, that he might furnish himself with a purse, and a change of linen; but especially, that he might provide himself with a squire, as was befitting every true knight-errant. Now, although I profess to ramble in the footsteps of Don Quixote, I trust it will not be expected

that I should twice journey from the village of *Miguel Esteban*; and as the Knight of La Mancha chose the daylight for one of his rambles, and the night for the other, I must claim the privilege of selection, and avoid darkness, which could scarcely enable me to fulfil my promise of following in his footsteps.

I bade the reader good-night in the reputed house of Don Quixote; and so fatiguing had been my day's journey, that no dream of knight errantry disturbed my slumbers. I broke a lance with no one; but was awakened from my first sleep about daybreak, by the entrance of my friend the barber.

“I was thinking,” said he, “that your mercy\* cannot do without a squire.”

“Not without a squire?” said I, “How? I am not going in quest of adventures.”

“No,” returned the barber, “but how can you follow in the track of Don Quixote, unless some one shew you the way? and besides, how can a caballero of your consideration, carry a wallet and

\* This is the phraseology in Spain; *vuestra merced* (your mercy) in place of you.

a wine-skin; for if your mercy be truly in earnest about following in the footsteps of Don Quixote, or rather, in the footsteps of Rozinante, I reckon you'll find stew-pans and pucheros somewhat scarce."

The barber was in the right; a guide could not be dispensed with, and I inquired of him whether he knew any one fitted for the office?

"Such people are scarce," said he; "I know of only one, and he could walk through La Mancha blindfolded: and as for the track of the knight, he can follow it with as much certainty as if, like Sancho's road out of the Brown Mountain, the knight himself had strewn it with furze."

This was just the man I wanted: I returned the barber *muchas gracias*, and told him to send this invaluable guide to me forthwith, as I should set out in less than half an hour.

"He's not far off," said the barber, with a look which convinced me this guide was no other than himself; "trade is not brisk, and, perhaps—"

"I am afraid," said I, "I cannot promise thee so magnificent a reward for thy services as the

government of an island." But my limited patronage proved no obstacle with the barber; and the matter of remuneration was speedily arranged: he would accept of nothing more than board for himself and his mule; and in less than half an hour, we were jogging out of the village, just as "ruddy Phoebus, o'er this wide and spacious earth, displayed the golden threads of his refulgent hair."

The barber carried a wallet, well stored with provisions; and a wine-skin of most agreeable rotundity, produced by several quartillos of good *val de peñas*; and we jogged on among the scattered olives, and through the saffron fields, though without the chorus mentioned by the knight, "from the little painted warblers with their forked tongues." Such a chorus is indeed nowhere to be found in *La Mancha*, which is nearly destitute of trees. But this embellishment being contained in a rhapsody of the knight, must not be charged against the veracity of Cervantes, who, in all that he relates as having happened to his hero, adheres most strictly to nature, such as we find her to be at this day in the district of *La Mancha*.

Sometimes the path was only wide enough for one mule; sometimes it was broader; and then we rode side by side, and conversed by the way.

“After all,” said the barber, “Sancho Panza was worthy of the government his master promised him; there never lived in La Mancha an honest man than Sancho.”

“Except the knight of La Mancha,” said I.

“Not honest,” replied the barber: “honour for the knight and honesty for the squire; each had the honesty that befitted his station.”

“True,” said I, “and I believe Sancho would have scorned a dishonest action as much as his master; though friend, it must needs be admitted, that the finding of Cardenio’s portmanteau in the Brown Mountain, sorely tempted, if it did not actually vanquish the honesty of Sancho, who is said to have ‘rummaged the portmanteau without leaving a corner, in that, or the pillion, which he did not search, pry into, and overhaul;’ and who stoutly combated the proposal of his master, to search for the owner, lest he should be forced to make restitution of the hundred crowns.”

“And yet,” replied the barber, “it is no more than justice to Sancho, to take into account, that he looked upon himself to be as truly the squire of his master, as were ever the squires of Amadis de Gaul or Palmerin; and that he considered all that was beneath the notice of the knight, to be the just perquisite of the squire, who was as much entitled to take the purse of a vanquished enemy, as his master was entitled to take his life.”

“There is good reason in what thou say’st,” returned I; “Sancho on his dapple following the Hidalgo, was a different man from Sancho in his native village: and after consenting to desert his wife and children, on the promise of the knight to give him the government of an island, there is little to wonder at that he should have looked upon the purse as justly his, when his master bade him ‘keep the money for his own use.’”

---

## CHAPTER VII.

IN WHICH THE AUTHOR MAKES SMALL PROGRESS IN HIS JOURNEY; BUT WHEREIN HE ENDEAVOURS TO MAKE AMENDS IN OTHER WAYS, AND PREVAILS ON THE BARBER TO TELL HIS STORY.

---

HERE the path became so narrow that my companion was obliged to fall behind, and I was left awhile to my own reflections, which continued to flow in the same channel.

To endeavour to assign a motive for the production of any work, is idle; for my own part, I believe that the often repeated motive, that of throwing ridicule upon books of knight errantry, was a very secondary consideration with Cervantes; and that he, like most other men of genius, wrote because genius overflowed, and sought a channel which might conduct it to immortality. It is a more interesting question to

ask, what is the aim and moral of the work? It is "all things to all men." The gentleman, the Christian, the master, the servant, may each learn something from its pages; for the Knight of La Mancha was a more perfect gentleman, a better practical Christian, a more excellent master, ay, and a wiser man too, than probably any one of those who study his life and conversation. Cervantes evidently intended to personify the intellectual and the animal parts of our nature, in the contrast between the knight and the squire. High-mindedness, loftiness of purpose, unbounded generosity, total disinterestedness, undaunted courage, humility, Christian resignation—these are the fine attributes of intellectual perfection; while in the character of the squire, we find all that is sensual, worldly, common, and vulgar, united with only that rough good sense, blunt honesty, good nature, and kind affections, which are compatible with an uninformed mind, and a low station.

I was interrupted in my cogitations by my companion pushing his mule briskly forward, and telling me it was already mid-day, and therefore

time to apply to our wallets and wine-skins, a proposition to which I not unwillingly assented; and allowing our mules to pick up a scanty breakfast, we seated ourselves under the imperfect shade of a few stunted olives, and opened the wallet.

The olive is almost the only tree found in La Mancha, and La Mancha is undoubtedly one of the ugliest countries under the sun; let nobody be deceived by the words of the song, "O remember the time in La Mancha's shades," for there are no shades in La Mancha.

The character of La Mancha may be thus briefly given: wide, uninclosed, and sometimes swelling plains; covered with scanty crops of grain, interspersed with saffron fields. Often the eye ranges over extensive reaches of sand, bearing no crop. Olive trees, sometimes planted in line, sometimes scattered, form the only shade from the scorching sun, that before the summer has far advanced, drinks up the scanty waters of every rivulet, and turns the herbage from green to brown. The river Guadiana, indeed, traverses La Mancha, and always flows a respectable river; but