

as well all the purposes of devotion. At Miguel Esteban I had learned that there was an opening in my trade, and being well assured that this was the native village of the Knight of La Mancha, and having strong suspicions that I was myself the descendant of Barber Nicholas, I felt that Providence had designed me to take the place of my forefathers, and to Miguel Esteban I accordingly returned. The worthy friar who was my companion, feeling some qualms of conscience, entered another convent. The money that still remained of the sum I had received for the cross, purchased some fields, which obtain me respect in the neighbourhood; and upon the produce of these, and of my calling, I have lived happily these fifteen years; and now you have the history of my doings in the world."

When the barber had made an end of his story, and when some comments had passed upon it, which need not be repeated here, it was fast approaching midnight; and as our intention was to penetrate next day into the heart of the Sierra, and to be stirring early, we each retired to rest.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

WHERE, IN FOLLOWING THE FOOTSTEPS OF DON QUIXOTE, THE AUTHOR CONDUCTS THE READER INTO THE HEART OF THE SIERRA, WHERE CARDENIO TOLD HIS STORY, AND WHERE DON QUIXOTE DID PENANCE.

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“ ‘THE appearance of Aurora already rejoices the earth,’ said the barber, in words of his favourite author, when next morning he pushed open the door of my quarto, and found me asleep; and not long after, we were seated upon our mules, and trotting up the bank that rises from the back of the venta, furnished with a wallet of unusual size, and with a corpulent wine-skin, both forced upon us by the generosity of Juanes, who would accept of no remuneration. There was no path; we rode side by side up the acclivity, among the rosemary

bushes and other aromatic plants and shrubs, and soon entered a defile, that shut out the plains behind, and appeared to lead into the bowels of the mountain. "It is said, in the history of the Knight's adventures," said the barber, "that the evening of the same day upon which the adventure with the galley-slaves took place, Don Quixote and Sancho 'arrived in the very heart of the Sierra,' and that 'they took up their lodging between two rocks, in the midst of a great number of cork trees.' Now, in the heart of the Sierra, there are no cork trees, though there are plenty of rocks; and here, at the end of this defile are both rocks and cork trees; and besides, as it was impossible to travel into the heart of the Sierra in a few hours, there appears to be a small inaccuracy here: but there can be no doubt that the spot we are now approaching is that where the Knight and his Squire reposed, and where Sancho had his ass stolen; see, 'there are two rocks, and all the trees around them are cork trees.'"

"'T was a touching lament," said I, "that which Sancho made, over the loss of his ass.

‘Born in my house, the play-fellow of my children, the delight of my spouse, the envy of my neighbours, and comfort of my cares!’”

“Ay!” said the barber, “there’s an honest heart there. But come on, the footing is difficult, and we’ve a toilsome journey before us.” The barber spoke truly; nothing but a mule could have picked its steps; we went round the rocks, and in and out among the cork trees; and after having continued this exercise for a couple of hours, we descended into a narrow valley, traversed by a small rivulet. Here the barber, who led the way, stopped until I rode up to him, and said, “there are so few streams on this side of the Sierra Morena (for they almost all flow down the southern side of the mountain), that we may conclude this to be the hollow, and the brook that which watered it, in which the adventurers found ‘a dead mule saddled and bridled, and half consumed by the dogs and the crows;’ and where they heard the old goatherd’s whistle; and where Cardenio came and told a part of his story.”

In this wild spot we paused a little, while the

whole scene so graphically described by Cervantes passed before me. Nor was it a difficult task for the imagination to add to the natural features of the spot, the other parts of the picture described by Cervantes; 't was in me but a slight exertion of memory; for it chanced that shortly before, in the Toledo mountains, I had seen the very object that here arrested the attention of Don Quixote—a dead mule, half consumed, and even then surrounded by the lean dogs and hungry ravens that were devouring it.

“It was doubtless here,” said the barber, when a little farther on, we came to ‘a verdant spot of grass at the turning of a rock,’ “that Cardenio told his story, and that the Knight of La Mancha quarreled with him for asserting something in prejudice of the Queen Madasima;” and having crossed the brook, and entered another defile, we gradually penetrated farther into the mountain, which at every step became wilder, justifying the description given by Cervantes. But true to nature as are the descriptions of Cervantes, they do not of themselves occupy the mind of the

traveller who follows in the footsteps of Don Quixote; they serve rather to call to recollection those inimitable dialogues between the Knight and his Squire, in which all that is romantic or extravagant, is opposed to the common-place maxims of every-day life; in which the noble and intellectual, is placed in ludicrous contrast with contented ignorance and vulgar honesty; and in which the high-flown language of a distempered fancy, is overwhelmed in a cloud of proverbs. Who then, mounted upon his mule, and with one companion, slowly pursuing his way among the rude passes of the Sierra Morena, could do otherwise than see in imagination, "the Knight of the rueful countenance" and his faithful Squire, and almost fancy that he listened to the delightful dialogue which on that very spot is recorded to have been carried on, wherein the Knight, with his own peculiar union of grave expostulation and affectionate persuasion, combats the Squire's incredulity upon certain points.

"Who," says Sancho, "that hears your worship call a barber's basin the helmet of Mambrino, but

will believe that he who affirms such nonsense must be crazed in his understanding? the basin, which is all bruised and battered, I have put up in my bag, in order to be mended at home, and used for the service of my own beard, if ever by the grace of God I come to see my wife and family.”

“Harkee, Sancho,” replies the Knight, “thou hast the most slender understanding that any Squire did ever possess; what seems a barber’s basin to thee I can easily discern to be the helmet of Mambrino, and I cannot but admire the providence of the sage who is my friend, in making that which is really and truly Mambrino’s helmet appear a basin to the rest of mankind, because it is of such inestimable value, that if it were known, the whole world would combine to ravish it from me:” and pondering upon the excellent invention and inimitable wit of Cervantes, and the perfect truth with which the characters of his personages are sustained, I had not observed that the barber had a considerable way outstripped me, and that he had dismounted from his mule, and sat awaiting

my approach. "This is the undoubted spot," said he, "where the Knight did penance, while Sancho was despatched to Toboso with a letter to Dulcinea;" and well it agreed with the description of Cervantes,—for 'a gentle rill' tinkled in a hundred windings through 'a narrow meadow, so green and fertile, that it ravished the spectator's eye, while the forest trees that grew around, and a thousand delicious herbs and flowers, conspired to make the place enchanting.'

"Mr. Barber," said I, "as thou hast spoken of the penance performed by the Knight, I would ask of thee if thou hast ever read 'Amadis de Gaul?'"

"I can easily guess," said the barber, "why your worship puts me that question."

"Art thou not of opinion," said I, "that the originality of Cervantes is put somewhat in jeopardy by what is narrated in that book?"

"It is very true," replied the barber, "that the fancy of doing penance, is not indulged for the first time, by Don Quixote, and that the stratagem devised by the licentiate and the barber, with the

assistance Dorothea, to entice the knight out of the Brown Mountain, was resorted to by the Maid of Denmark, to withdraw Amadis from his self-imposed rigours: but your mercy will please to recollect, that to copy Amadis in this, was only in correspondence with the character of Don Quixote, and with the whole object of the work. Cervantes has asserted that the head of Don Quixote was stuffed with the contents of books of knight-errantry, and we find throughout the whole book, that Don Quixote's model of knight-errantry was Amadis, whom he considered well worthy of imitation; so that nothing could be more natural than that he should bethink himself of following the example set to him by the paragon of knight-errantry, in which indeed the consistency of his character is kept up; and though the heads of the licentiate and the barber and Dorothea, were not like the knight's, running on knight-errantry, it must be recollected that when all the books of chivalry were burned by the curate and the barber, Amadis de Gaul was spared; so that therefore, they may be supposed to have recollected the

stratagem practised by the Maid of Denmark, and therefore resorted to the same stratagem on the present occasion; but," continued the barber, "better things await us here than penance and buffeting; for I begin to long as eagerly to dive into the contents of this wallet, as Sancho did to probe Cardenio's portmanteau, where he found a hundred gold crowns, and if I mistake not, friend Juanes has had an eye to our comforts, for, 'body of me,' as Sancho says, the bag is so crammed, that I am not able to thrust my hand into it."

While the barber rummaged the wallet, I took the saddle off my mule, that he as well as his master might enjoy himself, and giving him a slap on the hinder parts, such as the worthy knight is said to have bestowed upon his Rozinante in the self-same spot, I sent him up among the fragrant shrubs, and seated myself upon the grass beside my friend, who had by this time proved the generosity of Juanes, which had indeed been princely; and seated together in this retired and agreeable spot, so full of associations, we dispatched the greater part of a pasty, which although somewhat

overlaid with garlic, was sufficiently savoury to be eaten with infinite relish; and then having satisfied hunger, we applied with assiduity to the wine-skin, which was so well filled, that the repeated draughts which we took from it, did not sensibly lessen the respectability of its appearance.

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## CHAPTER XXVII.

IN WHICH THE BEAUTIFUL EPISODE OF DOROTHEA IS CONSIDERED, AND WHEREIN THE BARBER AGAIN TAKES OCCASION TO VINDICATE THE GENIUS OF CERVANTES, AND TO ENLARGE ON THE EPISODES WHICH ARE INTRODUCED.

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“Mr. Barber,” said I, when the meal was ended, “methinks that I could almost without thy assistance, have fixed upon this spot as the scene of many of the most agreeable of the adventures in the Brown Mountain; for here we have not only the ‘rill’ and the ‘narrow meadow,’ but the forest trees mentioned by Cervantes, and which are not yet seen in any other part of our journey.”

“Ay, truly,” said the barber, “these may be the very rocks on which Sancho cautioned his master how he ran his head against them, and

these the trees on which he is said to have hung his armour while he did penance,—but there are even more certain proofs of identity than these. Come hither,” said the barber, leading the way on foot down a narrow valley watered by a purling brook, and shaded in a most cool and agreeable manner by some rocks and trees; “does your honour see those few aged ash trees bending over the brook, and growing, as it would seem, out of the rock?”

“Ah, Mr. Barber,” said I, “prince of guides, well indeed are all these scenes known to thee; I see indeed these old ash trees,—and I think I see at this moment the image that Cervantes has so beautifully associated with them—the fair and forsaken Dorothea, sitting on the rock ‘under the ash tree,’ washing her ‘delicate feet and fair limbs, and wiping them with her handkerchief, while her golden locks fell down upon her shoulders.’”

“I perceive,” said the barber, “that your honour is worthy of being conducted in the footsteps of Don Quixote; is not that a beautiful picture?”

“’T is one of the most beautiful of pictures,” said I, “and belongs to one of the most touching of stories.”

“And yet,” said the barber, “there are those who have such slender understanding as to say, and uphold, that the stories which are here and there interspersed, had better have been omitted, because in them we hear nothing of our hero; and some go so far as to aver that they are dull and wearisome. Now,” continued the barber, “that is not my way of thinking. There never was knight-errant with sword always in his hand; and though it be true, that when the telling of a love story comes after a dialogue between the knight and his squire, or after the narration of some of the most excellent of the adventures, it does appear somewhat flattish in comparison; it only sets them off, and lets us have time to digest one dish and get hungry again before we fall upon another: no man can eat savoury stews all the day long; a puchero to come between, gives them a greater relish.”

“And are not the stories Cervantes’ invention, as well as the adventures?”

“In truth are they,” said the barber; “but for my part, I’m puzzled to see why any one makes a distinction between them. The stories arise naturally out of the adventures,—they often shew forth the character and qualities of the knight and his squire, which must need have something to bring them to light. Nothing can be more natural than that the knight should call upon Cardenio to tell his story; and if he had not told it, see what would have been lost! Don Quixote could not have taken umbrage at the disrespect spoken of Queen Madasima by Cardenio; nor could that excellent dialogue between Sancho and his master have been inserted, wherein Sancho taking advantage of his license to speak his mind, rates his master for his indiscreet bristling up about the Queen Madasima, which brought upon them the wrath of the madman; and which concludes with the knight’s high-flown defence of knight-errantry, and Sancho’s string of proverbs.”

“Thou hast doubtless made out thy case,” said I, “as regards this story at least.”

“And as easy ’t will be,” said the barber, “to

shew that they have all their uses ; but indeed, the story of Cardenio, and in particular, that part of it which relates to Lucretia, and her appearance in the Brown Mountain (all of which are just as much a part of his adventures, as his encounters with goat-herds, or Yanguesian carriers, or galley-slaves), were necessary towards the sequel of the book ; for how, unless Lucretia had appeared there, could the Licentiate and the Barber have contrived along with Lucretia, the cunning device by which he was withdrawn out of the Brown Mountain, when Dorothea, pretending to be the Queen Micomicona, begged a boon of him.”

“ I perceive now more than ever,” said I, “ the folly of endeavouring to separate between the adventures of the knight, and the stories which are introduced, and which are indeed essential to the continuation of the adventures, as well as to the exhibition of character.”

When the barber had thus agreeably defended his favourite from the charges which some foolish people have brought against him, we walked leisurely about, taking up in the hollow of our

hands a mouthful or two of the pure water of the brook wherein, we are told, that the white feet and limbs of Lucretia looked like crystal, and at the same time almost imagining we saw "the beautiful apparition," as Cervantes calls her, seated there; and then we returned to the spot where we had left our mules, and our wallet and wine-skin, because it was the shadiest spot in all these parts. Several clumps of ilex trees were scattered up and down, and an elevated rocky height, said in Cervantes to be, as if it had been cut out from the rest that surrounded it, threw a considerable shadow on one side of the valley.

"I don't know," said the barber, "how it may be with your grace, but I find the air of these parts produce a marvellous effect on my stomach; 't is scarce three hours since Juanes' pasty was interred; and yet, 'body of me,' as Sancho says, I am as keen set, as if nothing but that mouthful of water had found its way down my throat this blessed day; and it's my belief, too, señor," added the barber, looking askance at the wine-skin, "that water does little service to a dry throat.

“No doubt, Master Nicholas,” said I, “mountain air invigorates the appetite, and a dry throat’s no agreeable companion; as for Juanes’ pasty, it was a miracle in its way, and if thy hand could lay hold on any thing as savoury, I would not be so uncivil as to let thee eat alone, though I promise thee the larger share.” And the barber’s hand was presently diving into the wallet, from which it speedily extracted a sausage, that smelt indeed a little of garlic, but which, if not entirely to my taste, was every whit suited to that of the barber, who did such rapid execution on it, that the greater part was speedily entombed along with the pasty.

“A knowing rogue is that Juanes,” said the barber, as we smacked our lips after a long draught of racy wine,—he knows a thing or two.”

“A thing or two more than is good for him to know may be,” said I.

“Ay, ay,” said the barber, “more’s the pity;” while he again tied up the wallet, and after one other draught, put the stopper in the wine-skin.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

IN WHICH THE AUTHOR, HAVING RELATED AS MUCH OF HIS TRAVELS IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF DON QUIXOTE, AS CAN BE CONTAINED IN THIS VOLUME, IS FORCED TO STOP FOR THE PRESENT, AND TO REQUEST HIS READERS TO INFORM HIM WHETHER THEY WISH HIM TO RESUME HIS AGREEABLE TASK.

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“A pretty hole we have made in the wallet,” said I; “and as for the wine-skin, ’t is scarcely to be recognised.”

“I scarcely think,” said the barber, pressing it with both his hands, “it will see out the night; and by the by, señor, is it your pleasure that we shall give it the trial?”

“That,” said I, “is more than I willingly take upon me to answer: thou hast undertaken to lead me in the footsteps of Don Quixote, and I am

ready to stay here, or jog on as thou mayest direct."

"Tread you shall in the footsteps of the Knight of La Mancha," replied the barber, "and glad I am to tread in them once more; but," continued he, "if your worship will be guided by me, I would give it as my opinion, that under the roof of friend Juanes we shall be to the full as comfortable as underneath these cork trees: this, as I have already said, is doubtless the spot where the Knight abode in the Brown Mountain, and from whence he despatched Sancho with a letter to the Dulcinea: here it was that he resolved to do penance, and these are the very rocks of which the affectionate Squire said, 'for the love of God Sir, take care how you dash your head against the rocks, for you may chance to meet with such a one, as at the first push will put a finishing blow to the whole scheme of penance; content yourself with running your skull against water, or some soft thing like a cotton bag, and leave it to my care to tell my lady that your worship went to loggerheads with the point of a rock a thousand

times harder than adamant!’ Here too it was, that the cunning device of the barber Nicholas, and the Licentiate, and Dorothea, was put into execution, when the knight forswore adventures until he had righted the great Queen Micomicona, and was thus enticed from the Brown Mountain: but I see no good reason why we, who only follow in the footsteps of the knight, should follow his example by abiding three days in the mountain, where, if I may judge by the altered look of our wallet, and the emaciated paunch of our wine-skin, we should be forced before the end of the three days to imitate Don Quixote in culling plants to sustain nature, and might become ‘wan, meagre, and half-famished,’ as Sancho found his master upon his return; wherefore I propose, that having noted all these things, we indulge in a short siesta, for which I confess that pasty of Juanes and the little morsel of sausage have somewhat inclined me, and that we then retrace our footsteps towards the Venta de Cardaña.”

The advice of the barber was palatable enough; and in less than three minutes after it was given,

the yielding wine-skin had received the impression of his head, while the friendly shadow of 'a great rock' interposed between him and the rays of the noon-day sun. As for me, I employed the next hour or two in that most enviable state, when between sleeping and waking the mind passively receives the impressions that are offered to it; and when, as may easily be believed, in a scene like this, and on an errand like mine, many fantastic but strongly pictured illusions passed before. I saw the lank faced Knight, with a grave countenance, deliver to Sancho the letter to Dulcinea, and recommend Rozinante to his care, while the Squire mounting the steed with tears in his eyes, begged his master's blessing, and set out upon his journey. I fancied the welcome of the honest Squire on his return. I heard the courteous Knight say to the disguised Dorothea, 'rise most beautiful lady, the boon you ask, is granted,' while Sancho, already feeling himself secure in the government of an island, 'took down the armour which hung upon a tree, and in a twinkling equipped his master,' who finding

himself armed, exclaims ‘Let us go in the name of God, to the assistance of this high-born lady;’ and with these images in my mind, my eyes closed, and I dropped asleep: when we awake, I may possibly continue the narrative of my travels, and this record of the Barber’s excellent sayings.



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