

fore chose to deprive himself of much additional emolument and applause, which he might have acquired from new works. For the space of six years he shut himself up without producing any thing, for the purpose of appearing with greater eclat. The first fruits of this seclusion were the twelve novels, which were published in the year 1613, with a dedication to the Count de Lemos, and which is written in an humble but not servile style, and contains much praise of his patron, without adulation. The estimation, in which our Author was held by this nobleman, and the Archbishop of Toledo, did not proceed from any fawning or obsequiousness on his part, but from their discernment, good taste, and love of literature. They had discovered the great genius of Cervantes, and were acquainted with his misfortunes and poverty. On that account, therefore, they were induced to assist and protect him.

Cervantes himself proved this, when his enemies attempted to lessen his genius, and injure his interest by means of the Quixote of Avelaneda. The confidence he placed in his two benefactors was the only shield he opposed to them. "So long," says he, "as the Count de Lemos, whose liberality and Christianity are acknowledged by all, supports me against the blows of my bad fortune, and so long as I retain the favour of the illustrious Archbishop of Toledo, I care not if there were as many books written against me as

there are letters in the couplets of Mingo Rivulgo. These two noblemen, without adulation on my part, have, through pure generosity, taken me under their protection, by which I hold myself more fortunate than if Fortune had placed me on the summit of her wheel." This answer, by which he proclaimed the generosity of his patrons and his own gratitude, was worthy of Cervantes: thus he immortalized their names, and the Count de Lemos and the Archbishop of Toledo will live recorded, so long as good taste and the love of literature exist among mankind. While the fame of the contemporaries of Cervantes, who then despised him, is already lost in oblivion.

As these two noblemen have been already mentioned as the patrons of our Author, it may not be improper, but, on the contrary, both useful and amusing, to give some account of their characters. The good system of education and love for literature which, in the preceding age, had produced so many great men in Spain, was now daily losing ground. The nobility, entirely given up to indolence, kept buffoons and flatterers, and were more anxious to procure good masters for their falcons than for their children, who consequently entered the world with the same inclinations they observed in their parents. Still, however, some remains of the wise and manly conduct of former times were apparent; and the

Archbishop of Toledo and the Count de Lemos were most conspicuous. Their age, their rank, and their passion for literature, were nearly the same. Their magnanimity and fame were equal, though differently acquired. The first was a pupil of the learned historian Cordobes Ambrosio de Morales, whose house was dedicated to the education of the nobility, and was the school of virtue and learning. The second was brought up in the bosom of his own family, in which valour, generosity, and good taste, were hereditary. One was respected for his integrity, and the other applauded for his popularity and gentleness of manners. The Count de Lemos knew no bounds to his munificence and patronage. The regard of the Archbishop for the fine arts was more reserved, and his liberality more confined. He honoured the memory of his master by erecting a magnificent monument, but he would not agree to its being built during his life. He protected and supported Cervantes, but would admit of no eulogium or public acknowledgment: he rather wished to be a patron, than to appear one; and he thus obtained more glory, as he was less solicitous about it.

The publication of the novels helped to strengthen the tie, which connected our Author with these illustrious patrons. Both the love and satire, which are scattered through these, are more soft and temperate. The subjects are taken

from events, which he became acquainted with, both in Spain and abroad; and the language of them shows that he became more perfect by experience and practice.

Judicious and reflecting travellers possess advantages over those, who never leave the place of their birth, like springs, which, by passing through various strata, acquire some peculiar virtue. By the conversation of men of letters in Italy, Cervantes became acquainted with the abuses and prejudices of vulgar education; and as his object was to enlighten his mind by an examination of the literature and customs of other countries, he was thus enabled to discover the defects of his own nation without despising it, and to celebrate the merit of his countrymen, where they deserved it, equally with foreigners. He gave an evident proof of this in his "Viage del Parnaso," which was printed at Madrid in 1614. Cervantes owns that he composed it in imitation of a work bearing the same title, which was written by Cesarè Caporalè, an Italian poet: and, by choosing him as his model, he gave the strongest proof of the admiration, in which he held his excellent and ingenious invention. This poem of Cervantes was always a favourite with himself, either from the circumstances and ideas under which he composed it, or from the anxiety he felt on first commencing poet upon so great a scale. Poetry was at that



time an universal mania, and every one was devoted to the Muses. The credit and fame of some excellent poets, added to the celebrity with which the amorous tales and valorous events, recounted in the melodious flowing verses of Lope de Vega, and other writers, were printed, rendered it an object of pursuit to every branch of the republic of letters. All thought themselves inspired, and gave a vent to their enthusiasm in extempore sonnets, and verses consisting of ten lines; a species of composition, which had long been esteemed a certain proof of genius. Cervantes was well aware of this fault, and clearly saw its origin. He wished to obtain the prize he was conscious he deserved, and also to undeceive the public with respect to the "Viage del Parnaso," the true object of which was to point out the cause of the defects of the bad Spanish poets, and to confer due praise on such as were superior.

For this purpose he supposes that Apollo, in order to free Parnassus from the bad poets, convoked the others by means of Mercury. This fiction gave him an opportunity of mentioning his own name, and making known his ill success, by means of two conversations, which he was supposed to have had with the gods.

Those, who have served their country either in arms or any other useful profession, have ever been esteemed worthy of a recompense, and have, in general, been rewarded. But the

injustice and illiberality of men have denied this to the literary character, though, in fact, literature is the most serviceable of all: for, without it, it is impossible to arrive at any depth of knowledge in other things. Those ages, which have neglected to reward the effusions of genius, will never obtain the praises of posterity, which will venerate the happy reigns of Augustus, Leo X. and Louis XIV. when public applause, and the liberality of princes, sought out and encouraged the wise and the learned in their retirement. The English nation, however, is fortunate in possessing a Prince, whose patronage of literary merit and the polite arts, evinces in so superior a degree the liberality of his mind and the pureness of his taste.

Cervantes pretends, that when Mercury had assembled these poets, Apollo conducted them into a rich garden of Parnassus, and assigned to each the place, which corresponded with his merit. Our Author alone did not obtain this distinction, and remained, without being noticed, in sight of the rest, before whom all the works he had published were placed. In vain he urged his love for literature, and the persecution he had endured on this account from envy and ignorance. He could not obtain the seat he wished. Even this was not all. Apollo, to console him, advised him to fold up his cloak, and seat himself upon it; but, alas! such was his poverty, that he did

not possess one, and was obliged to remain standing, in spite of his age, his talents, and the opinion of many, who knew and acknowledged the honour and preference, which were his due.

It is natural to conclude, that this conversation is a true portrait of the situation of Cervantes, when he wrote this poem. Nor could he, perhaps, have found a more ingenious mode of showing his extreme misery, and the injustice he suffered from those, who, from their situation and character, ought to have discerned and rewarded such brilliant abilities. The calm remonstrance, contained in this work, was received with various opinions. The rivals and enemies of our Author, who, if he had not written, would have attributed his silence to want of power, accused him of arrogance. But the generous and impartial received it as a just defence from a man, who wrote with that true wisdom, equally distant from the pride of the ignorant, and the baseness of the hypocritical.

He delayed the publication of this poem for some time after he had finished it, for it appears he wrote it previous to his novels, either from fear of its success, or of the abuse he should receive from those, of whose merit he had not spoken very highly. Nor was he sure it would be well received by the Count de Lemos, and he determined, therefore, to seek another patron for it. His suspicions were not unfounded. He had

availed himself of the Argensoli to recommend him, in the first instance, to the Count de Lemos, with whom they then were at Naples. These illustrious brothers made him such great promises, that our Author hoped, through their means, to improve his fortune by the liberality of that nobleman. In this, however, he was disappointed. The Argensoli neglected to perform their promises, and he not only remained for some time without any assistance, but with the apprehension that these famous poets were not his friends, and had injured him in the opinion of his patron. This completed his affliction, and made him complain of the Argensoli in such strong terms in this work. He afterwards, however, professed a sincere friendship for them, and gave the strongest proof of it in his "Canto de Caliope," in which he praised them in very high terms: and also in the first part of the Quixote, where he mentions the tragedies of "Lupercio," "Isabella," "Phyllis," and "Alexander," as models for Spanish composition.

What afterwards took place between the Count de Lemos and Cervantes, still more confirms these circumstances. He prudently hastened the publication of his novels, and deferred the "Viage." In addition to their being more excellent in themselves, they were written upon more pleasant subjects. They were highly esteemed, and obtained such favour with the

Count, that their author dedicated all his other works to him, except the "Viage del Parnaso," which he had previously determined to dedicate to Don Rodrigo de Tapia, Knight of the order of Saint Jago. And he published the novels, when he was convinced they would be well received by the Count, and when he possessed the friendship of the Argensoli.

As a continuation of the "Viage del Parnaso," Cervantes published a little work which he called "Adjunto al Parnaso." It was a dialogue in prose, in which the Author, and another poet, who brought him a paper from Apollo, were the speakers. This paper contained some privileges and regulations for Spanish poets: and though the object of this work seemed at first to be the same as the "Viage," it was in fact written for the purpose of making our Author's dramatic productions more known.

Cervantes was at this time at variance with the theatres, because, though they knew he had at that moment by him both comedies and interludes, they did not seem inclined to perform them. He therefore determined to print them, that the public might judge of their merit. In the "Adjunto" he gave notice of eight comedies and eight interludes, which he published in the following year 1615. Such, however, was his poverty, that he was unable to defray the ex-

pense of publishing these plays. He therefore sold them to his bookseller, by whom he was told, that much might be expected from his prose, and but little from his verses.

This information grieved Cervantes not a little, so much was he attached to the Muses. Never was the maxim, that men do not prize those qualities they possess, so much as those they affect, more truly verified than in him. The poor reception these plays met with from the public, and their not having been performed, were two fresh disasters, which arose to our Author from not confining himself to his proper sphere. It is almost impossible, that a man should excel both in poetry and prose. Seneca, the philosopher, affirms, that Virgil wrote as bad prose, as Cicero did poetry. The Mantuan bard, however, had the good sense, which neither the Roman orator, nor Spanish fabulist, possessed. He did not discredit himself by writing prose, whereas Cicero and Cervantes have tarnished their fame, by indulging in some visits to the Muses.

Our Author, however, was most probably induced to publish these plays, for the sake of emolument rather than fame. At one time he had certainly condemned them to oblivion. The handsome manner, in which he speaks of the comic writers, and especially of Lope de Vega, in a prologue to one of them, forgetting, with sin-

gular generosity, the persecution he had suffered through him, is a great proof of the moderation of Cervantes.

It is an observation of Juan Huartè, in his "Examen de Ingenios," that in applying the mind to any science, the inclination for that science should not only be considered, but whether the mind be more inclined to its theory or its practice; because each often requires a different species of abilities. This reflection is fully confirmed in Cervantes. His theoretic knowledge of poetry and the drama, which was excellent, did not enable him to compose in an equal style of perfection. In the ingenious conversation between the Canon of Toledo and the Priest, in the first part of *Don Quixote*, the best laws and regulations are laid down for dramatic and poetic composition. But very far short, indeed, did his own plays fall of this standard.

Cervantes however was not the only one, who neglected the regular drama. Towards the end of the sixteenth century, when Lope de Vega began to be admired by the vulgar, and preferred by the theatres, many found fault with his comedies, as not being written according to the rules of the art. He endeavoured to justify himself by saying, that dramatic compositions should vary according to the age, and the taste of the audience. The contest was carried to such a



length, and with so much warmth and vehemence, that the Poetic Academy of Madrid commanded Lope de Vega to write a treatise, in which he should explain the new system he himself followed. In this essay, which was printed in 1602, he boldly confesses the defects of his own comedies, and the distance they are from all rule, six only excepted; he allows that he exposes himself to the just censure of foreign nations; and even that his aim was to forget the precepts of his art and the example of Plautus and Terence, that he might gain the applause of the many, and thus render his works saleable. So that he not only confirmed the objections, which had been made, but acknowledged his intention of always preferring gain to immortality, and profit to honour; like the comic actor Dossenno, whom Horace so pleasantly and so acutely reprehends. Cervantes also, in the same dialogue, says the very same things of Lope de Vega, which he mentioned in his essay. He admits, that his desire of accommodating himself to the taste of the performers had prevented him from arriving at that degree of perfection, which some of his comedies possessed, yet he also adds to the fame of this Author by the praises he bestows upon him. He supposes him perfectly acquainted with the rules of his art, and lays the blame upon the bad taste of the actors, not on the ignorance of

the poet. So that, when properly received, his arguments are more like an apology for, than a censure upon, Lope de Vega and his imitators.

Cervantes, however, could not himself entirely escape. A comic writer, who was his implacable enemy, attacked him most violently. It is a common trick with the malevolent, to intermix their own cause with that of others of more consequence, in order to deceive and inflame the public. This poet was much offended at the just censures, which Cervantes had passed on his works in the *Quixote*. He knew the estimation he had acquired by that work, and how universally the second part was wished for. To satiate his hatred, therefore, he endeavoured to discredit at one stroke, both the genius and heart of its author: his genius, by continuing the *Quixote*, and his heart, by asserting, in that continuation, that through envy and malice he abused Lope de Vega. It was with this intention, that the second part of the ingenious Knight of La Mancha was produced in Tarragona in 1614; written, as the title says, by the Licentiate Alonzo Fernandes de Avellaneda, a native of Tordesillas. But it was in reality the production of the before-mentioned poet; of whom nothing more is known, than that he was of Arragon, and that he concealed his name with as much artifice as he endeavoured to mask his intentions.

He asserts in his preface, that he continued the

Quixote with the intention of preventing the pernicious perusal of books of chivalry. And he there abuses Cervantes for his criticisms on Lope de Vega. But the violence of his anger discovers his motives at the very outset. His preface is an infamous and rancorous libel on the writings of Cervantes, which are not the only objects of his abuse; since, in his malice, he descends to personal invective, and calls him old, lame, poor, invidious, and complaining: in short, every one in reading it must be convinced, that he wrote this book for the sole purpose of injuring Cervantes, decrying his abilities, and insinuating, either that he could not continue the Quixote, or that there were others equally capable of writing it.

The audacity of this writer, and his odious and violent style, were alone sufficient to have convinced the public of the merit of our Author. But he wisely pursued a better method, by publishing the second part of Don Quixote in the year 1615. No sooner was this published, than it became evident, that no one was so capable of continuing such a work as the original inventor; and the Castilian Quixote banished the Arragones from the republic of letters. The anonymous writer (for Avellaneda concealed his name, that he might insult Cervantes with impunity), who thus sought to tarnish the fame of a deserving and unfortunate man, only added a faded

laurel to his triumph. Cervantes, who neither wished to revenge himself, nor tear the mask from his adversary, opposed the personalities, which had been published against him, with an amiable modesty, and repelled the injuries with temperance. His only weapons were wit and pleasantry, by which he proved the ascendancy of innocence, moderation, and urbanity, over calumny, audacity, and rudeness. And his preface to the second part is a model for mildness and candour in literary warfare.

Among all the works, which the human mind is capable of producing, there are none more exempt from partiality and unreasonableness, than those of pure invention, because in none is pleasure or disgust more perceptible. In other writings, the dexterity of a censorer or a panegyrist may blind the judgment of the reader, but in these each must judge for himself, according to the pleasure or dissatisfaction he derives from its perusal. Avellaneda possessed neither dignity in his thoughts, nor decency in his expressions. In almost every page he presents some improper images, the gross and indelicate colouring of which impresses the reader with disgust. He, who compares the two episodes of "The Despairing Rich Man" and the "Happy Lovers," with those of "The Curious Impertinent" and "The Captive," who contrasts the character of Barbara with that of Dorothea, will be sensible, that

similar situations and similar circumstances are rendered agreeable, or otherwise, according to the abilities of the writer. It is unnecessary to say more, especially in England, where the Quixote of Avellaneda is unknown. The continued judgment of the public, for two centuries, has been decidedly in favour of Cervantes. His Quixote is in the hand of every artist, and is translated into every language, and it is hoped the present edition will not discredit the English press, nor the memory of our Author. The work of Avellaneda has completely sunk into oblivion; at least if we except a French translation of it in the year 1704. Whatever merit that may possess, is to be attributed to the translator; who has corrected its indecencies, and added several pleasing episodes to it. There was also a Spanish edition in 1732, but it was hardly ever read.

One remarkable circumstance relative to our Author must not be passed over, though it reflects, in its consequences, no credit on his countrymen. It is a convincing proof of the merit of the Quixote, and the want of favour towards its Author.

Philip III. being at a window of his palace in Madrid, observed a student reading a book, as he was walking on the banks of the Manzanares, who frequently gave himself a blow on the forehead, which he accompanied with various signs of great pleasure. The monarch, immediately

guessing at the cause of his mirth, exclaimed, "That student is either mad, or reading Don Quixote." Some person, who was about him, from an idea of pleasing the prince, sent immediately to inquire into the truth, and found that the student really was reading it. So public an approbation of the merit of this work, bestowed by the sovereign, and confirmed by the first persons in his court, ought to have reminded them of the poor condition of the author. But, whether they did not mention him, or, if they did, whether it was not remarked, it is certain, that no one had the generosity to seize so favourable a moment of soliciting a moderate pension for his support.

The manner, in which Cervantes was slighted, and even despised, by some of his countrymen, was felt by him the more, on account of the attention and respect he met with from all foreigners. In such estimation were his works almost all over Europe, that every one, who visited Spain, was solicitous of seeing and knowing him. On the arrival of a most splendid embassy from France, for the purpose of strengthening the mutual ties of friendship between the princes of the house of Bourbon and that of Austria, the conversation of the different nobles, of whom it was composed, often turned upon literature; and the state, in which it was in Spain. In a visit paid to the ambassador by the Archbishop of Toledo

and his court, among whom was the Licentiate Marquez Torres, his master of the pages, the merits of various works of genius were discussed, and, among others, the second part of the Quixote. No sooner was the name of Cervantes mentioned, than they all began to praise him; and to report the estimation, in which the French and other nations held the Quixote, the novels, and the Galatea, which many present knew almost by heart. Their commendations were so great, that the Licentiate offered to take them to the house of the author, and introduce them to him. They accepted it with the greatest pleasure, and in the mean time made inquiries about the age, profession, and situation of Cervantes. The Licentiate was obliged, in answer, to tell them, that he was an old wounded soldier, not far removed from a state of poverty. This description so excited the pity of one of the nobles, that he exclaimed, "Why does not Spain maintain such a man at the public expense?" To which the other prudently and wisely answered, "If necessity obliges him to write, we ought to pray, that he may never possess abundance; because, though he is himself poor, with his works he enriches all the world."

In works of satire it is difficult to avoid running into violence and abuse, without sinking into flatness and insipidity. Cervantes, however, knew how to avoid both these defects; he tem-



pered liberty with prudence, and restrained the power of his genius within the limits of circumspection. This is one of the chief merits of the second part of the *Quixote*, in which the original talent of our Author shines more than in any other work, and therefore we should make it a standard, by which to estimate his genius.

It is certainly true, that all his productions are not equally good; the *Quixote*, however, is alone sufficient to give him a rank amongst those illustrious men, so thinly scattered through every age. No one can be exempt from the failings of human nature, and always equal to himself. The *Principia* will immortalize Sir Isaac Newton, while his "Observations on the Prophecies of Daniel" are, comparatively, almost unknown. Such too is the difference between the *Quixote*, and the interludes and comedies of Cervantes. Both these instances show, that the human mind is a mixture of strength and weakness, and may console the admirers of the latter for the discredit some of his works deservedly possess, by the superiority, which others have attained to.

The last work, which Cervantes published before his death, was the second part of the *Quixote*. His health began to be impaired towards the end of the year 1615, and became much worse at the commencement of the following spring: his genius, however, was still strong, and his imagination uninjured. In the year 1619

he had offered to the public, the "Adventures of Persilis and Sigismunda," and in October 1615 he repeated the same offer to the Count de Lemos; assuring him the work should be completed within four months. He kept his promise, notwithstanding what he suffered from his complaint, which proved fatal to him soon after he had finished this novel. His performance of this engagement, in such a state of illness, is a strong proof of his indefatigable activity, and of that vigour of mind, which he preserved without any alteration even in the arms of death.

In April 1616 he finished his "Persilis," by which he so far injured his health, that he went to Esquivias before he had written the dedication and preface, in hopes of receiving some benefit from change of air. His disorder, however, so much increased immediately after his arrival, that, either from the wish of dying in his own house, or in expectation of better medical assistance, he returned to Madrid, accompanied by two friends. He met with an event on his journey, which afforded him the incident in the preface to Persilis, and gave him an opportunity of narrating the circumstances and state of his illness.

As they were riding from Esquivias, and had got near Madrid, they heard some person on horseback coming very fast behind them, and calling to them to stop. When he came up,

they found it was a student, who complained, that they rode so fast, he could not overtake them. To this one of the friends answered, that it was the fault of the horse of Cervantes, which was such a fast trotter. He had scarcely pronounced the name of Cervantes, when the student, who was passionately fond of his works, but did not know his person, alighted from his horse, and, taking hold of his left arm, exclaimed, "Yes, yes, this is the lame arm! this is the famous humorous writer, the beloved of the Muses!" Cervantes, thanking him with his usual modesty, embraced him, and entreated him to mount his horse, and ride with them the remainder of the way. The student joyfully accepted the offer; and this conversation is the only confirmation of his illness, that Cervantes has left; he says: "We gave the reins to our horses, and slowly pursued our road, along which we talked of my disorder. The student immediately damped all my hopes of recovery, by saying, 'Your disease is dropsical, and all the water of the ocean, could you swallow it, would not cure you. Believe me, Signor Cervantes, if you will refrain from drinking, and eat only, you may recover without any other medicine.'— 'Many have told me so,' I replied, 'but the period of my life is approaching; the course of my pulse is nearly concluded, and about Sunday next, we shall wind up all our accounts. Your

acquaintance with me, Sir, has begun late, since there does not remain sufficient time to convince you of my gratitude, for the great attention you have shown me.' We had now arrived at the bridge of Toledo; I entered the town by that road, and he turned off to go to Segovia."

When Cervantes arrived at his own house he wrote the above dialogue. His hopes and fears alternately gained the ascendancy; yet he still preserved his gay and lively spirits, as is evident from the pleasant, and in some respects ludicrous description he gives of the dress and gestures of the student, and the manner, in which he was mounted. At one moment his disorder afflicted him so much, that he was obliged to lay down his pen and leave his dialogue unfinished; nay, even to deny himself to his friends. At another he was so much better, that he did not despair of completing both that and the second part of the *Galatea*, which he had promised. His disease, at length, annihilated all his hopes, and reduced him so much, that, being considered as past recovery, extreme unction was administered to him on the 18th of April 1616.

Cervantes had now lost all bodily strength; he was, however, still quite collected, and his recollection and sense of the liberality of the Count de Lemos remained unimpaired. The day after he had received extreme unction, he wrote a dedicatory farewell to him; and offered him, as the

best proof of his gratitude, "The Amours of Persilis and Sigismunda." The composition of this is excellent, and well worthy the attention of both patrons and learned men, as an inducement to liberality in the former, and gratitude in the latter. "Yesterday," says Cervantes, "I received extreme unction, and to-day I write this. My time is short, my pains increase, my hope diminishes; yet, I live even longer than I desire, unless it be to kiss your Excellency's feet. Had I the happiness of seeing you once more in Spain, it might perhaps restore me to health. But if it be decreed I am to die, may the will of Heaven be completed. Your Excellency, however, shall know how anxious I am to serve you, not only in this life, but in the next. And, as I prophesy your return, I congratulate on it. I rejoice to see you so universally admired; and I am happy, that my hopes are realized by the fame of your goodness." The expressions in this letter are so much the more honourable to the Count de Lemos, as he, who wrote them, was in such a miserable situation. Our Author's gratitude was sincere and pure, and the dying words of Cervantes deserve as much attention as those of Seneca.

He retained his calmness and serenity to the last moment of his life. He made his wife, Donna Catalina de Salazar, and the Licentiate Francisco Nunez, who resided in the same house,

his executors : and left directions for them to bury him in the convent of the Trinity. His life now drew near its close, and the twenty-third day of April, one thousand six hundred, and sixteen, was the last of his existence, when he finished a course of sixty-eight years, six months, and fourteen days. It is a singular coincidence of circumstances, that the same day should deprive the world of two men of such transcendent abilities as Cervantes and Shakespear: the latter of whom died in England on the very day that put an end to the life of the former in Spain. And, were this a proper place for the purpose, a parallel might be drawn between them, and extended to a considerable length with great propriety.

The funeral of Cervantes was as poor and obscure as his person had been. The epitaphs, that were composed in his praise, deserve not to be recorded. No stone, inscription, or memorial, of any sort, remained to point out the place of his interment : and it seems as if an unpropitious fate had persecuted him, while living, accompanied him to the grave, and even prevented his friends and protectors from honouring his memory.

The same fate has attended the portraits, which were painted of him by Don Juan de Jauregui and Francisco Pacheco, both of Seville, and reckoned excellent artists. The head, however, which accompanies this edition was most pro-

bably a copy from one or other of them. From all the accounts, that are left us, his person, though not large, was well proportioned. He was, however, heavy in his shoulders, and slow of foot. His hair was a bright chesnut, he was *eagle-faced*, his forehead smooth, and open, his eyes lively, his nose hooked, and his mouth small with uneven teeth. He wore his mustachoes very large, and his beard very thick. He had also a hesitation in his speech. The good qualities of his mind were engraven in his countenance, the lively serenity of which announced an affable disposition and an elevated genius. In the preface to the "Novelas" Cervantes gives the following description of himself, or rather of the portrait, which was painted by Don Juan de Jauregui, and prefixed to an early edition of that work: "Este que veis aqui de rostro aguileño, de cabello castaño, frente lisa y desembarazada, de alegres ojos, y de nariz corva aunque bien proporcionada, las barbas de plata que non ha veinte años que fueron de oro, los bigotes grandes, la boca pequeña, los dientes no crecidos porque no tiene sino seis y esos mal acondicionados, y peor puestos porque no tienen correspondencia los unos con los otros, el cuerpo entre dos extremos, ni grande ni pequeño, la color viva antes blanca que morena, algo cargado de espaldas, y no muy ligero de pies: este digo, que es el rostro del autor de Don Quixote de la Mancha, &c. : llamase comunmente



Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra: fue soldado muchos años, y cinco y medio cautivo, donde aprendió á tener paciencia en las adversidades.”—  
“This picture, which you see here with an eagle-face, chesnut hair, open and smooth forehead, lively eyes, with a well-proportioned curved nose, a silver beard, which twenty years ago was golden, with large mustachoes, a small mouth, with only six half grown and worse placed teeth, a person neither tall nor short, a complexion more fair than dark, heavy shouldered and slow footed; this, I say, is the portrait of the author of *Don Quixote de la Mancha*, &c. commonly called Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, who was many years a soldier, and five years and a half a captive, where he learnt to possess patience towards his adversaries.”

Such was his own account. His principal virtues were sincerity, moderation, and gratitude. He possessed that native openness of character, which is better preserved by an intercourse with books than with mankind. He was, however, exempt from that fear and embarrassment, which is often visible in those, who know nothing of the world. He knew how to conduct himself when in company with the great, who protected him, and not to abuse their favours. He loved tranquillity, and lost his vivacity and natural grace, when he was deprived of his repose and power of application. For this reason, although he

lived almost always near the court, he never aspired to the character of a courtier. His modesty and penetration kept him at a distance from such a system of restraint and dissimulation. He well knew, that the pleasures of a court are but superficial, and only catch the eye, while its pains, though concealed, are acute and certain.

His probity, though not so well directed, was equal to his gratitude. By the latter he preserved the friends and companions, which his peaceable and quiet disposition gained him; while the former offended many, who, blinded by self-love, could not bear the brightness of that truth, which is so conspicuous in most of his works. He still, however, threw over the whole a veil of urbanity, discretion, and modesty; and although he severely lashed the vice, he was reserved and indulgent to the agent. He was towards himself only an exception to this rule; confessing his own defects with an ingenuousness much more praiseworthy than the stern and severe purity of Cato, who forgave not himself for having been blind to the faults of others. Cervantes was indulgent to others and severe to himself.

It is useless to dwell longer on this subject. His principles were honourable, because they proceeded from a noble soul, and were directed entirely by religious considerations. They preserved him from the effects of deceit, detraction, or flattery, and consequently shut up all the avenues

to ambition. As he knew not how to acquire fame by any other means than his pen, or to court favour but by merit, he left no other inheritance but his works.

Besides the productions already mentioned, he was engaged in four others at the time of his death: the second part of *Galatea*, "The Garden Week," "Bernardo," and "The Deception of the Eyes;" the last of which was a comedy, that he composed for the purpose of avoiding the defects, which were noticed in those he printed in 1615. These works were never finished; and at this day no part of them is extant but their titles, which are mentioned in his other writings.

After the death of Cervantes his widow obtained the privilege of publishing "*Persilis and Sigismunda*," and printed it at Madrid in the year 1617. This was the last tribute she could pay to her husband's memory, and the only inheritance he could bequeath her in his will. Whether Cervantes left any family is now uncertain, as no proof of any is to be found, nor does he himself take notice of it in any way; it may therefore be fairly concluded, that he died without issue.

Had this illustrious Spaniard lived at Athens or at Rome, they would have erected statues to his memory, and transmitted his life to posterity with that bold and nervous eloquence, with which they knew how to honour the merit of an Aristophanes, a Plautus, a Varro, or a Terence, and

which flowed from the pen of a Demosthenes or a Plutarch, of a Tacitus or a Cicero. While the utmost inquiry and perseverance of the present age have been able to produce no fuller account than is now before the public, owing to the want of diligence, or inclination, of his contemporaries.

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In an edition of the most celebrated work of this Author it may not be thought improper to give some account of it. And, perhaps, what follows may not only afford some amusement, but enable others to form a more correct judgment. It would, perhaps, be better that those, if indeed there be any such, who have not yet read the Quixote, should first peruse it, as they will then be better able to appreciate the merits of that work, and the propriety of the following observations; the length of which it is presumed the great excellence of the Quixote itself will in some measure justify.

Most of those authors, who have praised this work, have confined themselves chiefly to general commendation, without attempting any distinct investigation of its plan, character, and object. This undertaking is certainly difficult, yet such is the purport of the following pages, as being best adapted to show the merit of its author.

In order to acquire the principles, on which to form a judgment of Don Quixote, it is necessary

to recur to the sources of true taste, and thence to discover the most natural and pleasing modes of entertaining the mind, and instructing the heart, in imitating the actions of a ridiculous and extravagant personage. This history presents to the imagination of the reader, from the very beginning, the picture of a hero, to whom the author attributes one sole action with a determinate end. This also is equally the purport of an epic fable; and consequently the general principles of the latter may be applied to the Quixote: not forgetting, in such application, the difference there ought always to be, between the relation of the ridiculous actions of a burlesque hero, whose example we are to shun, and the poetical representation of the surprising deeds of a true hero, whose excellencies we are to admire.

Previous to forming any judgment of the Quixote, it is necessary to give some idea of the principles, on which such judgment should be founded, and then individually apply those rules, which result from them. This will not only assist in appreciating the merits of this particular work, but is equally applicable to all burlesque fables.

Our reason tells us, that the principles of any art should be short, clear, and distinct; and deduced from one fixed and determinate source. These are the sure means, by which an artist can obtain his end. The object of all ingenious fabulists is principally to convey instruction under