Don Quixote, II−v27, Illustrated

Miguel de Cervantes

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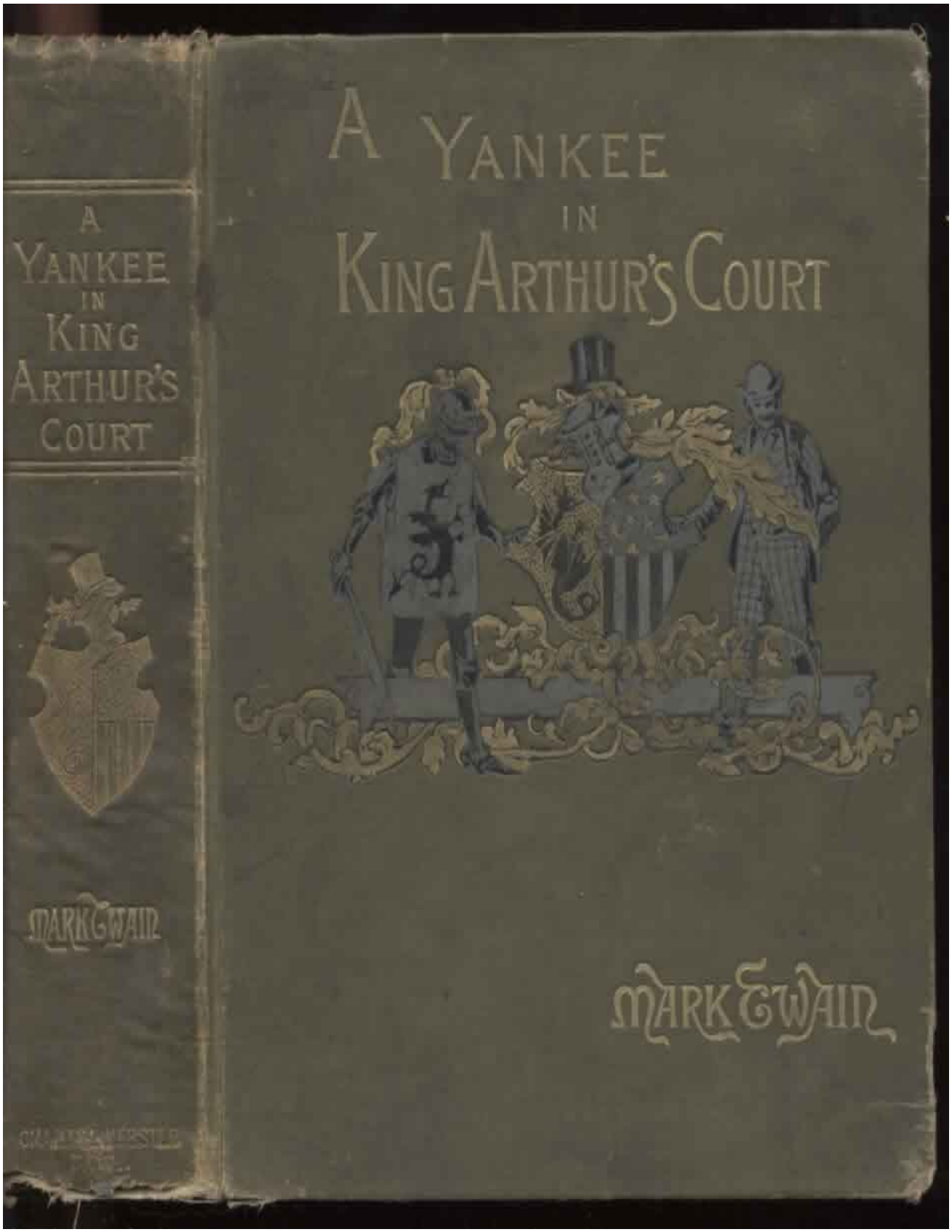
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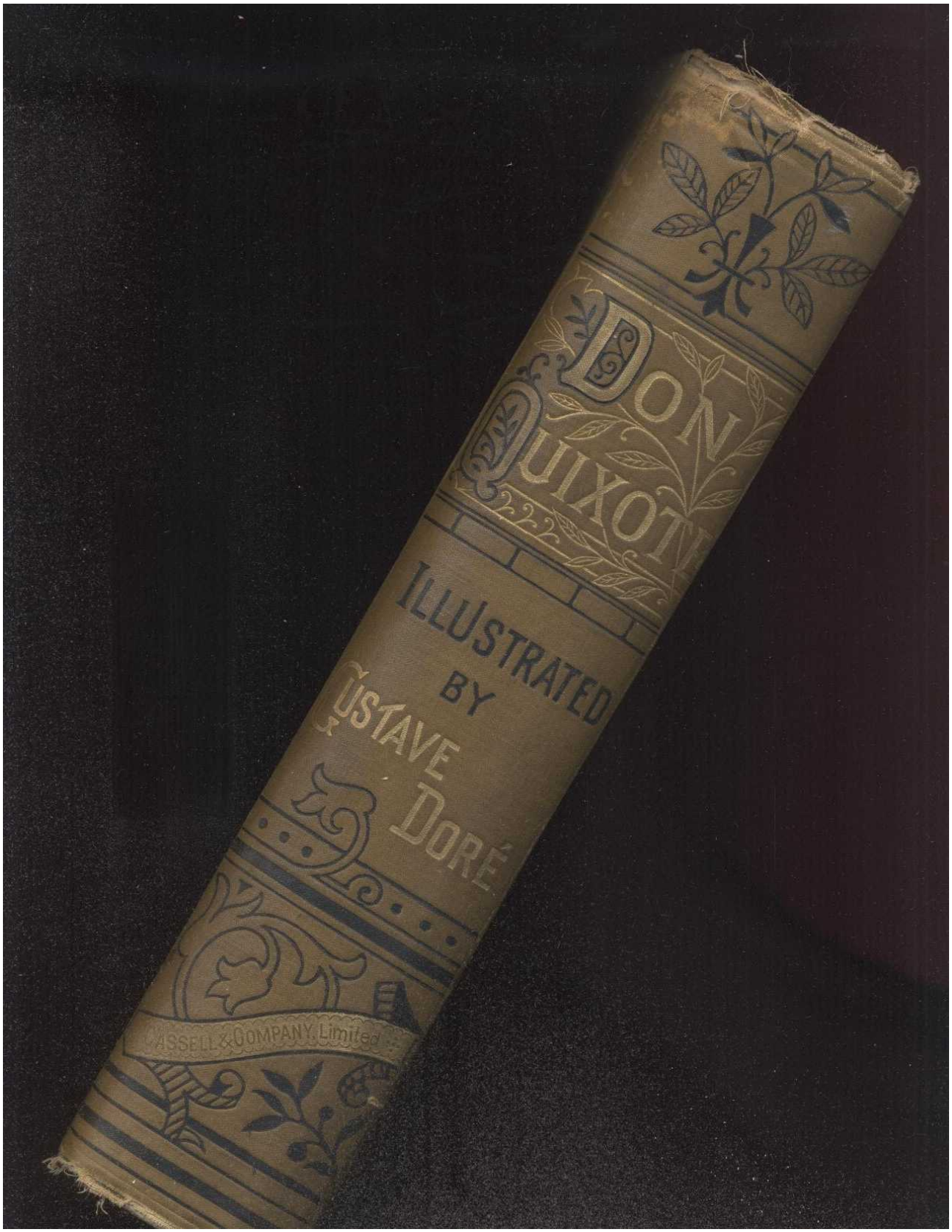
DON QUIXOTE
ILLUSTRATED BY GUSTAVE DORÉ
CASSELL & COMPANY, Limited

Ebook Editor's Note

The book cover and spine above and the images which follow were not part of the original Ormsby translation—they are taken from the 1880 edition of J. W. Clark, illustrated by Gustave Dore. Clark in his edition states that, "The English text of 'Don Quixote' adopted in this edition is that of Jarvis, with occasional corrections from Motteaux." See in the introduction below John Ormsby's critique of both the Jarvis and Motteaux translations. It has been elected in the present Project Gutenberg edition to attach the famous engravings of Gustave Dore to the Ormsby translation instead of the Jarvis/Motteaux. The detail of many of the Dore engravings can be fully appreciated only by utilizing the "Full Size" button to expand them to their original dimensions. Ormsby in his Preface has criticized the fanciful nature of Dore's illustrations; others feel that these woodcuts and steel engravings well match the dreams of the man from La Mancha. D.W.

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Part II.

DON QUIXOTE

PART II.

CHAPTER XXVI.

WHEREIN IS CONTINUED THE DROLL ADVENTURE OF THE PUPPET−SHOWMAN, TOGETHER WITH OTHER THINGS IN TRUTH RIGHT GOOD

All were silent, Tyrians and Trojans; I mean all who were watching the show were hanging on the lips of the interpreter of its wonders, when drums and trumpets were heard to sound inside it and cannon to go off. The noise was soon over, and then the boy lifted up his voice and said, "This true story which is here represented to your worships is taken word for word from the French chronicles and from the Spanish ballads that are in everybody's mouth, and in the mouth of the boys about the streets. Its subject is the release by Senor Don Gaiferos of his wife Melisendra, when a captive in Spain at the hands of the Moors in the city of Sansuena, for so they called then what is now called Saragossa; and there you may see how Don Gaiferos is playing at the tables, just as they sing it−

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At tables playing Don Gaiferos sits,
For Melisendra is forgotten now.
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And that personage who appears there with a crown on his head and a sceptre in his hand is the Emperor Charlemagne, the supposed father of Melisendra, who, angered to see his son−in−law's inaction and unconcern, comes in to chide him; and observe with what vehemence and energy he chides him, so that you would fancy he was going to give him half a dozen raps with his sceptre; and indeed there are authors who say he did give them, and sound ones too; and after having said a great deal to him about imperilling his honour by not effecting the release of his wife, he said, so the tale runs,

Enough I've said, see to it now.

Observe, too, how the emperor turns away, and leaves Don Gaiferos fuming; and you see now how in a burst of anger, he flings the table and the board far from him and calls in haste for his armour, and asks his cousin Don Roland for the loan of his sword, Durindana, and how Don Roland refuses to lend it, offering him his company in the difficult enterprise he is undertaking; but he, in his valour and anger, will not accept it, and says that he alone will suffice to rescue his wife, even though she were imprisoned deep in the centre of the earth, and with this he retires to arm himself and set out on his journey at once. Now let your worships turn your eyes to that tower that appears there, which is supposed to be one of the towers of the alcazar of Saragossa, now called the Aljaferia; that lady who appears on that balcony dressed in Moorish fashion is the peerless Melisendra, for many a time she used to gaze from thence upon the road to France, and seek consolation in her captivity by thinking of Paris and her husband. Observe, too, a new incident which now occurs, such as, perhaps, never was seen. Do you not see that Moor, who silently and stealthily, with his finger on his lip, approaches Melisendra from behind? Observe now how he prints a kiss upon her lips, and what a hurry she is in to spit, and wipe them with the white sleeve of her smock, and how she bewails herself, and tears her fair hair as though it were to blame for the wrong. Observe, too, that the stately Moor who is in that corridor is King Marsilio of Sansuena, who, having seen the Moor's insolence, at once orders him (though his kinsman and a great favourite of his) to be seized and given two hundred lashes, while carried through the streets of the city according to custom, with criers going before him and officers of justice behind; and here you see them come out to execute the sentence, although the offence has been scarcely committed; for among the Moors there are no indictments nor remands as with us."

Here Don Quixote called out, "Child, child, go straight on with your story, and don't run into curves and slants, for to establish a fact clearly there is need of a great deal of proof and confirmation;" and said Master Pedro from within, "Boy, stick to your text and do as the gentleman bids you; it's the best plan; keep to your plain song, and don't attempt harmonies, for they are apt to break down from being over fine."

"I will," said the boy, and he went on to say, "This figure that you see here on horseback, covered with a Gascon cloak, is Don Gaiferos himself, whom his wife, now avenged of the insult of the amorous Moor, and taking her stand on the balcony of the tower with a calmer and more tranquil countenance, has perceived without recognising him; and she addresses her husband, supposing him to be some traveller, and holds with him all that conversation and colloquy in the ballad that runs—

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If you, sir knight, to France are bound,
Oh! for Gaiferos ask—
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which I do not repeat here because prolixity begets disgust; suffice it to observe how Don Gaiferos discovers himself, and that by her joyful gestures Melisendra shows us she has recognised him; and what is more, we now see she lowers herself from the balcony to place herself on the haunches of her good husband's horse. But ah! unhappy lady, the edge of her petticoat has caught on one of the bars of the balcony and she is left hanging in the air, unable to reach the ground. But you see how compassionate heaven sends aid in our sorest need; Don Gaiferos advances, and without minding whether the rich petticoat is torn or not, he seizes her and by force brings her to the ground, and then with one jerk places her on the haunches of his horse, astraddle like a man, and bids her hold on tight and clasp her arms round his neck, crossing them on his breast so as not to fall, for the lady Melisendra was not used to that style of riding. You see, too, how the neighing of the horse shows his satisfaction with the gallant and beautiful burden he bears in his lord and lady. You see how they wheel round and quit the city, and in joy and gladness take the road to Paris. Go in peace, O peerless pair of true lovers! May you reach your longed−for fatherland in safety, and may fortune interpose no impediment to your prosperous journey; may

the eyes of your friends and kinsmen behold you enjoying in peace and tranquillity the remaining days of your life—and that they may be as many as those of Nestor!"

Here Master Pedro called out again and said, "Simplicity, boy! None of your high flights; all affectation is bad."

The interpreter made no answer, but went on to say, "There was no want of idle eyes, that see everything, to see Melisendra come down and mount, and word was brought to King Marsilio, who at once gave orders to sound the alarm; and see what a stir there is, and how the city is drowned with the sound of the bells pealing in the towers of all the mosques."

"Nay, nay," said Don Quixote at this; "on that point of the bells Master Pedro is very inaccurate, for bells are not in use among the Moors; only kettledrums, and a kind of small trumpet somewhat like our clarion; to ring bells this way in Sansuena is unquestionably a great absurdity."

On hearing this, Master Pedro stopped ringing, and said, "Don't look into trifles, Senor Don Quixote, or want to have things up to a pitch of perfection that is out of reach. Are there not almost every day a thousand comedies represented all round us full of thousands of inaccuracies and absurdities, and, for all that, they have a successful run, and are listened to not only with applause, but with admiration and all the rest of it? Go on, boy, and don't mind; for so long as I fill my pouch, no matter if I show as many inaccuracies as there are motes in a sunbeam."

"True enough," said Don Quixote; and the boy went on: "See what a numerous and glittering crowd of horsemen issues from the city in pursuit of the two faithful lovers, what a blowing of trumpets there is, what sounding of horns, what beating of drums and tabors; I fear me they will overtake them and bring them back tied to the tail of their own horse, which would be a dreadful sight."


G.Doré

Don Quixote, however, seeing such a swarm of Moors and hearing such a din, thought it would be right to aid the fugitives, and standing up he exclaimed in a loud voice, "Never, while I live, will I permit foul play to be practised in my presence on such a famous knight and fearless lover as Don Gaiferos. Halt! ill−born rabble, follow him not nor pursue him, or ye will have to reckon with me in battle!" and suiting the action to the word, he drew his sword, and with one bound placed himself close to the show, and with unexampled rapidity and fury began to shower down blows on the puppet troop of Moors, knocking over some, decapitating others, maiming this one and demolishing that; and among many more he delivered one down stroke which, if Master Pedro had not ducked, made himself small, and got out of the way, would have sliced off his head as easily as if it had been made of almond−paste. Master Pedro kept shouting, "Hold hard! Senor Don Quixote! can't you see they're not real Moors you're knocking down and killing and destroying, but only little pasteboard figures! Look—sinner that I am!—how you're wrecking and ruining all that I'm worth!" But in spite of this, Don Quixote did not leave off discharging a continuous rain of cuts, slashes, downstrokes, and backstrokes, and at length, in less than the space of two credos, he brought the whole show to the ground, with all its fittings and figures shivered and knocked to pieces, King Marsilio badly wounded, and the Emperor Charlemagne with his crown and head split in two. The whole audience was thrown into confusion, the ape fled to the roof of the inn, the cousin was frightened, and even Sancho Panza himself was in mighty fear, for, as he swore after the storm was over, he had never seen his master in such a furious passion.

The complete destruction of the show being thus accomplished, Don Quixote became a little calmer, said, "I wish I had here before me now all those who do not or will not believe how useful knights−errant are in the world; just think, if I had not been here present, what would have become of the brave Don Gaiferos and the fair Melisendra! Depend upon it, by this time those dogs would have overtaken them and inflicted some outrage upon them. So, then, long live knight−errantry beyond everything living on earth this day!"

"Let it live, and welcome," said Master Pedro at this in a feeble voice, "and let me die, for I am so unfortunate that I can say with King Don Rodrigo—

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Yesterday was I lord of Spain
To−day I've not a turret left
That I may call mine own.
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Not half an hour, nay, barely a minute ago, I saw myself lord of kings and emperors, with my stables filled with countless horses, and my trunks and bags with gay dresses unnumbered; and now I find myself ruined and laid low, destitute and a beggar, and above all without my ape, for, by my faith, my teeth will have to sweat for it before I have him caught; and all through the reckless fury of sir knight here, who, they say, protects the fatherless, and rights wrongs, and does other charitable deeds; but whose generous intentions have been found wanting in my case only, blessed and praised be the highest heavens! Verily, knight of the rueful figure he must be to have disfigured mine."

Sancho Panza was touched by Master Pedro's words, and said to him, "Don't weep and lament, Master Pedro; you break my heart; let me tell you my master, Don Quixote, is so catholic and scrupulous a Christian that, if he can make out that he has done you any wrong, he will own it, and be willing to pay for it and make it good, and something over and above."

"Only let Senor Don Quixote pay me for some part of the work he has destroyed," said Master Pedro, "and I would be content, and his worship would ease his conscience, for he cannot be saved who keeps what is another's against the owner's will, and makes no restitution."

"That is true," said Don Quixote; "but at present I am not aware that I have got anything of yours, Master Pedro."

"What!" returned Master Pedro; "and these relics lying here on the bare hard ground—what scattered and

shattered them but the invincible strength of that mighty arm? And whose were the bodies they belonged to but mine? And what did I get my living by but by them?"

"Now am I fully convinced," said Don Quixote, "of what I had many a time before believed; that the enchanters who persecute me do nothing more than put figures like these before my eyes, and then change and turn them into what they please. In truth and earnest, I assure you gentlemen who now hear me, that to me everything that has taken place here seemed to take place literally, that Melisendra was Melisendra, Don Gaiferos Don Gaiferos, Marsilio Marsilio, and Charlemagne Charlemagne. That was why my anger was roused; and to be faithful to my calling as a knight−errant I sought to give aid and protection to those who fled, and with this good intention I did what you have seen. If the result has been the opposite of what I intended, it is no fault of mine, but of those wicked beings that persecute me; but, for all that, I am willing to condemn myself in costs for this error of mine, though it did not proceed from malice; let Master Pedro see what he wants for the spoiled figures, for I agree to pay it at once in good and current money of Castile."

Master Pedro made him a bow, saying, "I expected no less of the rare Christianity of the valiant Don Quixote of La Mancha, true helper and protector of all destitute and needy vagabonds; master landlord here and the great Sancho Panza shall be the arbitrators and appraisers between your worship and me of what these dilapidated figures are worth or may be worth."

The landlord and Sancho consented, and then Master Pedro picked up from the ground King Marsilio of Saragossa with his head off, and said, "Here you see how impossible it is to restore this king to his former state, so I think, saving your better judgments, that for his death, decease, and demise, four reals and a half may be given me."

"Proceed," said Don Quixote.

"Well then, for this cleavage from top to bottom," continued Master Pedro, taking up the split Emperor Charlemagne, "it would not be much if I were to ask five reals and a quarter."

"It's not little," said Sancho.

"Nor is it much," said the landlord; "make it even, and say five reals."

"Let him have the whole five and a quarter," said Don Quixote; "for the sum total of this notable disaster does not stand on a quarter more or less; and make an end of it quickly, Master Pedro, for it's getting on to supper−time, and I have some hints of hunger."

"For this figure," said Master Pedro, "that is without a nose, and wants an eye, and is the fair Melisendra, I ask, and I am reasonable in my charge, two reals and twelve maravedis."

"The very devil must be in it," said Don Quixote, "if Melisendra and her husband are not by this time at least on the French border, for the horse they rode on seemed to me to fly rather than gallop; so you needn't try to sell me the cat for the hare, showing me here a noseless Melisendra when she is now, may be, enjoying herself at her ease with her husband in France. God help every one to his own, Master Pedro, and let us all proceed fairly and honestly; and now go on."

Master Pedro, perceiving that Don Quixote was beginning to wander, and return to his original fancy, was not disposed to let him escape, so he said to him, "This cannot be Melisendra, but must be one of the damsels that waited on her; so if I'm given sixty maravedis for her, I'll be content and sufficiently paid."

And so he went on, putting values on ever so many more smashed figures, which, after the two arbitrators had adjusted them to the satisfaction of both parties, came to forty reals and three−quarters; and over and above this sum, which Sancho at once disbursed, Master Pedro asked for two reals for his trouble in catching the ape.

"Let him have them, Sancho," said Don Quixote; "not to catch the ape, but to get drunk; and two hundred would I give this minute for the good news, to anyone who could tell me positively, that the lady Dona Melisandra and Senor Don Gaiferos were now in France and with their own people."

"No one could tell us that better than my ape," said Master Pedro; "but there's no devil that could catch him now; I suspect, however, that affection and hunger will drive him to come looking for me to−night; but to−morrow will soon be here and we shall see."

In short, the puppet−show storm passed off, and all supped in peace and good fellowship at Don Quixote's expense, for he was the height of generosity. Before it was daylight the man with the lances and halberds took his departure, and soon after daybreak the cousin and the page came to bid Don Quixote farewell, the former returning home, the latter resuming his journey, towards which, to help him, Don Quixote gave him twelve reals.

Master Pedro did not care to engage in any more palaver with Don Quixote, whom he knew right well; so he rose before the sun, and having got together the remains of his show and caught his ape, he too went off to seek his adventures. The landlord, who did not know Don Quixote, was as much astonished at his mad freaks as at his generosity. To conclude, Sancho, by his master's orders, paid him very liberally, and taking leave of him they quitted the inn at about eight in the morning and took to the road, where we will leave them to pursue their journey, for this is necessary in order to allow certain other matters to be set forth, which are required to clear up this famous history.

CHAPTER XXVII.

WHEREIN IT IS SHOWN WHO MASTER PEDRO AND HIS APE WERE, TOGETHER WITH THE MISHAP DON QUIXOTE HAD IN THE BRAYING ADVENTURE, WHICH HE DID NOT CONCLUDE AS HE WOULD HAVE LIKED OR AS HE HAD EXPECTED

Cide Hamete, the chronicler of this great history, begins this chapter with these words, "I swear as a Catholic Christian;" with regard to which his translator says that Cide Hamete's swearing as a Catholic Christian, he being—as no doubt he was—a Moor, only meant that, just as a Catholic Christian taking an oath swears, or ought to swear, what is true, and tell the truth in what he avers, so he was telling the truth, as much as if he swore as a Catholic Christian, in all he chose to write about Quixote, especially in declaring who Master Pedro was and what was the divining ape that astonished all the villages with his divinations. He says, then, that he who has read the First Part of this history will remember well enough the Gines de Pasamonte whom, with other galley slaves, Don Quixote set free in the Sierra Morena: a kindness for which he afterwards got poor thanks and worse payment from that evil−minded, ill−conditioned set. This Gines de Pasamonte—Don Ginesillo de Parapilla, Don Quixote called him—it was that stole Dapple from Sancho Panza; which, because by the fault of the printers neither the how nor the when was stated in the First Part, has been a puzzle to a good many people, who attribute to the bad memory of the author what was the error of the press. In fact, however, Gines stole him while Sancho Panza was asleep on his back, adopting the plan and device that Brunello had recourse to when he stole Sacripante's horse from between his legs at the siege of Albracca; and, as has been told, Sancho afterwards recovered him. This

Gines, then, afraid of being caught by the officers of justice, who were looking for him to punish him for his numberless rascalities and offences (which were so many and so great that he himself wrote a big book giving an account of them), resolved to shift his quarters into the kingdom of Aragon, and cover up his left eye, and take up the trade of a puppet−showman; for this, as well as juggling, he knew how to practise to perfection. From some released Christians returning from Barbary, it so happened, he bought the ape, which he taught to mount upon his shoulder on his making a certain sign, and to whisper, or seem to do so, in his ear. Thus prepared, before entering any village whither he was bound with his show and his ape, he used to inform himself at the nearest village, or from the most likely person he could find, as to what particular things had happened there, and to whom; and bearing them well in mind, the first thing be did was to exhibit his show, sometimes one story, sometimes another, but all lively, amusing, and familiar. As soon as the exhibition was over he brought forward the accomplishments of his ape, assuring the public that he divined all the past and the present, but as to the future he had no skill. For each question answered he asked two reals, and for some he made a reduction, just as he happened to feel the pulse of the questioners; and when now and then he came to houses where things that he knew of had happened to the people living there, even if they did not ask him a question, not caring to pay for it, he would make the sign to the ape and then declare that it had said so and so, which fitted the case exactly. In this way he acquired a prodigious name and all ran after him; on other occasions, being very crafty, he would answer in such a way that the answers suited the questions; and as no one cross−questioned him or pressed him to tell how his ape divined, he made fools of them all and filled his pouch. The instant he entered the inn he knew Don Quixote and Sancho, and with that knowledge it was easy for him to astonish them and all who were there; but it would have cost him dear had Don Quixote brought down his hand a little lower when he cut off King Marsilio's head and destroyed all his horsemen, as related in the preceeding chapter.

So much for Master Pedro and his ape; and now to return to Don Quixote of La Mancha. After he had left the inn he determined to visit, first of all, the banks of the Ebro and that neighbourhood, before entering the city of Saragossa, for the ample time there was still to spare before the jousts left him enough for all. With this object in view he followed the road and travelled along it for two days, without meeting any adventure worth committing to writing until on the third day, as he was ascending a hill, he heard a great noise of drums, trumpets, and musket−shots. At first he imagined some regiment of soldiers was passing that way, and to see them he spurred Rocinante and mounted the hill. On reaching the top he saw at the foot of it over two hundred men, as it seemed to him, armed with weapons of various sorts, lances, crossbows, partisans, halberds, and pikes, and a few muskets and a great many bucklers. He descended the slope and approached the band near enough to see distinctly the flags, make out the colours and distinguish the devices they bore, especially one on a standard or ensign of white satin, on which there was painted in a very life−like style an ass like a little sard, with its head up, its mouth open and its tongue out, as if it were in the act and attitude of braying; and round it were inscribed in large characters these two lines−

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They did not bray in vain,
Our alcaldes twain.
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From this device Don Quixote concluded that these people must be from the braying town, and he said so to Sancho, explaining to him what was written on the standard. At the same time be observed that the man who had told them about the matter was wrong in saying that the two who brayed were regidors, for according to the lines of the standard they were alcaldes. To which Sancho replied, "Senor, there's nothing to stick at in that, for maybe the regidors who brayed then came to he alcaldes of their town afterwards, and so they may go by both titles; moreover, it has nothing to do with the truth of the story whether the brayers were alcaldes or regidors, provided at any rate they did bray; for an alcalde is just as likely to bray as a regidor." They perceived, in short, clearly that the town which had been twitted had turned out to do battle with some other that had jeered it more than was fair or neighbourly.

Don Quixote proceeded to join them, not a little to Sancho's uneasiness, for he never relished mixing himself

up in expeditions of that sort. The members of the troop received him into the midst of them, taking him to he some one who was on their side. Don Quixote, putting up his visor, advanced with an easy bearing and demeanour to the standard with the ass, and all the chief men of the army gathered round him to look at him, staring at him with the usual amazement that everybody felt on seeing him for the first time. Don Quixote, seeing them examining him so attentively, and that none of them spoke to him or put any question to him, determined to take advantage of their silence; so, breaking his own, he lifted up his voice and said, "Worthy sirs, I entreat you as earnestly as I can not to interrupt an argument I wish to address to you, until you find it displeases or wearies you; and if that come to pass, on the slightest hint you give me I will put a seal upon my lips and a gag upon my tongue."

They all bade him say what he liked, for they would listen to him willingly.

With this permission Don Quixote went on to say, "I, sirs, am a knight−errant whose calling is that of arms, and whose profession is to protect those who require protection, and give help to such as stand in need of it. Some days ago I became acquainted with your misfortune and the cause which impels you to take up arms again and again to revenge yourselves upon your enemies; and having many times thought over your business in my mind, I find that, according to the laws of combat, you are mistaken in holding yourselves insulted; for a private individual cannot insult an entire community; unless it be by defying it collectively as a traitor, because he cannot tell who in particular is guilty of the treason for which he defies it. Of this we have an example in Don Diego Ordonez de Lara, who defied the whole town of Zamora, because he did not know that Vellido Dolfos alone had committed the treachery of slaying his king; and therefore he defied them all, and the vengeance and the reply concerned all; though, to be sure, Senor Don Diego went rather too far, indeed very much beyond the limits of a defiance; for he had no occasion to defy the dead, or the waters, or the fishes, or those yet unborn, and all the rest of it as set forth; but let that pass, for when anger breaks out there's no father, governor, or bridle to check the tongue. The case being, then, that no one person can insult a kingdom, province, city, state, or entire community, it is clear there is no reason for going out to avenge the defiance of such an insult, inasmuch as it is not one. A fine thing it would be if the people of the clock town were to be at loggerheads every moment with everyone who called them by that name,—or the Cazoleros, Berengeneros, Ballenatos, Jaboneros, or the bearers of all the other names and titles that are always in the mouth of the boys and common people! It would be a nice business indeed if all these illustrious cities were to take huff and revenge themselves and go about perpetually making trombones of their swords in every petty quarrel! No, no; God forbid! There are four things for which sensible men and well−ordered States ought to take up arms, draw their swords, and risk their persons, lives, and properties. The first is to defend the Catholic faith; the second, to defend one's life, which is in accordance with natural and divine law; the third, in defence of one's honour, family, and property; the fourth, in the service of one's king in a just war; and if to these we choose to add a fifth (which may be included in the second), in defence of one's country. To these five, as it were capital causes, there may be added some others that may be just and reasonable, and make it a duty to take up arms; but to take them up for trifles and things to laugh at and he amused by rather than offended, looks as though he who did so was altogether wanting in common sense. Moreover, to take an unjust revenge (and there cannot be any just one) is directly opposed to the sacred law that we acknowledge, wherein we are commanded to do good to our enemies and to love them that hate us; a command which, though it seems somewhat difficult to obey, is only so to those who have in them less of God than of the world, and more of the flesh than of the spirit; for Jesus Christ, God and true man, who never lied, and could not and cannot lie, said, as our law−giver, that his yoke was easy and his burden light; he would not, therefore, have laid any command upon us that it was impossible to obey. Thus, sirs, you are bound to keep quiet by human and divine law."

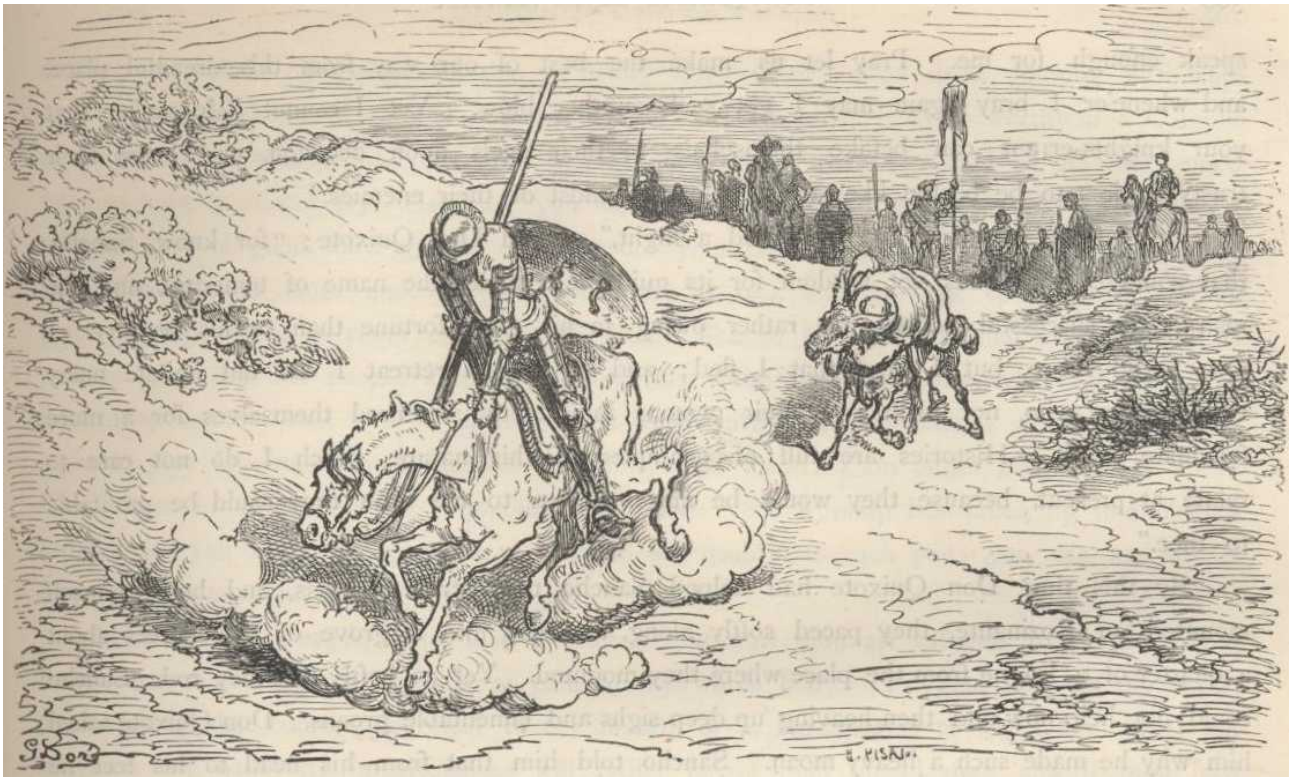
"The devil take me," said Sancho to himself at this, "but this master of mine is a tologian; or, if not, faith, he's as like one as one egg is like another."

Don Quixote stopped to take breath, and, observing that silence was still preserved, had a mind to continue his discourse, and would have done so had not Sancho interposed with his smartness; for he, seeing his master pause, took the lead, saying, "My lord Don Quixote of La Mancha, who once was called the Knight of the Rueful Countenance, but now is called the Knight of the Lions, is a gentleman of great discretion who knows Latin and his mother tongue like a bachelor, and in everything that he deals with or advises proceeds like a good soldier, and has all the laws and ordinances of what they call combat at his fingers' ends; so you have nothing to do but to let yourselves be guided by what he says, and on my head be it if it is wrong. Besides which, you have been told that it is folly to take offence at merely hearing a bray. I remember when I was a boy I brayed as often as I had a fancy, without anyone hindering me, and so elegantly and naturally that when I brayed all the asses in the town would bray; but I was none the less for that the son of my parents who were greatly respected; and though I was envied because of the gift by more than one of the high and mighty ones of the town, I did not care two farthings for it; and that you may see I am telling the truth, wait a bit and listen, for this art, like swimming, once learnt is never forgotten;" and then, taking hold of his nose, he began to bray so vigorously that all the valleys around rang again.

One of those, however, that stood near him, fancying he was mocking them, lifted up a long staff he had in his hand and smote him such a blow with it that Sancho dropped helpless to the ground. Don Quixote, seeing him so roughly handled, attacked the man who had struck him lance in hand, but so many thrust themselves between them that he could not avenge him. Far from it, finding a shower of stones rained upon him, and crossbows and muskets unnumbered levelled at him, he wheeled Rocinante round and, as fast as his best gallop could take him, fled from the midst of them, commending himself to God with all his heart to deliver him out of this peril, in dread every step of some ball coming in at his back and coming out at his breast, and every minute drawing his breath to see whether it had gone from him. The members of the band, however, were satisfied with seeing him take to flight, and did not fire on him. They put up Sancho, scarcely restored to his senses, on his ass, and let him go after his master; not that he was sufficiently in his wits to guide the beast, but Dapple followed the footsteps of Rocinante, from whom he could not remain a moment separated. Don Quixote having got some way off looked back, and seeing Sancho coming, waited for him, as he perceived that no one followed him. The men of the troop stood their ground till night, and as the enemy did not come out to battle, they returned to their town exulting; and had they been aware of the ancient custom of the Greeks, they would have erected a trophy on the spot.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

OF MATTERS THAT BENENGELI SAYS HE WHO READS THEM WILL KNOW, IF HE READS THEM WITH ATTENTION



When the brave man flees, treachery is manifest and it is for wise men to reserve themselves for better occasions. This proved to be the case with Don Quixote, who, giving way before the fury of the townsfolk and the hostile intentions of the angry troop, took to flight and, without a thought of Sancho or the danger in which he was leaving him, retreated to such a distance as he thought made him safe. Sancho, lying across his ass, followed him, as has been said, and at length came up, having by this time recovered his senses, and on joining him let himself drop off Dapple at Rocinante's feet, sore, bruised, and belaboured. Don Quixote dismounted to examine his wounds, but finding him whole from head to foot, he said to him, angrily enough, "In an evil hour didst thou take to braying, Sancho! Where hast thou learned that it is well done to mention the rope in the house of the man that has been hanged? To the music of brays what harmonies couldst thou expect to get but cudgels? Give thanks to God, Sancho, that they signed the cross on thee just now with a stick, and did not mark thee per signum crucis with a cutlass."

"I'm not equal to answering," said Sancho, "for I feel as if I was speaking through my shoulders; let us mount and get away from this; I'll keep from braying, but not from saying that knights−errant fly and leave their good squires to be pounded like privet, or made meal of at the hands of their enemies."

"He does not fly who retires," returned Don Quixote; "for I would have thee know, Sancho, that the valour which is not based upon a foundation of prudence is called rashness, and the exploits of the rash man are to be attributed rather to good fortune than to courage; and so I own that I retired, but not that I fled; and therein I have followed the example of many valiant men who have reserved themselves for better times; the histories are full of instances of this, but as it would not be any good to thee or pleasure to me, I will not recount them to thee now."

Sancho was by this time mounted with the help of Don Quixote, who then himself mounted Rocinante, and at a leisurely pace they proceeded to take shelter in a grove which was in sight about a quarter of a league off. Every now and then Sancho gave vent to deep sighs and dismal groans, and on Don Quixote asking him what caused such acute suffering, he replied that, from the end of his back−bone up to the nape of his neck, he was so sore that it nearly drove him out of his senses.

"The cause of that soreness," said Don Quixote, "will be, no doubt, that the staff wherewith they smote thee being a very long one, it caught thee all down the back, where all the parts that are sore are situated, and had it reached any further thou wouldst be sorer still."

"By God," said Sancho, "your worship has relieved me of a great doubt, and cleared up the point for me in elegant style! Body o' me! is the cause of my soreness such a mystery that there's any need to tell me I am sore everywhere the staff hit me? If it was my ankles that pained me there might be something in going divining why they did, but it is not much to divine that I'm sore where they thrashed me. By my faith, master mine, the ills of others hang by a hair; every day I am discovering more and more how little I have to hope for from keeping company with your worship; for if this time you have allowed me to be drubbed, the next time, or a hundred times more, we'll have the blanketings of the other day over again, and all the other pranks which, if they have fallen on my shoulders now, will be thrown in my teeth by−and−by. I would do a great deal better (if I was not an ignorant brute that will never do any good all my life), I would do a great deal better, I say, to go home to my wife and children and support them and bring them up on what God may please to give me, instead of following your worship along roads that lead nowhere and paths that are none at all, with little to drink and less to eat. And then when it comes to sleeping! Measure out seven feet on the earth, brother squire, and if that's not enough for you, take as many more, for you may have it all your own way and stretch yourself to your heart's content. Oh that I could see burnt and turned to ashes the first man that meddled with knight−errantry or at any rate the first who chose to be squire to such fools as all the knights−errant of past times must have been! Of those of the present day I say nothing, because, as your worship is one of them, I respect them, and because I know your worship knows a point more than the devil in all you say and think."

"I would lay a good wager with you, Sancho," said Don Quixote, "that now that you are talking on without anyone to stop you, you don't feel a pain in your whole body. Talk away, my son, say whatever comes into your head or mouth, for so long as you feel no pain, the irritation your impertinences give me will he a pleasure to me; and if you are so anxious to go home to your wife and children, God forbid that I should prevent you; you have money of mine; see how long it is since we left our village this third time, and how much you can and ought to earn every month, and pay yourself out of your own hand."

"When I worked for Tom Carrasco, the father of the bachelor Samson Carrasco that your worship knows," replied Sancho, "I used to earn two ducats a month besides my food; I can't tell what I can earn with your worship, though I know a knight−errant's squire has harder times of it than he who works for a farmer; for after all, we who work for farmers, however much we toil all day, at the worst, at night, we have our olla supper and sleep in a bed, which I have not slept in since I have been in your worship's service, if it wasn't the short time we were in Don Diego de Miranda's house, and the feast I had with the skimmings I took off Camacho's pots, and what I ate, drank, and slept in Basilio's house; all the rest of the time I have been sleeping on the hard ground under the open sky, exposed to what they call the inclemencies of heaven, keeping life in me with scraps of cheese and crusts of bread, and drinking water either from the brooks or from the springs we come to on these by−paths we travel."

"I own, Sancho," said Don Quixote, "that all thou sayest is true; how much, thinkest thou, ought I to give thee over and above what Tom Carrasco gave thee?"

"I think," said Sancho, "that if your worship was to add on two reals a month I'd consider myself well paid; that is, as far as the wages of my labour go; but to make up to me for your worship's pledge and promise to me to give me the government of an island, it would be fair to add six reals more, making thirty in all."

"Very good," said Don Quixote; "it is twenty−five days since we left our village, so reckon up, Sancho, according to the wages you have made out for yourself, and see how much I owe you in proportion, and pay yourself, as I said before, out of your own hand."

"O body o' me!" said Sancho, "but your worship is very much out in that reckoning; for when it comes to the promise of the island we must count from the day your worship promised it to me to this present hour we are at now."

"Well, how long is it, Sancho, since I promised it to you?" said Don Quixote.

"If I remember rightly," said Sancho, "it must be over twenty years, three days more or less."

Don Quixote gave himself a great slap on the forehead and began to laugh heartily, and said he, "Why, I have not been wandering, either in the Sierra Morena or in the whole course of our sallies, but barely two months, and thou sayest, Sancho, that it is twenty years since I promised thee the island. I believe now thou wouldst have all the money thou hast of mine go in thy wages. If so, and if that be thy pleasure, I give it to thee now, once and for all, and much good may it do thee, for so long as I see myself rid of such a good−for−nothing squire I'll be glad to be left a pauper without a rap. But tell me, thou perverter of the squirely rules of knight−errantry, where hast thou ever seen or read that any knight−errant's squire made terms with his lord, 'you must give me so much a month for serving you'? Plunge, scoundrel, rogue, monster—for such I take thee to be—plunge, I say, into the mare magnum of their histories; and if thou shalt find that any squire ever said or thought what thou hast said now, I will let thee nail it on my forehead, and give me, over and above, four sound slaps in the face. Turn the rein, or the halter, of thy Dapple, and begone home; for one single step further thou shalt not make in my company. O bread thanklessly received! O promises ill−bestowed! O man more beast than human being! Now, when I was about to raise thee to such a position, that, in spite of thy wife, they would call thee 'my lord,' thou art leaving me? Thou art going now when I had a firm and fixed intention of making thee lord of the best island in the world? Well, as thou thyself hast said before now, honey is not for the mouth of the ass. Ass thou art, ass thou wilt be, and ass thou wilt end when the course of thy life is run; for I know it will come to its close before thou dost perceive or discern that thou art a beast."

Sancho regarded Don Quixote earnestly while he was giving him this rating, and was so touched by remorse that the tears came to his eyes, and in a piteous and broken voice he said to him, "Master mine, I confess that, to be a complete ass, all I want is a tail; if your worship will only fix one on to me, I'll look on it as rightly placed, and I'll serve you as an ass all the remaining days of my life. Forgive me and have pity on my folly, and remember I know but little, and, if I talk much, it's more from infirmity than malice; but he who sins and mends commends himself to God."

"I should have been surprised, Sancho," said Don Quixote, "if thou hadst not introduced some bit of a proverb into thy speech. Well, well, I forgive thee, provided thou dost mend and not show thyself in future so fond of thine own interest, but try to be of good cheer and take heart, and encourage thyself to look forward to the fulfillment of my promises, which, by being delayed, does not become impossible."

Sancho said he would do so, and keep up his heart as best he could. They then entered the grove, and Don Quixote settled himself at the foot of an elm, and Sancho at that of a beech, for trees of this kind and others like them always have feet but no hands. Sancho passed the night in pain, for with the evening dews the blow of the staff made itself felt all the more. Don Quixote passed it in his never−failing meditations; but, for all that, they had some winks of sleep, and with the appearance of daylight they pursued their journey in quest of the banks of the famous Ebro, where that befell them which will be told in the following chapter.