Don Quixote, II−v38, Illustrated

Miguel de Cervantes

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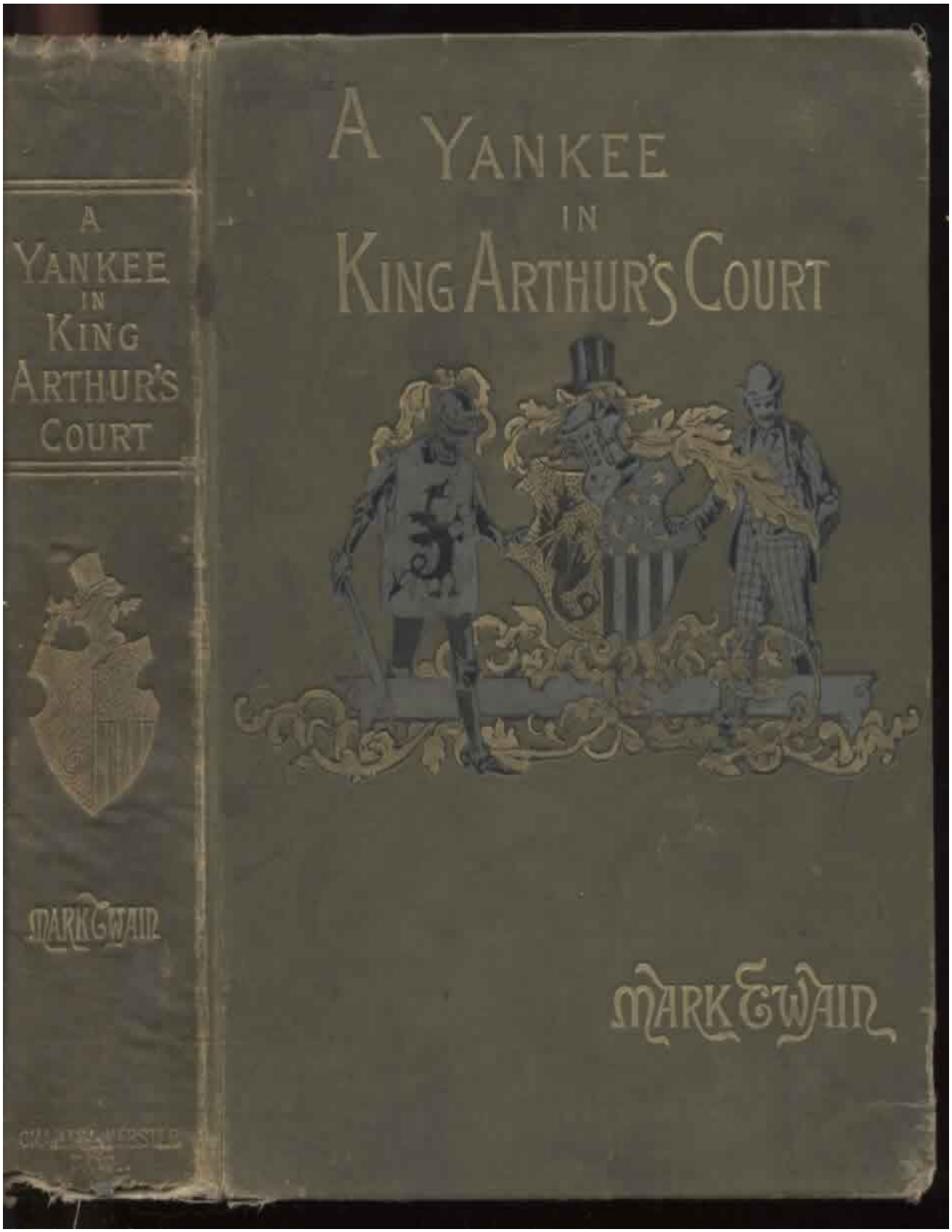
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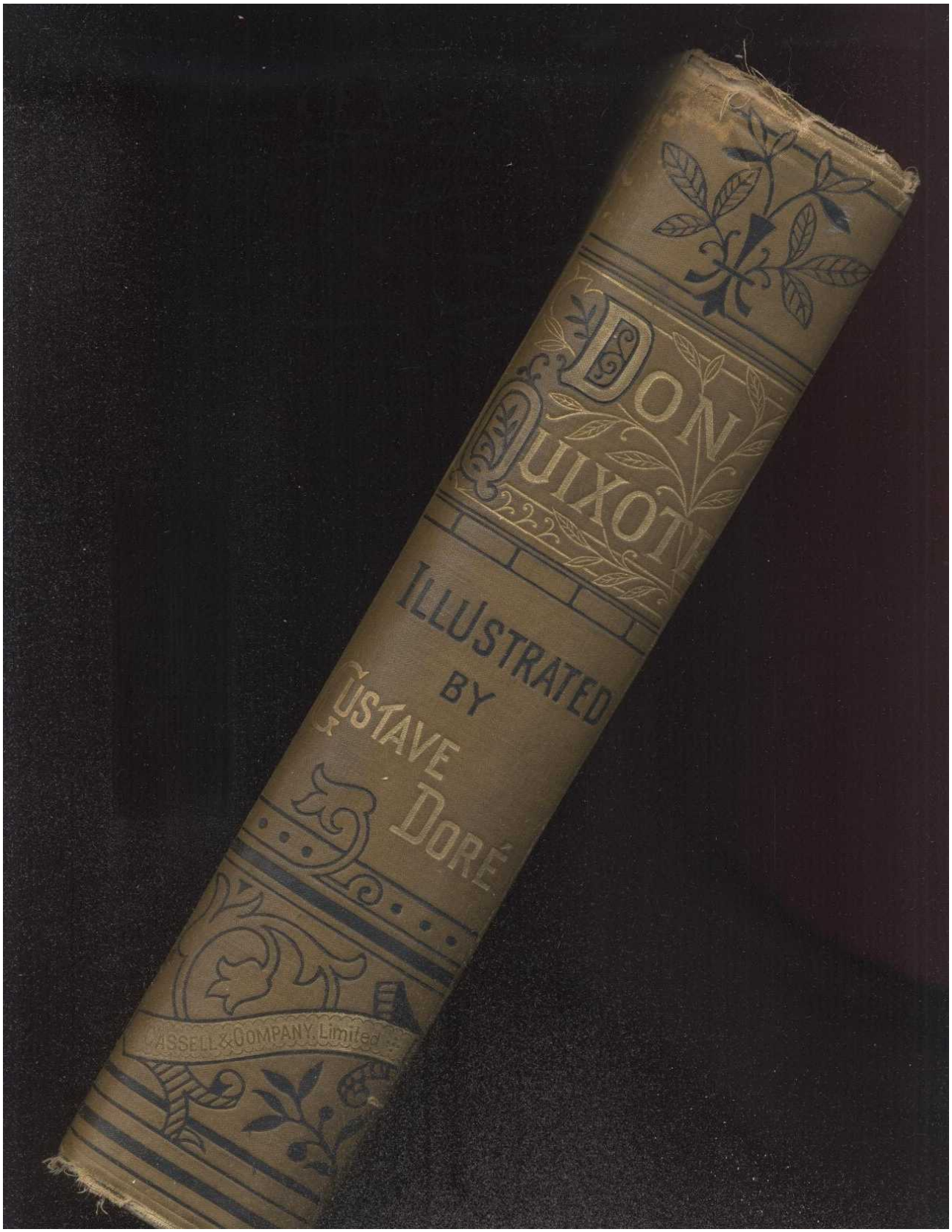
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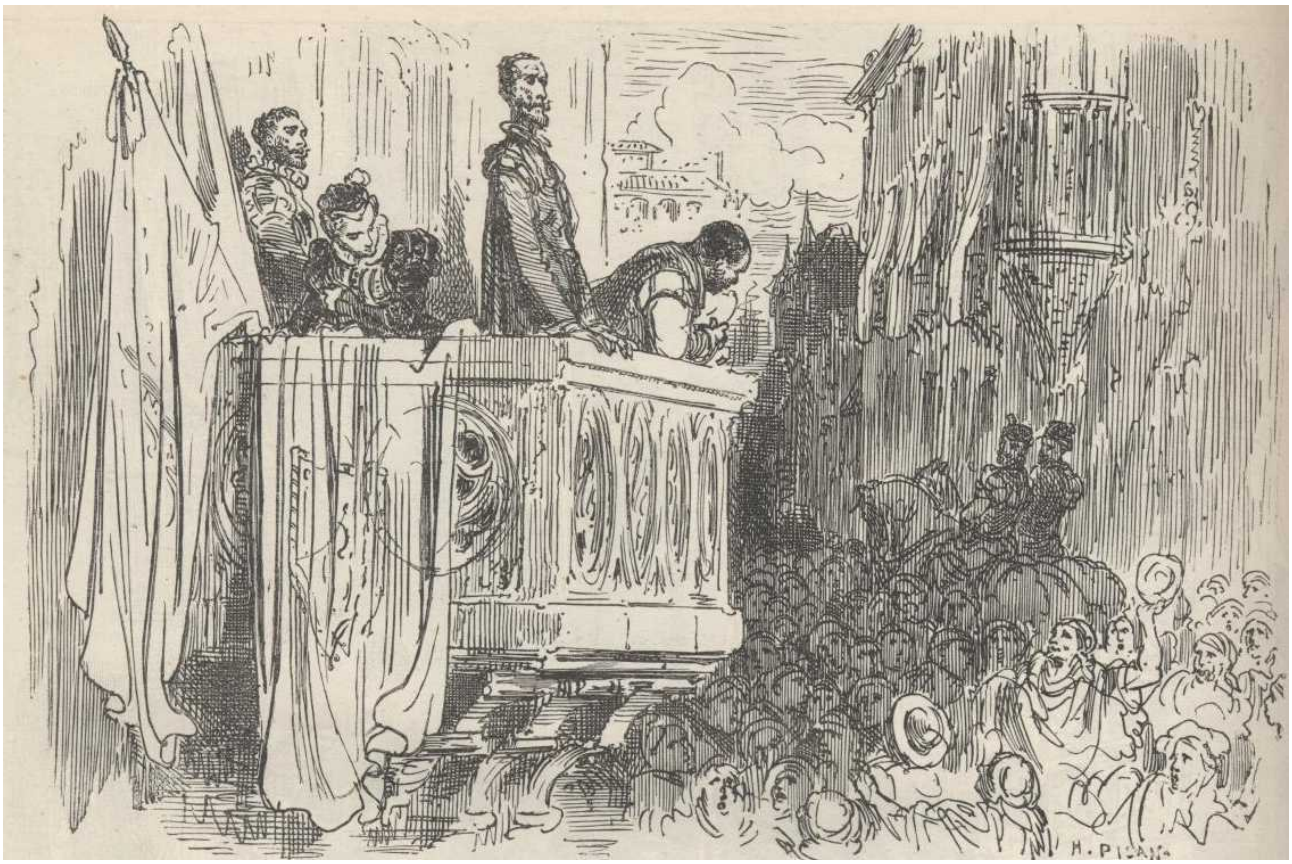
Ebook Editor's Note

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.

CHAPTER LXII.

WHICH DEALS WITH THE ADVENTURE OF THE ENCHANTED HEAD, TOGETHER WITH OTHER TRIVIAL MATTERS WHICH CANNOT BE LEFT UNTOLD



Don Quixote's host was one Don Antonio Moreno by name, a gentleman of wealth and intelligence, and very fond of diverting himself in any fair and good−natured way; and having Don Quixote in his house he set about devising modes of making him exhibit his mad points in some harmless fashion; for jests that give pain are no jests, and no sport is worth anything if it hurts another. The first thing he did was to make Don Quixote take off his armour, and lead him, in that tight chamois suit we have already described and depicted more than once, out on a balcony overhanging one of the chief streets of the city, in full view of the crowd and of the boys, who gazed at him as they would at a monkey. The cavaliers in livery careered before him again as though it were for him alone, and not to enliven the festival of the day, that they wore it, and Sancho was in high delight, for it seemed to him that, how he knew not, he had fallen upon another Camacho's wedding, another house like Don Diego de Miranda's, another castle like the duke's. Some of Don Antonio's friends dined with him that day, and all showed honour to Don Quixote and treated him as a knight−errant, and he becoming puffed up and exalted in consequence could not contain himself for satisfaction. Such were the drolleries of Sancho that all the servants of the house, and all who heard him, were kept hanging upon his lips. While at table Don Antonio said to him, “We

hear, worthy Sancho, that you are so fond of manjar blanco and forced−meat balls, that if you have any left, you keep them in your bosom for the next day."

"No, senor, that's not true," said Sancho, "for I am more cleanly than greedy, and my master Don Quixote here knows well that we two are used to live for a week on a handful of acorns or nuts. To be sure, if it so happens that they offer me a heifer, I run with a halter; I mean, I eat what I'm given, and make use of opportunities as I find them; but whoever says that I'm an out−of−the−way eater or not cleanly, let me tell him that he is wrong; and I'd put it in a different way if I did not respect the honourable beards that are at the table."

"Indeed," said Don Quixote, "Sancho's moderation and cleanliness in eating might be inscribed and graved on plates of brass, to be kept in eternal remembrance in ages to come. It is true that when he is hungry there is a certain appearance of voracity about him, for he eats at a great pace and chews with both jaws; but cleanliness he is always mindful of; and when he was governor he learned how to eat daintily, so much so that he eats grapes, and even pomegranate pips, with a fork."

"What!" said Don Antonio, "has Sancho been a governor?"

"Ay," said Sancho, "and of an island called Barataria. I governed it to perfection for ten days; and lost my rest all the time; and learned to look down upon all the governments in the world; I got out of it by taking to flight, and fell into a pit where I gave myself up for dead, and out of which I escaped alive by a miracle."

Don Quixote then gave them a minute account of the whole affair of Sancho's government, with which he greatly amused his hearers.

On the cloth being removed Don Antonio, taking Don Quixote by the hand, passed with him into a distant room in which there was nothing in the way of furniture except a table, apparently of jasper, resting on a pedestal of the same, upon which was set up, after the fashion of the busts of the Roman emperors, a head which seemed to be of bronze. Don Antonio traversed the whole apartment with Don Quixote and walked round the table several times, and then said, "Now, Senor Don Quixote, that I am satisfied that no one is listening to us, and that the door is shut, I will tell you of one of the rarest adventures, or more properly speaking strange things, that can be imagined, on condition that you will keep what I say to you in the remotest recesses of secrecy."

"I swear it," said Don Quixote, "and for greater security I will put a flag−stone over it; for I would have you know, Senor Don Antonio" (he had by this time learned his name), "that you are addressing one who, though he has ears to hear, has no tongue to speak; so that you may safely transfer whatever you have in your bosom into mine, and rely upon it that you have consigned it to the depths of silence."

"In reliance upon that promise," said Don Antonio, "I will astonish you with what you shall see and hear, and relieve myself of some of the vexation it gives me to have no one to whom I can confide my secrets, for they are not of a sort to be entrusted to everybody."

Don Quixote was puzzled, wondering what could be the object of such precautions; whereupon Don Antonio taking his hand passed it over the bronze head and the whole table and the pedestal of jasper on which it stood, and then said, "This head, Senor Don Quixote, has been made and fabricated by one of the greatest magicians and wizards the world ever saw, a Pole, I believe, by birth, and a pupil of the famous Escotillo of whom such marvellous stories are told. He was here in my house, and for a consideration of a thousand crowns that I gave him he constructed this head, which has the property and virtue of answering whatever questions are put to its ear. He observed the points of the compass, he traced figures, he studied the stars, he watched favourable moments, and at length brought it to the perfection we shall see to−morrow, for on Fridays it is mute, and this being Friday we must wait till the next day. In the interval your worship may consider what you would like to ask it; and I know by experience that in all its answers it tells the truth."

Don Quixote was amazed at the virtue and property of the head, and was inclined to disbelieve Don Antonio; but seeing what a short time he had to wait to test the matter, he did not choose to say anything except that he thanked him for having revealed to him so mighty a secret. They then quitted the room, Don Antonio locked the door, and they repaired to the chamber where the rest of the gentlemen were assembled. In the meantime Sancho had recounted to them several of the adventures and accidents that had happened his master.

That afternoon they took Don Quixote out for a stroll, not in his armour but in street costume, with a surcoat of tawny cloth upon him, that at that season would have made ice itself sweat. Orders were left with the servants to

entertain Sancho so as not to let him leave the house. Don Quixote was mounted, not on Rocinante, but upon a tall mule of easy pace and handsomely caparisoned. They put the surcoat on him, and on the back, without his perceiving it, they stitched a parchment on which they wrote in large letters, “This is Don Quixote of La Mancha.” As they set out upon their excursion the placard attracted the eyes of all who chanced to see him, and as they read out, “This is Don Quixote of La Mancha,” Don Quixote was amazed to see how many people gazed at him, called him by his name, and recognised him, and turning to Don Antonio, who rode at his side, he observed to him, "Great are the privileges knight−errantry involves, for it makes him who professes it known and famous in every region of the earth; see, Don Antonio, even the very boys of this city know me without ever having seen me.”

“True, Senor Don Quixote,” returned Don Antonio; “for as fire cannot be hidden or kept secret, virtue cannot escape being recognised; and that which is attained by the profession of arms shines distinguished above all others.”

It came to pass, however, that as Don Quixote was proceeding amid the acclamations that have been described, a Castilian, reading the inscription on his back, cried out in a loud voice, “The devil take thee for a Don Quixote of La Mancha! What! art thou here, and not dead of the countless drubbings that have fallen on thy ribs? Thou art mad; and if thou wert so by thyself, and kept thyself within thy madness, it would not be so bad; but thou hast the gift of making fools and blockheads of all who have anything to do with thee or say to thee. Why, look at these gentlemen bearing thee company! Get thee home, blockhead, and see after thy affairs, and thy wife and children, and give over these fooleries that are sapping thy brains and skimming away thy wits.”

“Go your own way, brother,” said Don Antonio, “and don't offer advice to those who don't ask you for it. Senor Don Quixote is in his full senses, and we who bear him company are not fools; virtue is to be honoured wherever it may be found; go, and bad luck to you, and don't meddle where you are not wanted.”

“By God, your worship is right,” replied the Castilian; “for to advise this good man is to kick against the pricks; still for all that it fills me with pity that the sound wit they say the blockhead has in everything should dribble away by the channel of his knight−errantry; but may the bad luck your worship talks of follow me and all my descendants, if, from this day forth, though I should live longer than Methuselah, I ever give advice to anybody even if he asks me for it.”

The advice−giver took himself off, and they continued their stroll; but so great was the press of the boys and people to read the placard, that Don Antonio was forced to remove it as if he were taking off something else.

Night came and they went home, and there was a ladies' dancing party, for Don Antonio's wife, a lady of rank and gaiety, beauty and wit, had invited some friends of hers to come and do honour to her guest and amuse themselves with his strange delusions. Several of them came, they supped sumptuously, the dance began at about ten o'clock. Among the ladies were two of a mischievous and frolicsome turn, and, though perfectly modest, somewhat free in playing tricks for harmless diversion sake. These two were so indefatigable in taking Don Quixote out to dance that they tired him down, not only in body but in spirit. It was a sight to see the figure Don Quixote made, long, lank, lean, and yellow, his garments clinging tight to him, ungainly, and above all anything but agile.

The gay ladies made secret love to him, and he on his part secretly repelled them, but finding himself hard pressed by their blandishments he lifted up his voice and exclaimed, “Fugite, partes adversae! Leave me in peace, unwelcome overtures; avaunt, with your desires, ladies, for she who is queen of mine, the peerless Dulcinea del Toboso, suffers none but hers to lead me captive and subdue me;” and so saying he sat down on the floor in the middle of the room, tired out and broken down by all this exertion in the dance.

Don Antonio directed him to be taken up bodily and carried to bed, and the first that laid hold of him was Sancho, saying as he did so, “In an evil hour you took to dancing, master mine; do you fancy all mighty men of valour are dancers, and all knights−errant given to capering? If you do, I can tell you you are mistaken; there's many a man would rather undertake to kill a giant than cut a caper. If it had been the shoe−fling you were at I could take your place, for I can do the shoe−fling like a gerfalcon; but I'm no good at dancing.”

With these and other observations Sancho set the whole ball−room laughing, and then put his master to bed, covering him up well so that he might sweat out any chill caught after his dancing.

The next day Don Antonio thought he might as well make trial of the enchanted head, and with Don Quixote, Sancho, and two others, friends of his, besides the two ladies that had tired out Don Quixote at the ball, who had remained for the night with Don Antonio's wife, he locked himself up in the chamber where the head was. He explained to them the property it possessed and entrusted the secret to them, telling them that now for the first time he was going to try the virtue of the enchanted head; but except Don Antonio's two friends no one else was privy to the mystery of the enchantment, and if Don Antonio had not first revealed it to them they would have been inevitably reduced to the same state of amazement as the rest, so artfully and skilfully was it contrived.

The first to approach the ear of the head was Don Antonio himself, and in a low voice but not so low as not to be audible to all, he said to it, “Head, tell me by the virtue that lies in thee what am I at this moment thinking of?"

The head, without any movement of the lips, answered in a clear and distinct voice, so as to be heard by all, “I cannot judge of thoughts.”

All were thunderstruck at this, and all the more so as they saw that there was nobody anywhere near the table or in the whole room that could have answered. “How many of us are here?” asked Don Antonio once more; and it was answered him in the same way softly, “Thou and thy wife, with two friends of thine and two of hers, and a famous knight called Don Quixote of La Mancha, and a squire of his, Sancho Panza by name.”

Now there was fresh astonishment; now everyone's hair was standing on end with awe; and Don Antonio retiring from the head exclaimed, “This suffices to show me that I have not been deceived by him who sold thee to me, O sage head, talking head, answering head, wonderful head! Let some one else go and put what question he likes to it.”

And as women are commonly impulsive and inquisitive, the first to come forward was one of the two friends of Don Antonio's wife, and her question was, “Tell me, Head, what shall I do to be very beautiful?” and the answer she got was, “Be very modest.”

“I question thee no further,” said the fair querist.

Her companion then came up and said, “I should like to know, Head, whether my husband loves me or not;” the answer given to her was, “Think how he uses thee, and thou mayest guess;” and the married lady went off saying, “That answer did not need a question; for of course the treatment one receives shows the disposition of him from whom it is received.”

Then one of Don Antonio's two friends advanced and asked it, “Who am I?” “Thou knowest,” was the answer. “That is not what I ask thee,” said the gentleman, “but to tell me if thou knowest me.” “Yes, I know thee, thou art Don Pedro Noriz,” was the reply.

“I do not seek to know more,” said the gentleman, “for this is enough to convince me, O Head, that thou knowest everything;” and as he retired the other friend came forward and asked it, “Tell me, Head, what are the wishes of my eldest son?"

“I have said already,” was the answer, “that I cannot judge of wishes; however, I can tell thee the wish of thy son is to bury thee.”

“That's 'what I see with my eyes I point out with my finger,'” said the gentleman, “so I ask no more.”

Don Antonio's wife came up and said, “I know not what to ask thee, Head; I would only seek to know of thee if I shall have many years of enjoyment of my good husband;” and the answer she received was, “Thou shalt, for his vigour and his temperate habits promise many years of life, which by their intemperance others so often cut short.”

Then Don Quixote came forward and said, “Tell me, thou that answerest, was that which I describe as having happened to me in the cave of Montesinos the truth or a dream? Will Sancho's whipping be accomplished without fail? Will the disenchantment of Dulcinea be brought about?"

“As to the question of the cave,” was the reply, “there is much to be said; there is something of both in it. Sancho's whipping will proceed leisurely. The disenchantment of Dulcinea will attain its due consummation.”

“I seek to know no more,” said Don Quixote; “let me but see Dulcinea disenchanted, and I will consider that all the good fortune I could wish for has come upon me all at once.”

The last questioner was Sancho, and his questions were, “Head, shall I by any chance have another government? Shall I ever escape from the hard life of a squire? Shall I get back to see my wife and children?” To which the answer came, “Thou shalt govern in thy house; and if thou returnest to it thou shalt see thy wife and children; and on ceasing to serve thou shalt cease to be a squire.”

“Good, by God!” said Sancho Panza; “I could have told myself that; the prophet Perogrullo could have said no more.”

“What answer wouldst thou have, beast?” said Don Quixote; “is it not enough that the replies this head has given suit the questions put to it?"

“Yes, it is enough,” said Sancho; “but I should have liked it to have made itself plainer and told me more.”

The questions and answers came to an end here, but not the wonder with which all were filled, except Don Antonio's two friends who were in the secret. This Cide Hamete Benengeli thought fit to reveal at once, not to keep the world in suspense, fancying that the head had some strange magical mystery in it. He says, therefore, that on the model of another head, the work of an image maker, which he had seen at Madrid, Don Antonio made this one at home for his own amusement and to astonish ignorant people; and its mechanism was as follows. The table was of wood painted and varnished to imitate jasper, and the pedestal on which it stood was of the same material, with four eagles' claws projecting from it to support the weight more steadily. The head, which resembled a bust or figure of a Roman emperor, and was coloured like bronze, was hollow throughout, as was the table, into which it was fitted so exactly that no trace of the joining was visible. The pedestal of the table was also hollow and communicated with the throat and neck of the head, and the whole was in communication with another room underneath the chamber in which the head stood. Through the entire cavity in the pedestal, table, throat and neck of the bust or figure, there passed a tube of tin carefully adjusted and concealed from sight. In the room below corresponding to the one above was placed the person who was to answer, with his mouth to the tube, and the voice, as in an ear−trumpet, passed from above downwards, and from below upwards, the words coming clearly and distinctly; it was impossible, thus, to detect the trick. A nephew of Don Antonio's, a smart sharp−witted student, was the answerer, and as he had been told beforehand by his uncle who the persons were that would come with him that day into the chamber where the head was, it was an easy matter for him to answer the first question at once and correctly; the others he answered by guess−work, and, being clever, cleverly. Cide Hamete adds that this marvellous contrivance stood for some ten or twelve days; but that, as it became noised abroad through the city that he had in his house an enchanted head that answered all who asked questions of it, Don Antonio, fearing it might come to the ears of the watchful sentinels of our faith, explained the matter to the inquisitors, who commanded him to break it up and have done with it, lest the ignorant vulgar should be scandalised. By Don Quixote, however, and by Sancho the head was still held to be an enchanted one, and capable of answering questions, though more to Don Quixote's satisfaction than Sancho's.

The gentlemen of the city, to gratify Don Antonio and also to do the honours to Don Quixote, and give him an opportunity of displaying his folly, made arrangements for a tilting at the ring in six days from that time, which, however, for reason that will be mentioned hereafter, did not take place.

Don Quixote took a fancy to stroll about the city quietly and on foot, for he feared that if he went on horseback the boys would follow him; so he and Sancho and two servants that Don Antonio gave him set out for a walk. Thus it came to pass that going along one of the streets Don Quixote lifted up his eyes and saw written in very large letters over a door, “Books printed here,” at which he was vastly pleased, for until then he had never seen a printing office, and he was curious to know what it was like. He entered with all his following, and saw them drawing sheets in one place, correcting in another, setting up type here, revising there; in short all the work that is to be seen in great printing offices. He went up to one case and asked what they were about there; the workmen

told him, he watched them with wonder, and passed on. He approached one man, among others, and asked him what he was doing. The workman replied, “Senor, this gentleman here” (pointing to a man of prepossessing appearance and a certain gravity of look) “has translated an Italian book into our Spanish tongue, and I am setting it up in type for the press.”

“What is the title of the book?” asked Don Quixote; to which the author replied, “Senor, in Italian the book is called Le Bagatelle.”

“And what does Le Bagatelle import in our Spanish?” asked Don Quixote.

“Le Bagatelle,” said the author, “is as though we should say in Spanish Los Juguetes; but though the book is humble in name it has good solid matter in it.”

“I,” said Don Quixote, “have some little smattering of Italian, and I plume myself on singing some of Ariosto's stanzas; but tell me, senor—I do not say this to test your ability, but merely out of curiosity—have you ever met with the word pignatta in your book?"

“Yes, often,” said the author.

“And how do you render that in Spanish?"

“How should I render it,” returned the author, “but by olla?"

“Body o' me,” exclaimed Don Quixote, “what a proficient you are in the Italian language! I would lay a good wager that where they say in Italian piace you say in Spanish place, and where they say piu you say mas, and you translate su by arriba and giu by abajo.”

“I translate them so of course,” said the author, “for those are their proper equivalents.”

“I would venture to swear,” said Don Quixote, “that your worship is not known in the world, which always begrudges their reward to rare wits and praiseworthy labours. What talents lie wasted there! What genius thrust away into corners! What worth left neglected! Still it seems to me that translation from one language into another, if it be not from the queens of languages, the Greek and the Latin, is like looking at Flemish tapestries on the wrong side; for though the figures are visible, they are full of threads that make them indistinct, and they do not show with the smoothness and brightness of the right side; and translation from easy languages argues neither ingenuity nor command of words, any more than transcribing or copying out one document from another. But I do not mean by this to draw the inference that no credit is to be allowed for the work of translating, for a man may employ himself in ways worse and less profitable to himself. This estimate does not include two famous translators, Doctor Cristobal de Figueroa, in his Pastor Fido, and Don Juan de Jauregui, in his Aminta, wherein by their felicity they leave it in doubt which is the translation and which the original. But tell me, are you printing this book at your own risk, or have you sold the copyright to some bookseller?"

“I print at my own risk,” said the author, “and I expect to make a thousand ducats at least by this first edition, which is to be of two thousand copies that will go off in a twinkling at six reals apiece.”

“A fine calculation you are making!” said Don Quixote; “it is plain you don't know the ins and outs of the printers, and how they play into one another's hands. I promise you when you find yourself saddled with two thousand copies you will feel so sore that it will astonish you, particularly if the book is a little out of the common and not in any way highly spiced.”

“What!” said the author, “would your worship, then, have me give it to a bookseller who will give three maravedis for the copyright and think he is doing me a favour? I do not print my books to win fame in the world, for I am known in it already by my works; I want to make money, without which reputation is not worth a rap.”

“God send your worship good luck,” said Don Quixote; and he moved on to another case, where he saw them correcting a sheet of a book with the title of “Light of the Soul;” noticing it he observed, “Books like this, though there are many of the kind, are the ones that deserve to be printed, for many are the sinners in these days, and lights unnumbered are needed for all that are in darkness.”

He passed on, and saw they were also correcting another book, and when he asked its title they told him it was called, “The Second Part of the Ingenious Gentleman Don Quixote of La Mancha,” by one of Tordesillas.

“I have heard of this book already,” said Don Quixote, “and verily and on my conscience I thought it had been by this time burned to ashes as a meddlesome intruder; but its Martinmas will come to it as it does to every pig; for fictions have the more merit and charm about them the more nearly they approach the truth or what looks like it; and true stories, the truer they are the better they are;” and so saying he walked out of the printing office with a certain amount of displeasure in his looks. That same day Don Antonio arranged to take him to see the galleys

that lay at the beach, whereat Sancho was in high delight, as he had never seen any all his life. Don Antonio sent word to the commandant of the galleys that he intended to bring his guest, the famous Don Quixote of La Mancha, of whom the commandant and all the citizens had already heard, that afternoon to see them; and what happened on board of them will be told in the next chapter.