

The History of Don Quixote, Vol. II., Part 23

Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra

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Title: The History of Don Quixote, Vol. II., Part 23

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Release Date: July 22, 2004 [EBook #5926]

Language: English

Character set encoding: ASCII

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Produced by David Widger

DON QUIXOTE

Volume II.

Part 23.

by Miguel de Cervantes

Translated by John Ormsby

CHAPTER XIX.

IN WHICH IS RELATED THE ADVENTURE OF THE ENAMOURED SHEPHERD, TOGETHER WITH OTHER TRULY DROLL INCIDENTS

Don Quixote had gone but a short distance beyond Don Diego's village, when he fell in with a couple of either priests or students, and a couple

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of peasants, mounted on four beasts of the ass kind. One of the students carried, wrapped up in a piece of green buckram by way of a portmanteau, what seemed to be a little linen and a couple of pairs of-ribbed stockings; the other carried nothing but a pair of new fencing-foils with buttons. The peasants carried divers articles that showed they were on their way from some large town where they had bought them, and were taking them home to their village; and both students and peasants were struck with the same amazement that everybody felt who saw Don Quixote for the first time, and were dying to know who this man, so different from ordinary men, could be. Don Quixote saluted them, and after ascertaining that their road was the same as his, made them an offer of his company, and begged them to slacken their pace, as their young asses travelled faster than his horse; and then, to gratify them, he told them in a few words who he was and the calling and profession he followed, which was that of a knight-errant seeking adventures in all parts of the world. He informed them that his own name was Don Quixote of La Mancha, and that he was called, by way of surname, the Knight of the Lions.

All this was Greek or gibberish to the peasants, but not so to the students, who very soon perceived the crack in Don Quixote's pate; for all that, however, they regarded him with admiration and respect, and one of them said to him, "If you, sir knight, have no fixed road, as it is the way with those who seek adventures not to have any, let your worship come with us; you will see one of the finest and richest weddings that up to this day have ever been celebrated in La Mancha, or for many a league round."

Don Quixote asked him if it was some prince's, that he spoke of it in this way. "Not at all," said the student; "it is the wedding of a farmer and a farmer's daughter, he the richest in all this country, and she the fairest mortal ever set eyes on. The display with which it is to be attended will be something rare and out of the common, for it will be celebrated in a meadow adjoining the town of the bride, who is called, par excellence, Quiteria the fair, as the bridegroom is called Camacho the rich. She is eighteen, and he twenty-two, and they are fairly matched, though some knowing ones, who have all the pedigrees in the world by heart, will have it that the family of the fair Quiteria is better than Camacho's; but no one minds that now-a-days, for wealth can solder a great many flaws. At any rate, Camacho is free-handed, and it is his fancy to screen the whole meadow with boughs and cover it in overhead, so that the sun will have hard work if he tries to get in to reach the grass that covers the soil. He has provided dancers too, not only sword but also bell-dancers, for in his own town there are those who ring the changes and jingle the bells to perfection; of shoe-dancers I say nothing, for of them he has engaged a host. But none of these things, nor of the many others I have omitted to mention, will do more to make this a memorable wedding than the part which I suspect the despairing Basilio will play in it. This Basilio is a youth of the same village as Quiteria, and he lived in the house next door to that of her parents, of which circumstance Love took advantage to reproduce to the word the long-forgotten loves of Pyramus and Thisbe; for Basilio loved Quiteria from his earliest years, and she responded to his passion with countless modest proofs of affection, so that the loves of the two children, Basilio and Quiteria, were the talk and the amusement of the town. As they grew up, the father of Quiteria made up his mind to refuse Basilio his wonted freedom of access to the house, and to relieve himself of constant doubts and suspicions, he arranged a match for his daughter with the rich Camacho, as he did not approve of marrying her to Basilio, who had not so large a share of the gifts of fortune as of nature; for if the

truth be told ungrudgingly, he is the most agile youth we know, a mighty thrower of the bar, a first-rate wrestler, and a great ball-player; he runs like a deer, and leaps better than a goat, bowls over the nine-pins as if by magic, sings like a lark, plays the guitar so as to make it speak, and, above all, handles a sword as well as the best."

"For that excellence alone," said Don Quixote at this, "the youth deserves to marry, not merely the fair Quiteria, but Queen Guinevere herself, were she alive now, in spite of Launcelot and all who would try to prevent it."

"Say that to my wife," said Sancho, who had until now listened in silence, "for she won't hear of anything but each one marrying his equal, holding with the proverb 'each ewe to her like.' What I would like is that this good Basilio (for I am beginning to take a fancy to him already) should marry this lady Quiteria; and a blessing and good luck--I meant to say the opposite--on people who would prevent those who love one another from marrying."

"If all those who love one another were to marry," said Don Quixote, "it would deprive parents of the right to choose, and marry their children to the proper person and at the proper time; and if it was left to daughters to choose husbands as they pleased, one would be for choosing her father's servant, and another, some one she has seen passing in the street and fancies gallant and dashing, though he may be a drunken bully; for love and fancy easily blind the eyes of the judgment, so much wanted in choosing one's way of life; and the matrimonial choice is very liable to error, and it needs great caution and the special favour of heaven to make it a good one. He who has to make a long journey, will, if he is wise, look out for some trusty and pleasant companion to accompany him before he sets out. Why, then, should not he do the same who has to make the whole journey of life down to the final halting-place of death, more especially when the companion has to be his companion in bed, at board, and everywhere, as the wife is to her husband? The companionship of one's wife is no article of merchandise, that, after it has been bought, may be returned, or bartered, or changed; for it is an inseparable accident that lasts as long as life lasts; it is a noose that, once you put it round your neck, turns into a Gordian knot, which, if the scythe of Death does not cut it, there is no untying. I could say a great deal more on this subject, were I not prevented by the anxiety I feel to know if the senior licentiate has anything more to tell about the story of Basilio."

To this the student, bachelor, or, as Don Quixote called him, licentiate, replied, "I have nothing whatever to say further, but that from the moment Basilio learned that the fair Quiteria was to be married to Camacho the rich, he has never been seen to smile, or heard to utter rational word, and he always goes about moody and dejected, talking to himself in a way that shows plainly he is out of his senses. He eats little and sleeps little, and all he eats is fruit, and when he sleeps, if he sleeps at all, it is in the field on the hard earth like a brute beast. Sometimes he gazes at the sky, at other times he fixes his eyes on the earth in such an abstracted way that he might be taken for a clothed statue, with its drapery stirred by the wind. In short, he shows such signs of a heart crushed by suffering, that all we who know him believe that when to-morrow the fair Quiteria says 'yes,' it will be his sentence of death."

"God will guide it better," said Sancho, "for God who gives the wound gives the salve; nobody knows what will happen; there are a good many

hours between this and to-morrow, and any one of them, or any moment, the house may fall; I have seen the rain coming down and the sun shining all at one time; many a one goes to bed in good health who can't stir the next day. And tell me, is there anyone who can boast of having driven a nail into the wheel of fortune? No, faith; and between a woman's 'yes' and 'no' I wouldn't venture to put the point of a pin, for there would not be room for it; if you tell me Quiteria loves Basilio heart and soul, then I'll give him a bag of good luck; for love, I have heard say, looks through spectacles that make copper seem gold, poverty wealth, and blear eyes pearls."

"What art thou driving at, Sancho? curses on thee!" said Don Quixote; "for when thou takest to stringing proverbs and sayings together, no one can understand thee but Judas himself, and I wish he had thee. Tell me, thou animal, what dost thou know about nails or wheels, or anything else?"

"Oh, if you don't understand me," replied Sancho, "it is no wonder my words are taken for nonsense; but no matter; I understand myself, and I know I have not said anything very foolish in what I have said; only your worship, senor, is always gravelling at everything I say, nay, everything I do."

"Cavilling, not gravelling," said Don Quixote, "thou prevaricator of honest language, God confound thee!"

"Don't find fault with me, your worship," returned Sancho, "for you know I have not been bred up at court or trained at Salamanca, to know whether I am adding or dropping a letter or so in my words. Why! God bless me, it's not fair to force a Sayago-man to speak like a Toledan; maybe there are Toledans who do not hit it off when it comes to polished talk."

"That is true," said the licentiate, "for those who have been bred up in the Tanneries and the Zocodover cannot talk like those who are almost all day pacing the cathedral cloisters, and yet they are all Toledans. Pure, correct, elegant and lucid language will be met with in men of courtly breeding and discrimination, though they may have been born in Majalahonda; I say of discrimination, because there are many who are not so, and discrimination is the grammar of good language, if it be accompanied by practice. I, sirs, for my sins have studied canon law at Salamanca, and I rather pique myself on expressing my meaning in clear, plain, and intelligible language."

"If you did not pique yourself more on your dexterity with those foils you carry than on dexterity of tongue," said the other student, "you would have been head of the degrees, where you are now tail."

"Look here, bachelor Corchuelo," returned the licentiate, "you have the most mistaken idea in the world about skill with the sword, if you think it useless."

"It is no idea on my part, but an established truth," replied Corchuelo; "and if you wish me to prove it to you by experiment, you have swords there, and it is a good opportunity; I have a steady hand and a strong arm, and these joined with my resolution, which is not small, will make you confess that I am not mistaken. Dismount and put in practice your positions and circles and angles and science, for I hope to make you see stars at noonday with my rude raw swordsmanship, in which, next to God, I place my trust that the man is yet to be born who will make me turn my

back, and that there is not one in the world I will not compel to give ground."

"As to whether you turn your back or not, I do not concern myself," replied the master of fence; "though it might be that your grave would be dug on the spot where you planted your foot the first time; I mean that you would be stretched dead there for despising skill with the sword."

"We shall soon see," replied Corchuelo, and getting off his ass briskly, he drew out furiously one of the swords the licentiate carried on his beast.

"It must not be that way," said Don Quixote at this point; "I will be the director of this fencing match, and judge of this often disputed question;" and dismounting from Rocinante and grasping his lance, he planted himself in the middle of the road, just as the licentiate, with an easy, graceful bearing and step, advanced towards Corchuelo, who came on against him, darting fire from his eyes, as the saying is. The other two of the company, the peasants, without dismounting from their asses, served as spectators of the mortal tragedy. The cuts, thrusts, down strokes, back strokes and doubles, that Corchuelo delivered were past counting, and came thicker than hops or hail. He attacked like an angry lion, but he was met by a tap on the mouth from the button of the licentiate's sword that checked him in the midst of his furious onset, and made him kiss it as if it were a relic, though not as devoutly as relics are and ought to be kissed. The end of it was that the licentiate reckoned up for him by thrusts every one of the buttons of the short cassock he wore, tore the skirts into strips, like the tails of a cuttlefish, knocked off his hat twice, and so completely tired him out, that in vexation, anger, and rage, he took the sword by the hilt and flung it away with such force, that one of the peasants that were there, who was a notary, and who went for it, made an affidavit afterwards that he sent it nearly three-quarters of a league, which testimony will serve, and has served, to show and establish with all certainty that strength is overcome by skill.

Corchuelo sat down wearied, and Sancho approaching him said, "By my faith, senior bachelor, if your worship takes my advice, you will never challenge anyone to fence again, only to wrestle and throw the bar, for you have the youth and strength for that; but as for these fencers as they call them, I have heard say they can put the point of a sword through the eye of a needle."

"I am satisfied with having tumbled off my donkey," said Corchuelo, "and with having had the truth I was so ignorant of proved to me by experience;" and getting up he embraced the licentiate, and they were better friends than ever; and not caring to wait for the notary who had gone for the sword, as they saw he would be a long time about it, they resolved to push on so as to reach the village of Quiteria, to which they all belonged, in good time.

During the remainder of the journey the licentiate held forth to them on the excellences of the sword, with such conclusive arguments, and such figures and mathematical proofs, that all were convinced of the value of the science, and Corchuelo cured of his dogmatism.

It grew dark; but before they reached the town it seemed to them all as if there was a heaven full of countless glittering stars in front of it. They heard, too, the pleasant mingled notes of a variety of instruments,

flutes, drums, psalteries, pipes, tabors, and timbrels, and as they drew near they perceived that the trees of a leafy arcade that had been constructed at the entrance of the town were filled with lights unaffected by the wind, for the breeze at the time was so gentle that it had not power to stir the leaves on the trees. The musicians were the life of the wedding, wandering through the pleasant grounds in separate bands, some dancing, others singing, others playing the various instruments already mentioned. In short, it seemed as though mirth and gaiety were frisking and gambolling all over the meadow. Several other persons were engaged in erecting raised benches from which people might conveniently see the plays and dances that were to be performed the next day on the spot dedicated to the celebration of the marriage of Camacho the rich and the obsequies of Basilio. Don Quixote would not enter the village, although the peasant as well as the bachelor pressed him; he excused himself, however, on the grounds, amply sufficient in his opinion, that it was the custom of knights-errant to sleep in the fields and woods in preference to towns, even were it under gilded ceilings; and so turned aside a little out of the road, very much against Sancho's will, as the good quarters he had enjoyed in the castle or house of Don Diego came back to his mind.

CHAPTER XX.

WHEREIN AN ACCOUNT IS GIVEN OF THE WEDDING OF CAMACHO THE RICH, TOGETHER WITH THE INCIDENT OF BASILIO THE POOR

Scarce had the fair Aurora given bright Phoebus time to dry the liquid pearls upon her golden locks with the heat of his fervent rays, when Don Quixote, shaking off sloth from his limbs, sprang to his feet and called to his squire Sancho, who was still snoring; seeing which Don Quixote ere he roused him thus addressed him: "Happy thou, above all the dwellers on the face of the earth, that, without envying or being envied, sleepest with tranquil mind, and that neither enchanters persecute nor enchantments affright. Sleep, I say, and will say a hundred times, without any jealous thoughts of thy mistress to make thee keep ceaseless vigils, or any cares as to how thou art to pay the debts thou owest, or find to-morrow's food for thyself and thy needy little family, to interfere with thy repose. Ambition breaks not thy rest, nor doth this world's empty pomp disturb thee, for the utmost reach of thy anxiety is to provide for thy ass, since upon my shoulders thou hast laid the support of thyself, the counterpoise and burden that nature and custom have imposed upon masters. The servant sleeps and the master lies awake thinking how he is to feed him, advance him, and reward him. The distress of seeing the sky turn brazen, and withhold its needful moisture from the earth, is not felt by the servant but by the master, who in time of scarcity and famine must support him who has served him in times of plenty and abundance."

To all this Sancho made no reply because he was asleep, nor would he have wakened up so soon as he did had not Don Quixote brought him to his senses with the butt of his lance. He awoke at last, drowsy and lazy, and casting his eyes about in every direction, observed, "There comes, if I don't mistake, from the quarter of that arcade a steam and a smell a great deal more like fried rashers than galingale or thyme; a wedding that begins with smells like that, by my faith, ought to be plentiful and

unstinting."

"Have done, thou glutton," said Don Quixote; "come, let us go and witness this bridal, and see what the rejected Basilio does."

"Let him do what he likes," returned Sancho; "be he not poor, he would marry Quiteria. To make a grand match for himself, and he without a farthing; is there nothing else? Faith, senor, it's my opinion the poor man should be content with what he can get, and not go looking for dainties in the bottom of the sea. I will bet my arm that Camacho could bury Basilio in reals; and if that be so, as no doubt it is, what a fool Quiteria would be to refuse the fine dresses and jewels Camacho must have given her and will give her, and take Basilio's bar-throwing and sword-play. They won't give a pint of wine at the tavern for a good cast of the bar or a neat thrust of the sword. Talents and accomplishments that can't be turned into money, let Count Dirlos have them; but when such gifts fall to one that has hard cash, I wish my condition of life was as becoming as they are. On a good foundation you can raise a good building, and the best foundation in the world is money."

"For God's sake, Sancho," said Don Quixote here, "stop that harangue; it is my belief, if thou wert allowed to continue all thou beginnest every instant, thou wouldst have no time left for eating or sleeping; for thou wouldst spend it all in talking."

"If your worship had a good memory," replied Sancho, "you would remember the articles of our agreement before we started from home this last time; one of them was that I was to be let say all I liked, so long as it was not against my neighbour or your worship's authority; and so far, it seems to me, I have not broken the said article."

"I remember no such article, Sancho," said Don Quixote; "and even if it were so, I desire you to hold your tongue and come along; for the instruments we heard last night are already beginning to enliven the valleys again, and no doubt the marriage will take place in the cool of the morning, and not in the heat of the afternoon."

Sancho did as his master bade him, and putting the saddle on Rocinante and the pack-saddle on Dapple, they both mounted and at a leisurely pace entered the arcade. The first thing that presented itself to Sancho's eyes was a whole ox spitted on a whole elm tree, and in the fire at which it was to be roasted there was burning a middling-sized mountain of faggots, and six stewpots that stood round the blaze had not been made in the ordinary mould of common pots, for they were six half wine-jars, each fit to hold the contents of a slaughter-house; they swallowed up whole sheep and hid them away in their insides without showing any more sign of them than if they were pigeons. Countless were the hares ready skinned and the plucked fowls that hung on the trees for burial in the pots, numberless the wildfowl and game of various sorts suspended from the branches that the air might keep them cool. Sancho counted more than sixty wine skins of over six gallons each, and all filled, as it proved afterwards, with generous wines. There were, besides, piles of the whitest bread, like the heaps of corn one sees on the threshing-floors. There was a wall made of cheeses arranged like open brick-work, and two cauldrons full of oil, bigger than those of a dyer's shop, served for cooking fritters, which when fried were taken out with two mighty shovels, and plunged into another cauldron of prepared honey that stood close by. Of cooks and cook-maids there were over fifty, all clean, brisk, and blithe. In the capacious belly of the ox were a dozen soft

little sucking-pigs, which, sewn up there, served to give it tenderness and flavour. The spices of different kinds did not seem to have been bought by the pound but by the quarter, and all lay open to view in a great chest. In short, all the preparations made for the wedding were in rustic style, but abundant enough to feed an army.

Sancho observed all, contemplated all, and everything won his heart. The first to captivate and take his fancy were the pots, out of which he would have very gladly helped himself to a moderate pipkinful; then the wine skins secured his affections; and lastly, the produce of the frying-pans, if, indeed, such imposing cauldrons may be called frying-pans; and unable to control himself or bear it any longer, he approached one of the busy cooks and civilly but hungrily begged permission to soak a scrap of bread in one of the pots; to which the cook made answer, "Brother, this is not a day on which hunger is to have any sway, thanks to the rich Camacho; get down and look about for a ladle and skim off a hen or two, and much good may they do you."

"I don't see one," said Sancho.

"Wait a bit," said the cook; "sinner that I am! how particular and bashful you are!" and so saying, he seized a bucket and plunging it into one of the half jars took up three hens and a couple of geese, and said to Sancho, "Fall to, friend, and take the edge off your appetite with these skimmings until dinner-time comes."

"I have nothing to put them in," said Sancho.

"Well then," said the cook, "take spoon and all; for Camacho's wealth and happiness furnish everything."

While Sancho fared thus, Don Quixote was watching the entrance, at one end of the arcade, of some twelve peasants, all in holiday and gala dress, mounted on twelve beautiful mares with rich handsome field trappings and a number of little bells attached to their petrels, who, marshalled in regular order, ran not one but several courses over the meadow, with jubilant shouts and cries of "Long live Camacho and Quiteria! he as rich as she is fair; and she the fairest on earth!"

Hearing this, Don Quixote said to himself, "It is easy to see these folk have never seen my Dulcinea del Toboso; for if they had they would be more moderate in their praises of this Quiteria of theirs."

Shortly after this, several bands of dancers of various sorts began to enter the arcade at different points, and among them one of sword-dancers composed of some four-and-twenty lads of gallant and high-spirited mien, clad in the finest and whitest of linen, and with handkerchiefs embroidered in various colours with fine silk; and one of those on the mares asked an active youth who led them if any of the dancers had been wounded. "As yet, thank God, no one has been wounded," said he, "we are all safe and sound;" and he at once began to execute complicated figures

with the rest of his comrades, with so many turns and so great dexterity, that although Don Quixote was well used to see dances of the same kind, he thought he had never seen any so good as this. He also admired another that came in composed of fair young maidens, none of whom seemed to be under fourteen or over eighteen years of age, all clad in green stuff, with their locks partly braided, partly flowing loose, but all of such bright gold as to vie with the sunbeams, and over them they wore garlands

of jessamine, roses, amaranth, and honeysuckle. At their head were a venerable old man and an ancient dame, more brisk and active, however, than might have been expected from their years. The notes of a Zamora bagpipe accompanied them, and with modesty in their countenances and in their eyes, and lightness in their feet, they looked the best dancers in the world.

Following these there came an artistic dance of the sort they call "speaking dances." It was composed of eight nymphs in two files, with the god Cupid leading one and Interest the other, the former furnished with wings, bow, quiver and arrows, the latter in a rich dress of gold and silk of divers colours. The nymphs that followed Love bore their names written on white parchment in large letters on their backs. "Poetry" was the name of the first, "Wit" of the second, "Birth" of the third, and "Valour" of the fourth. Those that followed Interest were distinguished in the same way; the badge of the first announced "Liberality," that of the second "Largess," the third "Treasure," and the fourth "Peaceful Possession." In front of them all came a wooden castle drawn by four wild men, all clad in ivy and hemp stained green, and looking so natural that they nearly terrified Sancho. On the front of the castle and on each of the four sides of its frame it bore the inscription "Castle of Caution." Four skillful tabor and flute players accompanied them, and the dance having been opened, Cupid, after executing two figures, raised his eyes and bent his bow against a damsel who stood between the turrets of the castle, and thus addressed her:

I am the mighty God whose sway
Is potent over land and sea.
The heavens above us own me; nay,
The shades below acknowledge me.
I know not fear, I have my will,
Whate'er my whim or fancy be;
For me there's no impossible,
I order, bind, forbid, set free.

Having concluded the stanza he discharged an arrow at the top of the castle, and went back to his place. Interest then came forward and went through two more figures, and as soon as the tabors ceased, he said:

But mightier than Love am I,
Though Love it be that leads me on,
Than mine no lineage is more high,
Or older, underneath the sun.
To use me rightly few know how,
To act without me fewer still,
For I am Interest, and I vow
For evermore to do thy will.

Interest retired, and Poetry came forward, and when she had gone through her figures like the others, fixing her eyes on the damsel of the castle, she said:

With many a fanciful conceit,
Fair Lady, winsome Poesy
Her soul, an offering at thy feet,
Presents in sonnets unto thee.
If thou my homage wilt not scorn,
Thy fortune, watched by envious eyes,
On wings of poesy upborne

Shall be exalted to the skies.

Poetry withdrew, and on the side of Interest Liberality advanced, and after having gone through her figures, said:

To give, while shunning each extreme,
The sparing hand, the over-free,
Therein consists, so wise men deem,
The virtue Liberality.
But thee, fair lady, to enrich,
Myself a prodigal I'll prove,
A vice not wholly shameful, which
May find its fair excuse in love.

In the same manner all the characters of the two bands advanced and retired, and each executed its figures, and delivered its verses, some of them graceful, some burlesque, but Don Quixote's memory (though he had an excellent one) only carried away those that have been just quoted. All then mingled together, forming chains and breaking off again with graceful, unconstrained gaiety; and whenever Love passed in front of the castle he shot his arrows up at it, while Interest broke gilded pellets against it. At length, after they had danced a good while, Interest drew out a great purse, made of the skin of a large brindled cat and to all appearance full of money, and flung it at the castle, and with the force of the blow the boards fell asunder and tumbled down, leaving the damsel exposed and unprotected. Interest and the characters of his band advanced, and throwing a great chain of gold over her neck pretended to take her and lead her away captive, on seeing which, Love and his supporters made as though they would release her, the whole action being to the accompaniment of the tabors and in the form of a regular dance. The wild men made peace between them, and with great dexterity readjusted and fixed the boards of the castle, and the damsel once more ensconced herself within; and with this the dance wound up, to the great enjoyment of the beholders.

Don Quixote asked one of the nymphs who it was that had composed and arranged it. She replied that it was a beneficiary of the town who had a nice taste in devising things of the sort. "I will lay a wager," said Don Quixote, "that the same bachelor or beneficiary is a greater friend of Camacho's than of Basilio's, and that he is better at satire than at vespers; he has introduced the accomplishments of Basilio and the riches of Camacho very neatly into the dance." Sancho Panza, who was listening to all this, exclaimed, "The king is my cock; I stick to Camacho." "It is easy to see thou art a clown, Sancho," said Don Quixote, "and one of that sort that cry 'Long life to the conqueror.'"

"I don't know of what sort I am," returned Sancho, "but I know very well I'll never get such elegant skimmings off Basilio's pots as these I have got off Camacho's;" and he showed him the bucketful of geese and hens, and seizing one began to eat with great gaiety and appetite, saying, "A fig for the accomplishments of Basilio! As much as thou hast so much art thou worth, and as much as thou art worth so much hast thou. As a grandmother of mine used to say, there are only two families in the world, the Haves and the Haven'ts; and she stuck to the Haves; and to this day, Senor Don Quixote, people would sooner feel the pulse of 'Have,' than of 'Know;' an ass covered with gold looks better than a horse with a pack-saddle. So once more I say I stick to Camacho, the bountiful skimmings of whose pots are geese and hens, hares and rabbits; but of Basilio's, if any ever come to hand, or even to foot, they'll be

only rinsings."

"Hast thou finished thy harangue, Sancho?" said Don Quixote. "Of course I have finished it," replied Sancho, "because I see your worship takes offence at it; but if it was not for that, there was work enough cut out for three days."

"God grant I may see thee dumb before I die, Sancho," said Don Quixote.

"At the rate we are going," said Sancho, "I'll be chewing clay before your worship dies; and then, maybe, I'll be so dumb that I'll not say a word until the end of the world, or, at least, till the day of judgment."

"Even should that happen, O Sancho," said Don Quixote, "thy silence will never come up to all thou hast talked, art talking, and wilt talk all thy life; moreover, it naturally stands to reason, that my death will come before thine; so I never expect to see thee dumb, not even when thou art drinking or sleeping, and that is the utmost I can say."

"In good faith, senor," replied Sancho, "there's no trusting that fleshless one, I mean Death, who devours the lamb as soon as the sheep, and, as I have heard our curate say, treads with equal foot upon the lofty towers of kings and the lowly huts of the poor. That lady is more mighty than dainty, she is no way squeamish, she devours all and is ready for all, and fills her alforjas with people of all sorts, ages, and ranks. She is no reaper that sleeps out the noontide; at all times she is reaping and cutting down, as well the dry grass as the green; she never seems to chew, but bolts and swallows all that is put before her, for she has a canine appetite that is never satisfied; and though she has no belly, she shows she has a dropsy and is athirst to drink the lives of all that live, as one would drink a jug of cold water."

"Say no more, Sancho," said Don Quixote at this; "don't try to better it, and risk a fall; for in truth what thou hast said about death in thy rustic phrase is what a good preacher might have said. I tell thee, Sancho, if thou hadst discretion equal to thy mother wit, thou mightst take a pulpit in hand, and go about the world preaching fine sermons." "He preaches well who lives well," said Sancho, "and I know no more theology than that."

"Nor needst thou," said Don Quixote, "but I cannot conceive or make out how it is that, the fear of God being the beginning of wisdom, thou, who art more afraid of a lizard than of him, knowest so much."

"Pass judgment on your chivalries, senor," returned Sancho, "and don't set yourself up to judge of other men's fears or braveries, for I am as good a fearer of God as my neighbours; but leave me to despatch these skimmings, for all the rest is only idle talk that we shall be called to account for in the other world;" and so saying, he began a fresh attack on the bucket, with such a hearty appetite that he aroused Don Quixote's, who no doubt would have helped him had he not been prevented by what must be told farther on.

*** END OF THIS PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK DON QUIXOTE, PART 23 ***

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