

GREAT MASTERS OF LITERATURE

BY

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E begin in this number of McClure's Magazine a series of papers on those writers who may fairly be called the great Masters of Literature. They are those writers who have possessed in a peculiar degree the power to rise above the limitations of a particular time and place, and to interpret the common heart and reflect the general life of mankind. They belong to no one country and to no one age more than to any other. They are the common heritage of the human race. In a very special sense are they our heritage, here in America: for we are a curiously blended people, deriving our common descent from nearly all the great races of Europe. Not only Scott, Milton, and Shakespeare, but Cervantes, Virgil, Montaigne, and Goethe may be claimed by us as national writers by virtue of the fact that the blood of the nations from which they spring is in our veins. They represent ideals and aspirations which we have inherited, and by which our actions and characters are still in great measure moulded. Mr. Woodberry who writes the papers was, until recently, Professor of Comparative Literature at Columbia University, and is well known as a scholar, poet, critic, and biographer. Indeed, he is one of a very few living English writers qualified to indicate first, who are the great masters of literature, and in the second place, to make clear their title to such preëminence. In these papers, he will devote his attention equally in each instance to the man and his work, showing how the work is the expression of the man and of the conditions under which he lived. THE EDITOR.

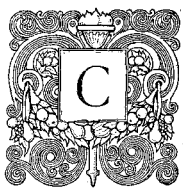
I

CERVANTES

SOLDIER AND WRITER

"IF BY SPIRIT HE WAS A WRITER, BY FLESH HE WAS A SOLDIER"

A Ruffling Gallant



*C*ERVANTES, noble by blood, was born poor. An infancy at Alcala de Henares, boyhood at Valladolid, youth at Madrid; from such early years he emerges into the half lights of biography in the two worlds of arms and letters. He was certainly the poet of his school, for his master praised and printed the verse of his "dear and beloved pupil"; and why should we not believe he was that same Miguel de Cervantes, page at court, who, for ruffling there in an affair of

gallantry, was condemned to ten years exile and to have his right hand cut off, and escaped to hiding? 'Tis as easy as deer-stealing. But, whether as a cavalier in flight, or as a protégé more peacefully picked up, Cervantes left Madrid at twenty-one, in the train of the Papal Ambassador, Monsignor Acquaviva, a fortunate Italian youth two years his senior, and a patron of art and letters, and, as a gentleman in attendance upon him, traveled to Rome.

"A Crusade!"

There, in a city which was still the world's high capital, the young Spanish provincial — half-poet, half-gallant — came into touch

with life in the large. He learned Italian, then the master tongue of literature; in the palace he mingled with the most cultivated society of the world, and heard much high-bred discussion; he came to recognize that something barbarous and belated which foreign nations found in the literature of his own land. Cervantes had a soul capable of great enthusiasms. At Rome, in 1570, a great cause was in the air. It was one of the oldest of great causes. "A Crusade! A Crusade!" was the cry. The Turks were storming Cyprus; they threatened Venice; they filled the African coast; they held the sea. Was the Mediterranean to be a Turkish lake? It appealed to Cervantes because it was a Christian cause, and he was "of the old Christian blood" that for centuries had waged the duel with the Moors to whom the Turks were heirs. It appealed to him because it belonged to the glory of Spain, with her vice-royalties strewn in Italy and on the Islands, to crush the Infidel. And it appealed to him because he was young. Don John of Austria, whose figure stood out in Southern Catholic chivalry with a brilliancy of knighthood not unlike Sidney's in the Puritan North, in its power to awake the imagination of the generous and the jealousies of the cold and mean, was the leader of the cause. Cervantes' choice was a foregone conclusion. If by the spirit he was a writer, by the flesh he was a soldier. In that adventurous age, a Spaniard, though a genius, was born for roving and for arms. When his young patron, Acquaviva, following the pleasant Italian way, put on the Cardinal's hat at twenty-four, Cervantes left the ante-chamber and enlisted in the Spanish ranks.

Fighting the Turk at Sea

A year later, the sun of Lepanto breaking, October 7, 1571, the young recruit, sick and weak with fever, lay below on the galleon "Marquesas." At noon, the fight being on, he pleaded his duty against the remonstrances of his comrades, came on deck, and was stationed by the long boat in command of twelve men. At night, the fight over, he lay there with two gunshot wounds in the breast, and his left hand shattered. It was a fruitless victory, men say to-day; then it was the greatest sea-fight of the world. To Cervantes it remained his "one crowded hour of glorious life." Five years he was in these wars, in barracks and on campaigns. He served at Navarino, Corfu, Tunis, Sar-

dinia, Sicily, and in Italy — one fair, last year at Naples. Don John himself and the Sicilian Viceroy bore testimony to his good conduct. He sailed for home, was captured, taken to Algiers, and fell to the spoils of a Greek renegade as a Christian slave. Five years more he was in these bonds. Once he was sold to the Dey, Hassan, for five hundred ducats, an interesting fact, the price of a world-genius as a slave not often being quoted.

A Slave in Africa

His character now shone conspicuous. Two things marked him out among thousands. He was first in the eyes of the captives to plan, to encourage, and to undertake. He was the central plotter of daring escapes for himself and his comrades, by twos and threes, and by scores, by land and by sea. He even dreamed of a general rising, and a Spanish rescue of all the sufferers. Hassan said, "Could he preserve himself against the maimed Spaniard, he would hold safe his Christians, his ships, and his city." He was first, also, in the respect of his masters. Repeatedly detected, he refused to abandon his attempts; often threatened and with the noose about his neck, in the full peril of such atrocities as he frequently saw inflicted, with unbroken constancy he shielded others and took all danger on himself. Yet he was never once struck. A certain readiness of jesting speech — helped, perhaps, like Lamb's, by his stammer — seems to have served him at such times. His security, nevertheless, is inexplicable. A wilder tale than this of his captivity one does not read in books of reality. He was already on board ship for transport to Constantinople, when the long efforts of his good mother, together with the aid of a subscription in Algiers among the merchants by the hands of a Redemptionist Father, bought his freedom. So the decamping court page of twenty came back to Spain at thirty-three, a crippled soldier and a ransomed slave.

Office, Prison, and a Wife

He became a king's officer, a commissary to collect stores for naval adventures, like that great one of the Armada, and a tax-gatherer. He got embarrassed with courts and officers, a trusted agent defaulted, and he was more than once in prison. He had married a wife, Doña Catalina, not a fortune,

but she brought him—here opens the domestic interior—besides some vineyards, “two linen sheets, one good blanket and one worn, tables, chairs, a brazier, a grater, several sacred images, one cock, and forty-five pullets.” His house was the general refuge of the women of the family; there, in 1605, were living his wife, his natural daughter, two sisters, and a niece; the women took in needlework, and Cervantes himself by that time had become, apparently, a general business agent, and made out papers for customers who called on him.

Lance Never Blunted Pen

The jail, the tax-collectorship, the long-suffering poverty, are they not the familiar marks of that other profession, the career of letters? “Pen never blunted lance, nor lance the pen,” he said; one failing, he took the other. Strong by nature, he cared for success, and with good sense he sought it in the beaten track. He obeyed occasions, he followed the fashion and the market, he tried all kinds. It was the age of artificial sentiment, and he wrote a shepherd book, like Sidney’s *Arcadia*, a tangle of intrigue, rhetoric, and love-plaining verse. It was the age of the rising drama, and he tried the play, staging realistic scenes from his life in Algiers. It was the age of the European short story, and he tried the tale, creating that variety of it which springs from direct observation of manners. Twenty years of such labors, a range from the thinnest whimsies of fashionable, courtly fancy to the hard realism of the thieves’ market, and he had not yet succeeded; but his mind comprised the theater of life, and he was trained in all the modes of literary art. Don Quixote, when it appeared in his fifty-eighth year, was the book of a wise old man. Its popular success did not bring him friends or money. Ten years later the second part was issued.

The grave old man, on the verge of seventy, was near his end; a figure of medium height, an oval face, with chestnut hair, a Roman nose, vivid complexion, and “the silvery beard that twenty years ago was golden”—so he describes himself. Though he mingled much with men all his life, he appears in the retrospect singularly solitary. Not bred in the university, he had never been accepted by those of the schools; he had led an independent career, frank of speech, careless of enmity, aloof from every clique,

acquainted with the strength and weakness of all, soberly judging even his young rival, Lope de Vega, the darling of the age. No one who saw him moving, with the stooped shoulders and the slow gait, thought how future ages would have prized some living portrait of that face, nor guessed that this stammerer was the world-voice of Spain; none of the religious brotherhood he joined to secure his funeral rites, as they followed him “with his face uncovered,” a little, unnoticed company, knew that the greatest Spaniard was there consigned to an obscure and now forgotten grave.

Cervantes himself could not have foreknown the nature of his fame. He did not perceive the relative importance of Don Quixote among his works. Not recognizing that he had broken out the modern path, he went back to the old ways. He again sought the honors of a poet in his *Journey to Parnassus*. He fell in with the opinion of his friends, that his *Persiles* and *Sigismunda* would reach “the extreme of possible goodness,” and be “the best composed in our language, of books of entertainment.” He died, still projecting a sequel to his first pastoral romance, *Galatea*. He was in no haste to take up and finish the second part of Don Quixote. Literature was, in those days, by the standard of taste and in tradition, a thing of refinement, elevation, style, in matter noble, in manner conventional; and the conscious ambition of Cervantes clung to this dying classicism for true reputation.

Don Quixote Born Behind Prison Bars

Don Quixote was never planned to be a great book. It was “engendered in a prison,” perhaps a by-thought of his mind, as a parody of the romances of chivalry. Cervantes was apt to have a purpose in his writings. In his realistic plays he meant to bring home to men’s bosoms that cause of the freeing of Algiers, which was his only practical dream in life and lingered long; in his novels he professed that they were exemplary or moral tales, and in Don Quixote he declared that his only aim was to destroy the popular chivalric romance which he looked on as a false and harmful mode of fiction. In his first sketch he found it, perhaps, vulgar in matter and barren in topic, too slight a theme to bear his genius; he tried to heighten it by introducing independent tales, either wholly foreign or loosely connected, and episodes of gallantry more

closely, yet carelessly, interwoven with the main plot. The book grew under his hand, and almost changed its nature in the second part, where there is nothing extraneous; it displayed a depth of type and a reach of discourse equal to the power of any genius for creation or reflection, and gathered to itself with infinite variety, the universal significance of life. Though Cervantes grew conscious of its intimacy with his own spirit, it is only on the last page that he declares the identity of the work with himself. He had gradually put into it, substantially, all he was — all he had seen, all he knew — without being aware of what he had done till it was done; and, like Columbus, he was never fully aware of what he had done. Don Quixote announced a new age.

A Great Book Greatens with Time

Cervantes was not in advance of his age. A great book greatens with time; and the seed-vessels which it contains time rifles, and scatters its germinal forces throughout the world, and ripens them in the bosom of a broad humanity; but the vitality of these belongs to the human spirit, and is a thing apart from the individuality of the original author. Men have found in Cervantes a reformer, a free-thinker, a censor of church and state, a modern pessimist — all the vexed brood of restless spirits of the latter days. He was none of these. He was a man of his country and age, and accepted the world as it was about him. He observed its elements, its operation, its method — summed the general result of life; but he had no thought of changing what was. The idea of change, the revolutionary idea, was out of his ken. Cervantes was part and parcel of the present, whole with his time, a loyal subject, a true Catholic. He approved of the expulsion of the Moors. He had a liberal outlook on the foreign world, shown especially by his fair words for England, Spain's foe; and at home he saw the political and even the ecclesiastical organization as human institutions, subject to defect in persons, means, and all their temporalities; if divinely instituted, they were humanly constituted. He was concerned with life in other phases. He was a natural critic; judgment was one of his principal gifts, shown not only in minor literary notices that stud the way, but in the large in those discourses which richly interweave the narrative or arise out of the dialogue which turns eloquently to monologue

under the flame of thought; and in the creative parts he was a critic of life. He was a great critic of life, just because he had no ulterior aim either reformatory or humanitarian. Not the practical modification of life, not life in the prospect, but its imaginative contemplation, life in the retrospect, was his sphere. It is an old man's book. To him life was externally a spectacle, and in himself a function; as a function it had been a gradually disillusioning enthusiasm; as a spectacle it had become an increasing irony. An enthusiastic youth is apt to be followed by an ironical old age. In the South, especially, young passion begot these pleasant ironies of later years, and the Mediterranean literature, except in the greatest, is well divided between young passion and old irony, whose blend in Don Quixote attains to greatness. Its chance "engendering in a prison" is, in itself, ironical; its destiny to enthrall the world is the very fatalism of the grotesque in life. A madman and a fool, a horse and an ass, seeking adventures in a world as it is, go faring forth on the great, empty Spanish plains: what mortal interest can there be in their doings or their fate?

The Broad World of Spain

Don Quixote is the book of Spain. Its theater is the Spanish land. It is a book of the open air and the broad world. It has for landscape the burning plains, the desolate, romantic mountains, the strip of blue by the coast; its outlook is along the Mediterranean world by the highway of the islands that Cervantes had traveled in youth, whence men came back with tales of sea-fight and captivity; on the long, northern edge lay Protestantism like a high mountain range, and its over-sea horizons stretched away to Peru and the Indies. It is a book written in Spain as from the center of the world, and this Spain was filled with its own folk. The race-mark of "the old Christian blood," of dark-skinned Moor and gipsy was stamped on them. They came forth in all their variety of life — hidalgo, bourgeois, picaresque, ducal, provincial, intellectual, young and old, good and bad, soldier, student and priest, inn-keepers, criminals, players, peasants, lovers, highwaymen, barbers, carriers, judges, officials, doctors, menagerie-men, damsels, duennas — an endless list. Scarce any book has so many people in it. This mass is put in constant

movement which gives unwearied liveliness to the scene. It is a book of life on the road. All the world is *en voyage*. The galley slaves are there; even the dead are going a journey. The delineation of manners is on the national scale. Only the high dignitaries of church and state are exempt from the general conscription. The Court and the great ecclesiastics are not seen, but their absence only proves how small a part exalted officials have in constituting the character of a people. The Spanish folk is represented in its racial life without them, and the portrayal is nationally complete. Cervantes deals with this multitude easily, taking them individually and a few at a time. It is a book of short flights, of incidents lightly dovetailed, of scenes strung together, of combinations rapidly formed and dissolved. The characters are seized like Holbein's in the Dance of Death, only here the dramatic moments are as various as the manifold situations of the living range of human affairs; the pictures and groupings are, nevertheless, on a similar limited scale, momentary and shifting, and each person is characterized with his own habit of life, caught in his own world, and shown completely in a few strokes. How many such small scenes crowd to the memory? The muleteer trolling the snatch of Roncesvalles in the dark morning of El Toboso; the student singing on his way to the wars; the puppet-show, the lion, and, in low life, the disasters of the night at the inn; innumerable vivid sketches.

Thus, the book is, by its surface, representative of all Spain, of the look of the land, the figures of the people, the daily event and business of life.

Cervantes Coined the Genius of His Race

But all this is only the environment of the action and the means of its operation in the tale. Cervantes knew a more admirable way of setting forth the soul of Spain. It is not merely because Don Quixote and Sancho are always on the scene that they surpass the other characters in power of interest; they have a higher life. Observation and invention are sufficient to account for the others; but this immortal pair are the children of the imagination. Cervantes stamped the genius of the race by a double die, on the loftier and the humbler side; noble and peasant, the mad hidalgo and the deluded boor, divide between them the spiritual realm of Spain.

The illusion of the one, the duping of the other, only intensify their racial traits and perfect them. Character is deeper than circumstance, and owns a superiority over all the world of appearances. If Don Quixote is, at first, interesting for what happens to him, as is the way of life, he becomes of interest for what he is; and the same, though in an inferior degree, is true of Sancho. Don Quixote achieves his ideal in his soul, however badly he fares with fortune in the outer world. He is complete in true knighthood, and when his madness leaves him, it cannot take away the nobility of nature which it has brought the poor gentleman whom it found nameless and unoccupied on his little estate, and made one of the world's heroes. The vocabulary of moral praise cannot exhaust his virtues. He is brave, resolute, courteous, wise, kind, gentle, patient; and, not to continue the enumeration, he possesses these traits with a distinctive Spanish excellence. What tenacity there is in his resolution; what recklessness in his courage; what fatalistic sweetness in his resignation; what endurance in a land of lost causes; what sadness of defeat accepted in the quiet of adversity. If these are not the most obvious, they are, perhaps, the deepest Spanish traits in the noble natures of that birth and soil. In Sancho — faithful, affectionate, dubious — nationality has lower relief, since he shares more simply the universal peasant nature of the South, but he is as abundantly Spanish in his peasanthood as Don Quixote in his sublimated chivalry. Both were fooled to the top of their bent; but destiny did not mistake her way; by comedy she perfected them, each in his own kind. It does not matter what happens to the battered body of Don Quixote, any more than to his crazy armor; in him the soul's the thing, and Cervantes keeps his soul invulnerable and undishonored. The dignity of the virtue of the great qualities of the Spanish ideal is preserved as well as set forth, and is seconded by the humbler virtue of the life near to the soil. No nation has cast ideal types of itself more summary, exemplary, and real.

Spain, the Quixote of Nations

Later ages have seen in Don Quixote a typifying power even more profound, and far beyond the reach of Cervantes to know, as no one can know the deeps of his own personality. Don Quixote was a man of

the past, bringing outworn arms against a changed world. Spain is a backward nation, ill-furnished for modern times. Other lands have persisted in seeing in Spain the Don Quixote of nations, whose life was a dream of past glory, whose thoughts and appliances were antiquated, whose career in the modern world must be foredoomed. So they saw her set forth lately, in full tilt in the lists against the best equipped, the most modern, the youngest of the nations of the earth. But what unconscious penetration, what depth of truth, there were in that man's genius, whose embodiment of the Spanish ideal has become the synonym of his country's fate!

Cervantes' Gift From Destiny

Don Quixote was welcomed by foreign nations, but not altogether as a foreigner. It is a European book. Cervantes, besides what the genius of his race and country gave him, received a gift from destiny. He embodied a great moment of time, the passing-hour of the old European ideal. It was a living ideal, that of chivalry. It was sprung from real conditions, and greatly ruled the minds and somewhat the lives of men through a long era. It belonged to a world of social disorder, the thinly populated, scarce reclaimed wilderness of feudal Europe; it belonged, too, to a world of marvel, where the unknown, even in geography, was a large constituent element, and magic, superstition, and devilism were so rife as to be almost parts of the human mind; but such as it found the world, there this ideal moved with power. The military spirit never took form more nobly than in this chivalric type. It combined and reconciled two of the greatest motive powers in the human spirit; the idea of sacrifice and the force of self-assertive personality. The perfect knight would die for his faith, his loyalty, and his love, but he died in battle. The reality of this ideal is shown by the depth, the richness, and the long continuance of its appeal to the bosoms of men. The idea of rescue, generated from mediæval misery and helplessness in an environment of brutal physical force, is its ethical core; but its efflorescence in the imagination of men was as many-colored as a sun. Beginning in the British waste marshes and the Frankish Court, it annexed the farthest Orient to the forests, deserts, and seas of its adventures; it re-made the genealogies of history and drew all the great,

emperors and saints alike, into the lines of its parentage; it absorbed into its own tradition all past heroic excellence. It developed a ceremonial ritual; it gathered to itself the mighty power of symbolism in its most august and passionate forms; it gave forth a great legendary literature, one of the richest products of human effort and faith, written in every European tongue, and splendid with the deeds of every soil. In the fullness of time, Arthur and Roland receding, it was Amadis who was the star of chivalry. Amadis' tale, though now out of the way, was once the book of Europe. It had a spell to hold the finest spirits, like Sidney, and appealed to them directly and intimately as the mirror of their hearts and hopes. It contained the European mood of knighthood in its last beauty, before its near eclipse and sudden dimming. Cervantes loved and honored it, and its hero was Don Quixote's ideal man, as he had been of thousands of the dying cult.

The Romance of Chivalry Smiled Away

Such was the nature of the literature which Cervantes "smiled away." For that had happened to the burning faith of chivalry, which is the fate of all the gods; at first men are overawed by them and worship, then they lift equal eyes to them and find them companions of life, and last they laugh at them. The laughter of men at chivalry had already filled the world from the lips of Italy before Cervantes came. In his day chivalry was dead and buried. The madness of Don Quixote was but its ghost, wandering in the staring daylight of a new age, forlorn, ridiculous, without place or use in the world.

It is this death of the chivalric ideal that strikes the tragic note. Whether Cervantes was himself conscious of this note of tragedy in his work must remain forever obscure; if he was aware of it, he very successfully concealed his knowledge. He began with pure, comic intention, and made fun of the chivalric tradition, and very rough fun it was, nor did it grow less rough. His treatment of the knight is not free from coarseness, and is unremitting in cruelty; here are the standards of the practical joker and the buffoon-stage; but it may be usefully remembered that Cervantes' scale of cruelty in life was one familiar with the ways of the Turk, and the pains of the Christian victims in Algiers. Primarily a comedy by its conception and unflinching conduct, Don Quixote gave out

the note of tragedy only in our own latter days. In this respect it is a myth of the modern mind, which has taken on new meanings and disclosed fresh phases of significance with time, as is the way of myths; with this Cervantes has nothing to do. As he did not see in his hero the incarnation of his country's fate, neither did he see in him the last and greatest of knight-errants. He did not look with our eyes, and it is only through the perspective of centuries that we recognize the historic moment, and discern the famous knight, a great-hearted gentleman, standing in his travesty at the grave of chivalry.

The Large Results of Time

The unconscious element, or what seems such, in the works of the highest genius, is their most immortal part. There is a mystical union of the race with these great works; they are humanized as much by the adoption of mankind as by their original creation. The general, human spirit enters into them; they blend with it and become impersonal; in the large results of time — in mythologies, in the legend of chivalry, in the masterpieces of culture — they become racial products, unindebted to individuals. It is thus that Don Quixote is enfranchised from being the book of a country, or of a historic moment merely, and becomes a great book of the modern spirit. It rises with the vigor of world-life in it, and bears the supreme title of a book of humanity. It contains the experience, the thought, the doubt of man. This comedy is found to be the tragedy of all idealism. If this is not the aspect under which it has most widely spread as a book of popular amusement, it is thus that it has most profoundly affected the mind of modern times. Mephistopheles and Don Quixote are the two great myths that the modern world has generated out of itself, as characteristic as Achilles in Homeric time, or Roland in the Middle Ages, or Amadis in the Renaissance. They are forms of its deepest consciousness, types created in its own image, planets cast from its own orb. The modern world is psychological, and this book contains a psychology, seemingly, as elementary and comprehensive as a law of nature; it is skeptical, and this book utters, as no other does, the *double entendre* of life; it is pessimistic, and this book makes the most destructive impeachment of life. Doubtless, one goes far from Cervantes in such thoughts;

but if he did not fathom, we may well believe that he felt the deeper meanings of his book, for even in the eyes of the comedian it is a book of much sadness.

The double nature of life is put to the fore. There is an opposition in human nature, and this is set forth by the contrast of Don Quixote and Sancho. It is rendered in them by divers ways as the antithesis of the imagination with the senses, of the life of thought with the life of fact, of illusion with reality, of the eloquent discourse with the proverb, of the poetry with the prose of life; but essentially, this polarity is in the double aspect of life as soul and sense. Cervantes decides for neither; he presents both as liable to error. He portrays Don Quixote with the characteristic defect of the soul, imaginative illusion; and he gives to Sancho the characteristic defect of the material man, self-interest. The higher nature betrayed by its own nobility, the lower duped by its own baseness — that is the two-edged sword of life. That is the human comedy.

It is in the madness of Don Quixote that the heart of the book beats. It is a very singular madness. The invention manifested in the narrative is generally thought to be its prime literary trait; but its verisimilitude, the skill with which it keeps the quaking edge of truth and fiction, is as marvelous; and nowhere more than in Don Quixote's madness are the shades made subtle. It is a very normal madness. Don Quixote does not differ much from other men in his mental processes. He interprets the sights and sounds of the actual world by his past experience; only, as he has lived in the world of books a life of imagination, his experience is unreal; his memory is inapplicable to the world about him, or, as is said, his inferences are all wrong. His illusions have an origin from without, and are misinterpretations of the external world, due to an expectancy in his own mind which has arisen from his absorbed reading of romances. His senses are overlaid with thought, and he sees what he expects to see. It is impossible, too, to acquit him of a certain complicity with his own madness. He shows it when he refrains from testing his second helmet; in the fact that he was not fully persuaded he was a knight-errant till the Duke treated him as such; and unmistakably in his tale of what happened in the cave of Montesinos, where Sancho frankly charges him with making it up; at the end,

too, his recovery seems, in part at least, self-willed. The history of his madness, also, has a method in it ; in the first part he is his own victim ; in the second he is the victim of others ; beginning with self-deception, he ends as the butt of the deception of all from Sancho to the Duke and the Bachelor. His madness is intermittent ; if his mind is, in fact, diseased, it is by a capability of going mad under certain exciting causes, but on all other occasions he is as remarkable for judgment as for learning and eloquence.

Madness of the Soul

This strange madness of Don Quixote is comic in its accidents, in its circumstantial defeat, in its earthly environment ; but in itself it is tragic. Its seat is in the very excellency of the soul ; its illusions take body in the noblest human aims, the most heroic nature and virtue of the purest strain. A madman has no character ; but it is the character of Don Quixote that, at last, draws the knight out of all his degradations, and makes him triumph in the heart of the reader. Modern dismay begins in the thought that here is not the abnormality of an individual, but the madness of the soul in its own nature. That high aims may be ridiculous ; that heroism may be folly ; that virtue may be insanity ; that the ideal, which was the spiritual wealth of the fathers, may be the farce of the children ; that the soul in its exaltation, its gentleness, and sacrifice, has no necessary wisdom, and in its own vision no warrant of reality ; that the good cast down, the kind trampled on, the brave broken become the laughter of the world ; these are the truths which make Don Quixote such sorry reading for the idealist.

Don Quixote, so far as the Knight of the Rueful Feature is concerned, would, indeed, be a pitiful farce to modern feeling, were not his madness typical of the partial sanity of mankind. Still, as in old time, a man finds what he goes out to seek ; a man sees his own face in the world ; and man is still a victim of past greatness. These are capital truths. Imaginative illusion, the soul's vice, is common in life, and affects most the best of men, and especially those of great emotional capacity ; and since emotional imagination is the principal feeder of the religious and moral energies of men, this illusion most characterizes men of ideal temper, possessed with the ideas of rescue, sacrifice, and battle,

and arises most frequently in the field of the reform of the world. A man of one or few ideas does not differ from Don Quixote psychologically, except in degree. Whether his experience is bookish or real, he confines his attention to a specially selected and usually narrow theme, neglects the correctives that life furnishes, and becomes absorbed in a mastering preconception of life ; he is infatuated. Often he exhibits a like complicity with his own partial madness, suppresses irreconcilable facts, and refuses to think in their direction. Often, too, he passes on from the stage of self-deception, in which he is only his own victim, and becomes the victim of others practising on him, whom they profess to take at his own estimate, for gain, convenience, or amusement. The parallel is easily followed out, and the fact is recognized in the word Quixotic, which has become a familiar term in all languages.

Cervantes' Victory

Don Quixote is a book of one great defeat, but also of many victories, and especially those of prose, realism, and humor in modern literature. Of all the victories which it embodies, however, the greatest is that of Cervantes over himself. The unfailing cheerfulness of its spirit is the temperament of Cervantes playing through it. He had lived and toiled, he had felt the full passion of life, he had dreamed, and planned, and striven, both as man and writer, in arms and letters, and he had met, for the most part, only the blows of fortune ; wounds and slavery, neglect and poverty, the well-known wages of genius, had been paid him in full measure. Yet every indication of his personality that survives shows him unspoiled and still companionable, pleasant, patient. It was in this spirit that, being about to die, he bade farewell to all. Scott, at the end of his days, with Wordsworth and others about him in the library at Abbotsford, asked Lockhart to read the scene. Allan, the painter, "remembered nothing he ever saw with such sad pleasure as the attitude of Scott and Wordsworth as the story went on." "Good by, humors ; good by, pleasant fancies ; good by, merry friends, for I perceive I am dying, in the wish to see you happy in the other life." These were Cervantes' last words in this world. The most profound master of the irony of life preserved his heart uncorroded by that knowledge, as he had kept it sweet against the enmity of man and fortune.

LEAVES FROM THE LOG OF THE “LEND-A-HAND”

BY

WILFRED T. GRENFELL

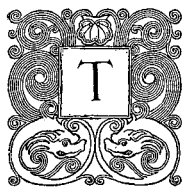
ILLUSTRATED WITH PHOTOGRAPHS

Doctor Wilfred T. Grenfell is the young Englishman and Oxford man who, for the love of God, practices medicine on the sparsely settled coasts of Newfoundland and Labrador. For thirteen years he has given the folk of some two thousand miles of desperately evil coast practically the only medical attendance they have had; and for that same period he has given them certainly the only sympathetic encouragement — the only hope — the whole people has ever known. In summer, his professional round is made in a little steamer, with which he reaches every harbor of the northern peninsula of Newfoundland, of the west shore of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and of the coast of Labrador, even past Cape Chidley into Hudson Strait; in winter, he gets about by dog-team and komatik, often making more than two thousand miles in a winter season — a call of 150 miles, in the worst of winter weather, the way lying through a bleak wilderness, is a commonplace experience.

Dr. Grenfell is a robust, jolly fellow, thoroughly interested in life. He loves the adventurous side of his career; he makes light of the deprivation and hardship and danger of it; he is not by any means of the sentimental, weak-kneed missionary type. He is indefatigable, devoted, kind; and he is in the best and most efficient way heroic. He does not know that he is heroic; he hasn't time to pause and reflect upon the dramatic quality of the situations into which his work frequently leads him (and, by the way, Dr. Grenfell is not

the hero of a certain work of fiction, dealing with life on the Labrador coast; this must be said because, unhappily, he has been mistaken for the original of a purely fictitious character.)

Within thirteen years he has established three hospitals on those barren coasts, and has initiated various enterprises by which the people may be helped to help themselves. He is not only a physician: he is more a physician than a preacher, to be sure, but he is as much an industrial organizer as a physician; The writer visited his hospitals, and sailed with him for a brief space; and the work of this mission is not only needed beyond belief, but it is being done by a thoroughly capable man, actuated by the finest motives of which the human heart is capable. The man and the mission are worthy of sympathetic interest — worthy of hearty support of every sort. Support is needed, as a matter of course: money is needed, that the good work may be continued, and extended to the remoter parts. The writer knows beyond all question that every dollar — every penny, even — contributed to this work will not only be carefully administered, but will, without fail and almost immediately, reach a sore spot. Only God and Grenfell really know what blessing half a dollar will work on that wretched coast! By the courtesy of the editors of this magazine, the writer is permitted to say that contributions may be sent to Messrs. Brown Bros. & Co., Wall Street, New York.
—NORMAN DUNCAN



HE “Lend-a-hand” is my komatik or dog-sleigh. We cut it ourselves from a stout old spruce — just where the stem joins the roots — so that the curved up “horns” of the runners should carry the grain right on round the “bend”. It is shod with enamel, sawn

from the jaw-bone of an old sulphur-bottom whale which was killed off our harbor and towed in to be flensed of its blubber. Not a nail is used to hold it together. Every piece is lashed to the next with stout thongs from the hide of an old harp-seal which one day pushed its inquisitive head out of a “lake” in the Arctic ice a little too near the end of our rifle