

**A LETTER TO THE
REVEREND
DR. PERCY**

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A Letter to the Reverend Dr. Percy by John Bowle

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JOHN BOWLE

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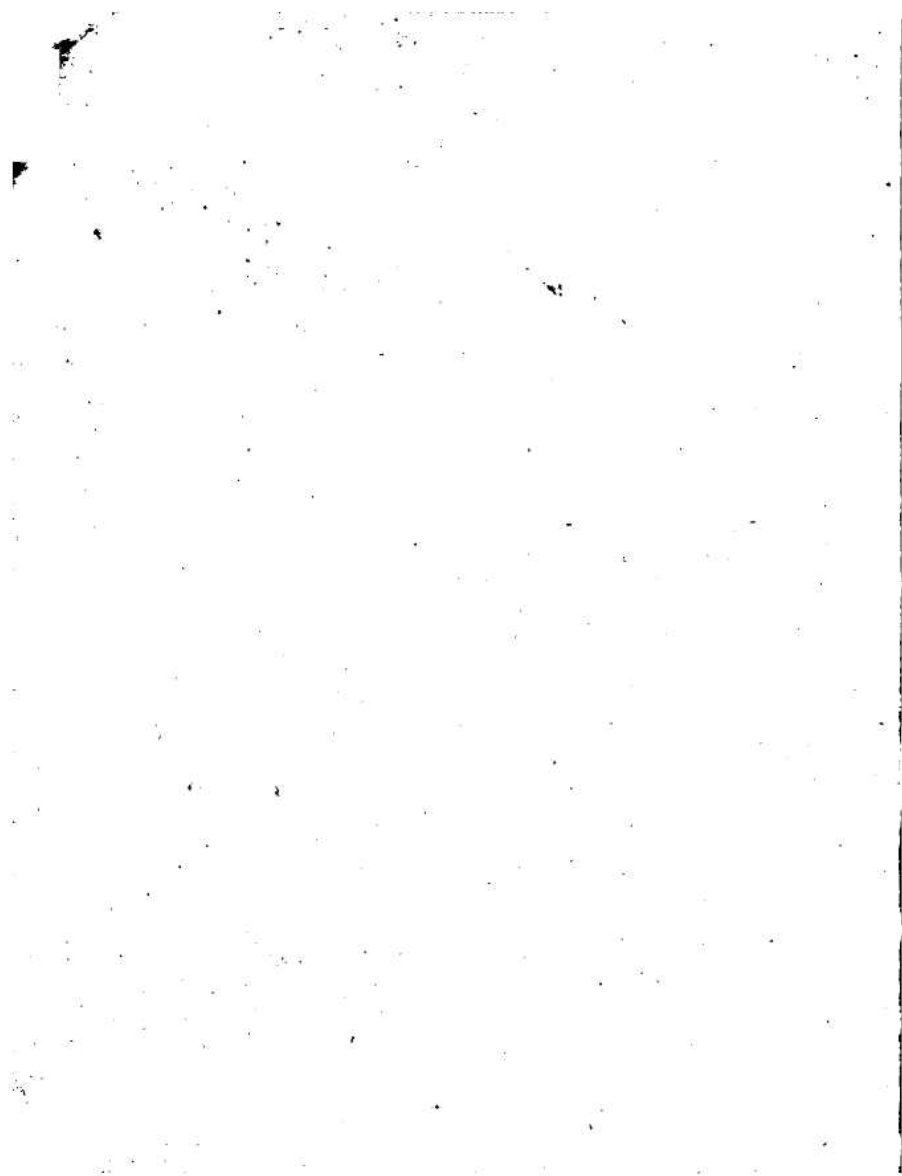
A

L E T T E R

TO THE

Reverend D^R P E R C Y.





A
L E T T E R

TO THE

Reverend D^R PERCY,

CONCERNING

A NEW AND CLASSICAL EDITION

OF

HISTORIA DEL VALEROSO CAVALLERO
DON QUIXOTE DE LA MANCHA.

To be illustrated by

ANNOTATIONS; and EXTRACTS from the Historians, Poets, and Romances
of Spain and Italy, and other Writers Ancient and Modern; with a
GLOSSARY, and INDEXES.

In which are occasionally interperfed

Some Reflections on the LEARNING and GENIUS of the AUTHOR.

With a MAP OF SPAIN, adapted to the History, and to every Transla-
tion of it.

By the Reverend JOHN BOWLE, M. A. F. S. A.

*MIGUEL DE CERVANTES merite quelque distinction. S'il avoit eu l'honneur d'être
un Ancien et que son Ouvrage eût été écrit en Grec ou seulement en Latin; il y a
déjà long-tems qu'il auroit eu des Scholiaſtes et même des Commentateurs en forme.
Avertisſement à TIRANT LE BLANC.*

L O N D O N :

Printed for B. WHITE, Horace's-Head, Fleet-Street.

MDCCLXXVII.



A

L E T T E R

TO THE

Reverend D^R P E R C Y,

CONCERNING A NEW EDITION OF

D O N Q U I X O T E.

AT length, Dear Sir, I take the liberty thus publicly to acquaint you with the result of my labours on our favourite writer CERVANTES. I particularly address myself to you, as you are so conversant in every branch of polite literature, more especially that which has ingrossed so much of my time, and attention.

From the commencement of my intimacy with the text of Don Quixote, I was induced to consider the great author as a Classic, and to treat him as such. With this view I had the courage to begin, and, what is more, the perseverance to finish two most copious verbal Indexes to both parts of that celebrated work. On transcribing which it seemed altogether right to sever the pro-

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per names of men, places, and other remarkable things, and to make them distinct parts. This has also been done; with this farther addition, that where the name occurs in both parts, the whole is to be found in the former, so that every particular respecting any person, city, mountain, or whatever else is mentioned by the author, from ancient and modern history, may be perused together. Thus, for instance, *Amadis de Gaula*, whom the Knight more immediately intended for the grand object of his imitation, besides the introductory verses ascribed to him, occurs in fourteen different chapters in the first, and in eight in the second part. The citations will abundantly gratify the pursuits of the most diligent searcher. The several articles under this head, you will probably be surpris'd to hear, are in number above one thousand, notwithstanding nothing is said of that odious and detestable character of the intolerant Ecclesiastico, who is justly held up as an object of contempt and ridicule, and therefore deservedly Anonymous. But notwithstanding this, every passage relating to him may be easily found in the words Ecclesiastico, and Religioso, in the General Index *. From this minute survey the necessity of a comment, and annotations becomes apparent, as 't is of very little use to read what we do not understand. This will be found to be the case in many instances as to the text, which in many places is very obscure; in others our ideas must be very imperfect, and frequently defective from the want of that collateral assistance which is to be derived from history, from the Romances, and other Books, which, if Cervantes did not immediately consult, will be found to contain matter that will throw light

* As words will but imperfectly convey an idea of this laborious undertaking, specimens of each will, in a proper place, be added.

on various passages in his work. Of some great events, which happened in his own time, he is to be considered as the original historian. Such were the battle of Lepanto, the taking of the Goleta *, and the Expulsion of the Moors from Spain, with several lesser incidents, to which he alludes; many of which will be verified by the concurrent testimony of other cotemporary writers, and will occasionally appear in the notes. It is not at present my intention to trouble you with extracts from those *Libros de Cavallerias*—the Romances, which, by your assistance, I have had the patience to toil through; but shall in general observe, that the secondary amends for the drudgery of such painful reading has been, what Monsieur de St. Palaye, and the other French writers on the History of Chivalry have remarked, the faithful and exact descriptions of the manners and customs of the times in which they were wrote: Though the facts related were in themselves as fabulous as the heroes of whom they were told, yet similar events frequently occurred: In this respect, they deserve some esteem as histories, because these latter enumerate several facts similar to those they particularly mention. Thus for example, the watching of arms in some church or chapel, previous to the receiving the order of Knighthood, with its various ceremonies of creation, the hearing mass, and confession † before the day of battle, with other religious circumstances, are to be found both in history, and romance, though

* P. 1. Chapters 39, 42.

† Toutefois celluy jour au matin Rolland devant que partir pour aller combattre festoit confesse et avoit receu le sacrement de lautel (car la coustume des gens de loist de Charlemaigne estoit telle) que devant que entrer en bataille ils se confessoient et recevoient leur redempteur, et le nostre. Bouchard Annales de Bretagne. Paris. 1531. Fol. fu. 606.