

**THE LIFE OF CERVANTES:
TOGETHER WITH REMARKS
ON HIS WRITINGS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649333219

The life of Cervantes: together with remarks on his writings by Mr. de Florian

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

MR. DE FLORIAN

**THE LIFE OF CERVANTES:
TOGETHER WITH REMARKS
ON HIS WRITINGS**

T O

Mrs. M A T H E W.

MADAM,

I Beg leave herewith to present you,—not with a Romance, because it is not fiction,—but with the Life of CERVANTES DE SAAVEDRA; to whom such extraordinary adventures happened, that were they told us from less respectable authority than that of the Spanish Academy, we should hardly be brought to give them credit.

SAAVEDRA's captivity, and its concomitant events, as bordering on the marvellous, form that part of his History which will most excite the attention of the ordinary Reader: but you, Madam, who cannot peruse a page of his admirable "*QUIXOTE*," without enthusiastic rapture; you will be no less inquisitive about the minutest circumstances of the Author's domestic Life.

Nothing, indeed, but the fondness with which his memory is cherished by all lovers of Literature, could warrant my obtruding on the Public, a Work otherwise so insignificant: consisting only of a few pages, translated from a translation:—the shadow of a shade.

For although Mr. DE FLORIAN, the Translator out of the Spanish into French, has executed his task very ably, the knowing it to be but a version would deter almost any one of literary ambition from the yet humbler

task of turning that into English. And possibly I myself might have been discouraged from such an undertaking, had I not, upon my first meeting with his Book, chanced to compare it with the original; and, whether it was from my being so much more conversant with the French, than with the Spanish, or from Mr. DE FLORIAN's manner of writing, and his little additions, it appeared to me more lustrous as it came out of his hands. At that time, however, being abroad, I had no thought of translating it: and it was not till very lately, that, in relaxation of severer studies, which had brought upon me a fixed head-ache, I took to translating the agreeable Romance of "GALATEE;" to which the "LIFE OF CERVANTES," and the "REMARKS UPON HIS WRITINGS," stand prefixed.

Ere I had finished it, I happily got rid of my head-ache; and therefore dismissed my Doctor;—or, in parliamentary phrase, I threw "GALATEA" over the table; and if it is not absolutely kicked out of the House; it is a business adjourned *sine die*.

If it were not interrupting the course of your studies, of greater pith and moment, I could almost venture to recommend to your perusal Mr. DE FLORIAN's "GALATEE." As it is the only pastoral Romance I ever read in my life, I cannot speak of its merit comparatively with that of others; but I think it excessively pretty; by no means perfect; for it partakes of the common fault of all of the Novel Genus,—too much *Love*. Of which, if I lament that there is so much to be found in books, it is only because there is so little to be found any where else.

Love, however, is not the sole subject of the Romance, but rural Manners;—pastoral Life, in general; of which, indeed, it may be said (for it is so in ARCADY, as well

us upon the banks of the TAJO) that passion is the vital principle.

“ Landscapes only I mean to paint; (says the Author) and village manners to describe. Ye, whose bosoms are fraught with sensibility, and whose minds are uncorrupt;—ye, who relish the pleasures of a country life;—to whom are grateful rural walks, and the contemplation of nature;—ye, of pure hearts, to whom the melody of birds, or murmuring streams speak peace; lend me your attention, all: and may ye reap instruction, as well as pleasure.”

The World is grown too populous, too luxurious, and too corrupt, I fear, ever to return to its primitive simplicity: and there are thousands, and thousands, in every Metropolis in Europe, whom nothing less than a plague could drive into the country; although they are morally sure, staying where they are, to lose their health, and, perhaps, their lives, in pursuit of fortunes or honours, which they never may obtain.

I have no very sanguine hope of awakening in such infatuated persons the dictates of reason and nature: yet I cannot resist the pleasure of transcribing one particular passage, from Mr. DE FLORIAN, as a sort of abstract of rural happiness. I shall give it in his own words, which are elegantly simple, as befits the subject. It is the opening of the second book of “ GALATEA.”

“ Quand pourrai-je vivre au village! Quand serai-je le possesseur d’une petite maison entourée de cerisiers! Tout auprès seroient un jardin, un verger, une prairie, et des ruches: un ruisseau bordé de noisetiers environneroit mon empire;—et mes desirs ne passeroient jamais ce ruisseau. Là, je coulerois

THE
L I F E
OF
C E R V A N T E S.

MICHAEL DE CERVANTES SAAVEDRA, whose Writings have given celebrity to SPAIN, amused all EUROPE, and improved the age in which he lived,—himself dragged on a miserable existence,—and died scarcely regretted.

It is but very lately that the place of his birth has been ascertained. MADRID, SEVILLE, LUCHEN, and ALCALA, have severally laid claim to him.

B

CER-

CERVANTES, as well as HOMER, CAMMOENS, and other illustrious men, has, since his death, been held in the highest estimation, though he lived almost in want of common necessaries.

The SPANISH ACADEMY, under the patronage of the KING, has at length thought proper to pay—to the *memory* of CERVANTES—those honours, which were so justly *his* due. An Edition of ‘DON QUIXOTE,’ of unparalleled typographical splendour, has been newly published. The EDITORS, having their national honour at heart, seem, by the extraordinary care, and expence bestowed upon *the Work*, desirous to atone for the stupid, and almost criminal neglect of *the Author*.

Materials for CERVANTES's Life have
been.

been very sedulously collected, and wrought up by a distinguished Member of the ACADEMY: from which it appears, he was of a Gentleman's family; being SON of RODERICK DE CERVANTES, and LEONORA DE CORTINAS. He was born at ALCALA DE HENARES, a TOWN in NEW CASTILE, the 9th day of October, 1547, in the reign of CHARLES THE FIFTH.

From his earliest infancy he was fond of books. He studied at MADRID, under a very eminent Professor: and soon distinguished himself from the rest of his School-fellows, by his superior genius.

A proficiency in the Latin language, and an insight into Theology, made up the learning of those days. His Parents intended him either for Phy-

fic, or the Church; those two being the only lucrative professions then followed in SPAIN: But, CERVANTES had this in common with many celebrated Poets,—he made verses in spite of his Parents.

AN ELEGY on the death of QUEEN ISABELLA of VALOIS,—several SONNETS,—and a POEM entitled FILENA; were his first productions. The indifferent reception these met with, seemed to our young Author such flagrant injustice, that he thereupon took the resolution of quitting his native Country; and went to settle at ROME. There penury constrained him to enter into the service of CARDINAL AQUAVIVA, in the humble capacity of *Valet de Chambre*.

Disgusted very soon with an employ
so