

THE MERCHANT KNIGHT.

A Romance translated from the Portuguese of Gonsalo Fernandez Trancoso. (1585).

Scarcely anything appears to be known of the life of Gonsalo Fernandez Trancoso, the author of the following story, except that he was a native of the little town in Beira from which he derived his name, that he professed mathematics, and published a small book on the ascertainment of moveable feasts, and died between 1585 and 1596. Two parts of his "Profitable Tales" were published by himself in the former year, and a third was added after his death by his son.

The collective title of Trancoso's stories shows that they were written with a moral purpose, and some are merely anecdotes. A few are of greater compass, including a version of the tale of Griselda, and the story now translated. The great superiority of this to the others renders it probable that it is founded upon, and closely follows, some old romance now lost. This may well have originated in the time of Edward the Third, when the connection between England and Portugal was especially intimate, and the English frequently came to the assistance of the Portuguese in their wars with Castile. If written after the Spanish conquest of Portugal in 1580, it may even have been intended to remind the Portuguese of this ancient alliance, and suggest that help might be had from England.

This story is not, like most of Trancoso's, spoiled by tedious moralising. It does not attempt any delineation of character or vivid individual portraiture, nor has it anything of the poetical charm of "Aucassin and Nicolette." But it is inspired by a thoroughly romantic spirit, and in its transparent simplicity of style affords a refreshing contrast to the exaggerated conceits of so much of the prose fiction of its day. It was written in the most flourishing age of Portuguese literature, and its diction is worthy of the period.

Trancoso's stories were popular in their own country in their day, but have not, so far as we are aware, been hitherto translated or noticed out of Portugal. The last edition was in 1722. All are rare: one of the two in the British Museum is not mentioned by any bibliographer.

Once upon a time there dwelt in a city of Portugal a rich merchant who had a discreet and clever son, well seen in all the accomplishments that would befit a youth of birth, versed in Latin and Greek, a graceful dancer, a skilful player on the guitar and all other instruments, a perfect horseman and expert in every warlike exercise ; insomuch that if his merit were regarded rather than his birth, he might adorn the court of the greatest monarch in the world. Being thus accomplished, his father could not train him to traffic as he would fain have done, for this the youth disdained, and would rather mate with the nobles and show forth his skill in their exercises than earn all the treasure his father promised him. Insomuch that at four and twenty he was putting no hand to his father's business, not by reason of ill habits or disobedience, but following his own way, by which he deemed some time to attain to honour. One day his father bade him go and market at Medina fair ; but he made some seemly excuse, and said that if his father so willed he would go as a merchant to Fez, with which we were then at peace. And this he said not as having a mind to buy and sell, for his thoughts were set on higher things, but he longed to behold the pastimes and exercises of the African horsemen, and the Moorish jennets, so renowned throughout the world. And his father gave him three thousand crusadoes, and he departed in a ship with other merchants, some going to prove what the Moors might have to sell, and others what the Moors might desire to buy. And thus having come to that city, everyone went whither his inclination led him, some to

the weavers of carpets to buy of their stock, or have others wrought according to their own pattern ; others to purchase table-linen, Moorish haiks, and the like ; and thus each one bought what he would of what he found in the land. But our youth inquired of nought respecting merchandise, but learned where the place of exercises was, and on the first holiday, which was the day after his coming, went thither to see how the people of that country rode, and what was the gear of their horses. And noting some particular things he saw a Moor of about fifty years well mounted, and with him two young sons of graceful bearing, and observing that by the negligence of their servants their saddle-girths were fastened amiss, he gave them warning, whereat they were glad, and gazed upon him, and he upon every one. And of all he saw no one seemed to him better seated than the old Moor, and so pleased was he that he uttered this in the hearing of many, who came around him and said that since he knew the seat of a cavalier so well it was right that he himself should be seen on horseback, and each offered him his own steed to mount, which he declined, thinking it discourteous to make the lender go on foot. But the Moor, hearing this, straightway sent to his own house for a horse and offered it to him, saying : " Take this, for I ween that these gentlemen who thought to humble us by their politeness, and that you had no such seat in the saddle as they, will be humbled themselves when your good seat is seen of them ; and I and those whom you commended will remain content with the lesson you will have given them." The youth

thanked him much for these good words, mounted the horse with great agility, and gave two courses and a volt in the field of exercise, showing that he understood what he was speaking of, for he did it with such grace and dash that all deemed him worthy of their company and conversation, though before they had despised him as but a merchant. And the old man and his sons rode with him to his hostelry, where all alighted, and at the old man's importunity he removed to his house, where he gained the love of the sons until death, as though they had been brothers, and the old man treated him as a son, and gave him to eat of our dishes that are not made in Barbary, and showed him as much honour as if he had been a prince. And in truth the young man was of noble nature, and well trained and fit for any company, and well seen of all, and thus he spent in the Moor's house all the time that his companions were buying their merchandise and preparing for their voyage home. But it now being time for them to return to the ship lying in the harbour ready to sail, they came to tell him: "Sir, despatch your goods and victuals, for we depart in three days." Hearing this he spoke to his host, and said: "Sir, I know not how I can repay the favours and great honours which you have done me, and pray you to hold me at your service and command me at your discretion, for, saving in what concerns the Faith, there is nothing you could require of me that I would not do. I say this, inasmuch as my companions are departing, and I would return with them, and I have provided nothing; wherefore it behoves me to quit

the much that is made of me in this house, and set myself to work to lay out certain monies which my father gave me wherewith to traffic here, which as yet I have not done," The Moor hearing this answered : " Sir, so long as I live, whenever you are in this country, you shall always receive in my house this little service which I render you now, and I will not suffer that you should go elsewhere until the hour of your departure ; and should you have anything to buy, and need my aid for this, I will do all your pleasure, and whatsoever you may send to your country shall be stored in my house. And take heed to send no provision for your voyage on shipboard, for my wife will provide it." The youth thanked him for his favour and said : " Sir, I am not a merchant, and never was, and know nothing of the business ; may it please you therefore of your goodness, since you promise me aid and favour, to lay out by the advice of merchants or by your own judgment the three thousand crusadoes which I have here, in any manner which seems good and profitable." The Moor looked on him and said : " If you would take to your own land what will bring honour and profit for you and your father, I counsel you to buy the bones of a holy Christian martyred here, whom the Christians hold in great veneration. These have come down by descent from father to son from him who first had them, and are rated at three thousand crusadoes, and are proved to be relics of the greatest worth ; and learned Moors affirm that the Christian who shall ransom them shall have great honour and advantage, and that the Moor who shall cause them to be

translated to a Christian land shall have great wealth and worship among Christians, and shall save his body and soul from every ill. And although it is long that these bones have been here, no Christian has been willing to ransom them at so high a rate ; but do you takethem upon my counsel, and trust to what I say." The Christian deeming him a man of truth, consented, and went with him to the house where the relics were to be found, and paid him that owned them, and when they were brought to the Moor's dwelling his wife, children, and household received them with great veneration, and made a coffer in which to put them, lined within and without with crimson velvet, with nails and embroidery of gold. And thus he was despatched to his ship, with much provision and conserves, wine, and water enough for a long voyage, and horses' trappings and caparison, and other rich work of the country ; some for himself and others for his father. And the Moor's wife sent coifs and jackets of Moorish work for the youth's mother ; for so great was the love which they bore to this Christian for his good and virtuous carriage, that they loved him as a son, and if they could have helped it would never have let him go. But he must needs return in the ship, to which the Moor and his sons bore him company.

Embarking immediately, he departed with good weather, which by the virtue of the relics as would appear, God so continued to him, that he soon came to port in his own country, where he was received with open arms, and gave the presents he had brought from his host to his father and mother, who

prized them much and took great delight in them, minded to repay them with even better. But when they would know how he had laid out the three thousand crusadoes, and learned what he had done, his father was ready to kill him for wrath, and said: "Look at this you bring, supposing that they are true relics, think you that I can sell them to get back my money with profit? It cannot be, on the contrary I must spend more money to do them honour and put them where they will be esteemed, and thus, you having squandered the three thousand crusadoes you took with you, my honour will compel me to spend as much again for the honour of these bones." The youth would have excused himself, affirming that he had been promised much honour and profit, but his father would not hearken unto him, and in his passion drove him from the house. But, having by his virtuous walk and deportment gained the friendship of many noble persons in the city, he repaired to their houses, and they took him in. And the Bishop having knowledge of those relics, and that they had been long in the city of Fez, and of the Saint to whom they had belonged, and knowing his life and miracles, brought them out of the ship with a great procession to the Cathedral. And, by the way, marvels were not wanting which showed the sanctity of the relics, and they were greatly esteemed, and gained the repute they deserved in the bishopric, and the youth's father became better known than before, and his house was so frequented that this year he did more business than in the three years before it. And as he still would not take his son back some

nobles who heard this interposed, and reconciled them and restored the son to his father's favour; and his mother, who took his part in everything, had him brought back to the house. At length she said to her husband that to see whether this was a miracle or not he should reckon up his substance, and he would find that for the three thousand crusadoes he had spent upon the Saint, God had given him six thousand and more, so that his capital was doubled. The merchant finding this to be so, determined to send his son next year, as he did, giving him four thousand crusadoes and presents for the Moor and his sons, and his mother gave him other very rich presents for the Moor's wife. And the youth went and was received as a son, and related all that had happened, and concluded that when the time came for his ship to return, he would give the Moor the four thousand crusadoes he had brought to lay out for him, for he loved him as a father, and determined to follow his advice, and go back to live with him if he were ill treated by his own father. And such was the Moor that, though he loved him as a son, neither he nor his sons ever strove to persuade him to change his faith, but rather besought him to continue as he was, for the Moor himself hoped to become a Christian when he should have performed certain necessary things. And so when the youth would depart, he charged him to take to the ship another coffer with other bones of another Saint, priced at four thousand crusadoes, which coffer he had at his own cost lined within and without with rich brocade, with silver nails, and

gave him carpets and other things of price to take to his father and mother, and for himself, and sent provisions to the ship as at the former time, and with his sons accompanied him to the place of embarkation, and gave him a horse with full caparison, and money, saying, "If your father is offended as at the first time, let it not trouble you, for if he knew my purpose he would not mislike it; and since he doth not know it, let him give course to his anger and free vent to his passion, and whatever he may say or do bear with him, for I know what I have given you, and believe that you will win honour and profit for yourself and your father and mother, and also for me and my wife and children. Go therefore content, and trust in me," and thus dismissed the young man from the port.

Speeding with a fair wind he arrived in his country, where he was at first well received, but when his father knew what he brought, if he had been angry the first time he was much more angry the second, deeming that to err once was more pardonable than to err twice. But the youth endured all his fury with patience, and withdrew from the house not to give him more annoy, as he could well do, having honourable entertainment elsewhere. At length the Bishop spoke to the father, saying it was by his means that God permitted him to bring these relics to his church, and that he thanked him and took it well of him. Also his wife, seeing that the substance in the house was greatly increased, made him take a reckoning of it for every six months, and said, "Take note that for four thousand which your son spends

on one side, God gives you ten thousand on the other ; own, therefore, that all that is laid out thus is laid out well." And on this she spoke with her husband many days, until he yielded, and the chest with the relics was carried to the church with as great procession and solemnity as the other, and greater if it were possible, and put in a fitting place to be venerated as it deserved, so that the land had profit of both, and miracles were not wanting, which the Lord ever works for his Saints. Insomuch that all the diocese took note, and people flocked from all the country, who, having seen the Saints, wished to see the house and person of him at whose cost the relics had come. And as he was a rich merchant, and had all manner of goods in his house, they asked for them and bought freely, deeming that all stuff in that house was blessed, and that somewhat of its holiness accrued to themselves. By reason whereof this man gained so greatly, that if the first year he had had ten thousand crusadoes, this year he had twenty thousand, by which he came to perceive that this happened not by his own industry, but by the grace of God, and, holding this for certain, he forgave his son, and received him again into his house. Then he equipped his son to go yet again to Fez, with great gifts for the Moor, and letters recommending him, with injunctions to him if any more relics were to be found to bring the same over, perceiving that though he could not sell them our Lord rewarded him with more than he had spent. He also gave him presents for the Moor's wife, and the son, taking gifts from himself for

the Moor's sons, and five thousand crusadoes which his father gave him to lay out, departed as soon as the vessel was ready. Arriving at Fez, he was well received and caressed by the Moor, his wife and sons, and treated as a son; and he gave each the gifts he had for them, and passed his time agreeably until it seemed that he ought to depart, when he gave the Moor, the five thousand crusadoes he had to lay out, praying him to spend them as he thought good, for he would be entirely at his disposal. Then said the Moor, "Here is a Christian damsel whose price is these very five thousand crusadoes; her you must take with you, and you will not return to this land, for I know that you will have much trouble and great occupations which will prevent you, but with God's help all will end well. And you will remain at the last rich and honoured to your great content. And I entreat you, that when you shall have found my words come true, you will think upon me, and do me to wit as you would your own father, for I love you as a son." The youth therefore gave the Moor the five thousand crusadoes to buy the maiden, who was some thirteen years old; and when he would have spoken with her she could not understand his speech, nor he hers, which displeased him. Yet they took her to the Moor's house, and he at his own cost had the richest garments made for her, of no stuff less than silk, and many garnished with tassels of silk and gold, and sent her away with like circumstance as if the youth had been a Prince; and he and his wife and sons went with them to the ship, and

he said to the youth, "My son, I deliver this lady to you to keep and guard in all honesty, and touch her no more than if she were you own sister. Regard the precepts of the law of God, which you Christians have, and keep them as you know how;" all which the youth promised and fulfilled.

He embarked, leaving great yearning for him with the Moor and his wife and sons; these returned to Fez, and he putting to sea with favourable weather speedily arrived in his own country, where his father received him with great caresses, being ready to have patience with him even though he should have brought the bones of another Saint, as indeed he desired, nor did he at first put him any questions. But when the presents had been seen, his son gave him the Moor's letter, by which he learned that the son had brought a Christian maiden appraised at five thousand crusadoes. At this he grieved mightily, and said, "That the Lord should send Saints is well, but what want we with sinners, especially female ones? Thou hast surely brought her here to satisfy thy carnal appetites, and hast never laid out thy money so ill in thy life." And he was more ireful and anguished than the other two times, weening that nothing good could come of mortal sin. Notwithstanding at the entreaty of his wife, he suffered that the damsel should be brought to his house, as she longed to see her; and this he did not to pleasure the girl, but to remove her from the company of his son. He therefore brought her to the house, and when his wife saw her she kissed her on the face, and thanked God who had made her so

beautiful, and said to her husband, "Mark, Sir, this is the crown of the reward which thou hast merited for ransoming those relics and this damsel; for the Lord who would give us but one son, now gives us a daughter, and I love her as my own." And thus she received her into her house; and seeing by her speech that she did not know our language, she instructed her, and kept her as her own daughter, and taught her all civility, which she learned as though she were to the manner born. She learned to work embroidery which none could match; she embroidered any stuff in gold and silk, and it was a marvel to see the perfection of her handiwork; she knew right well how to draw, and was the best needlewoman in the land, and took pleasure in embroidering linen with letters, and would join two pieces together, so that the same letters might be read on each side, and they were so elegant that it was a delight to see them. But they were in the language of her own country, and she would never tell whence she came, or who she was, or how she had fallen into captivity. And thus she continued in this dwelling for three years, in which she never saw or was seen by any but the people of the house, and she learned our language as well as if she had been born here by hearing the discourse of others. And by reason of her obligation to him who had brought her out of captivity, she was as kindly affectioned to the youth as though they had been brother and sister. But the father could not suffer this, and if he saw them together even though they were saying nothing, he took it amiss, so jealous was he

of her, as though she had been his true daughter, and his son a servant ; so fond of her were he and his wife for her good disposition, conversation and talent. Then the mother casting about her to do her some good, and do herself a pleasure at the same time, determined to marry her to her son, that she might share his goods after his father and mother should be dead, and the father agreed thereto. But when they spoke thereof to the damsel, she said that she thanked them indeed for all the care they had taken of her, but that she could not marry until she had accomplished a vow which she had made to God in her captivity, and if the son would make a journey for love of her, she promised and vowed to wed no other than him. To this the youth consented, and she told him what he had to do, and gave him whatsoever was needful for him. And he sailed from his country on a ship bound for Flanders ; but having arrived at a port in England departed out of the vessel, and taking a coffer which he had brought with him, went to the city of London, where the King then was. Coming to the courtyard of the palace he saw that the King had finished dinner, and was coming forth by a corridor which opened on the side of the court where the youth was. Perceiving this, he spread out some of those linens embroidered with letters whereof we have spoken, and when any came to look at them he warned them not to touch, for none might handle them save the King, nor would he suffer any person to read the letters, for so the damsel had enjoined him. This being told to the King, he, desiring to see the broideries, called

for the youth and commanded him to bring the coffer ; and so it was done.

As soon as the King took one of the pieces of linen into his hand and read, the colour of his countenance changed, and he cried aloud, "God save us!" and coming again to himself inquired, "Where is the damsel who wrought this?" to which the youth answered, "Let your Majesty pay me for what I shall say by buying these cloths;" and the King did so, for otherwise the youth would not answer his questions. But on his giving him five thousand crusadoes, which was the price the damsel had cost him, the youth said: "Sir, this damsel is in Portugal, the country where I was born, and I will show her to whomsoever your Majesty will send to see her." The King took the linen, and calling to him an old man, who was his steward, he said: "Rememberest thou that five or six years ago thou wentest to Ireland, and did'st agree to send my daughter, the Princess, whom you and your wife had brought up, to the Court of my cousin, the Queen of Ireland, and how I sent her accompanied with cavaliers, nobles, ladies and damsels of great worship, and how you and your wife might not go by reason of your sickness; and how it was told us that the ship was lost upon a shoal, and that some escaped; and how the Queen, my beloved wife, died of grief thereat. Now I know that when the ship was lost, the captain, to save my daughter and himself, entered a boat with some few others and strove to make land, but the winds were so adverse that this might not be; and driven by

the fury of the gales, the boat sped on without being stayed in Brittany, or Biscay, or Spain, until after twelve days they landed in Barbary, so worn out by the terrors of the sea, and tormented with hunger and thirst, that they rejoiced to find themselves on land, even though it were the land of the infidels, where they could look for nothing but mournful captivity. They came forth from the boat to save their lives, and no sooner were they on land than they were taken and made captive, and my daughter, Princess of this kingdom, became the slave of a Moor, who having learned from those with her who she was, immediately put a price upon her of five thousand crusadoes, which this youth has paid, and brought her with honour to the land of the Christians. All this is set forth in the letters on this linen cloth, which are embroidered in our language, and I pray you to read them." The steward read them, and both wept for joy and grief, he and the King, and when their transport was over they agreed that the steward should go in a King's ship with the youth wheresoever the youth should guide him, and should see the damsel that should be shown him whom the youth should affirm to be she who wrought the linen, and if she were the Princess he should give him in whose house she had been kept, all he should say he had spent upon her, and two thousand crusadoes to boot, and promise him that if he would come with her the King would show him great favour, and to the youth also. And that the youth might be sure of his reward, the King gave him a writing, which the youth kept; and a

galley being prepared the steward and his wife embarked, with her many ladies and with him many nobles and knights, and the youth who had brought the broideries; and they came to his country with a fair voyage. But on the way the youth had discoursed with the steward of his father's jealousy, and how he feared that he would deny the maiden, and not suffer them to have sight of her. They therefore agreed what to do, and when they took port the steward and the youth left the ship unknown to the others, and went to the father's house by covert ways, and as the youth was familiar with the house he was able to find the lady in a retired part. She, not knowing he was there, chanced to look that way and saw him, and with him the guardian who had brought her up, and whom she knew well; and approaching nearer she allowed herself to be seen of them, who knowing her came up to speak to her, and the old man would have knelt to kiss her hand, but she would not suffer him. While they were thus engaged the father entered, marvelling to find people in his house, and when he knew his son he cried, *Camest thou not in by the door? There is treachery,* and seized him by his head, not seeing who was speaking with the damsel, thus the twain had time and occasion to escape from the house without being seen or hindered. And as soon as they were clear of it she covered herself with a man's cloak which the steward had brought with him, and they hastened down to the strand, and taking a boat embarked upon the ship without contradiction from any, and set sail in the same hour as they

had come, without eating or drinking in that land. The youth, who remained with his father said: "Sir, this damsel is daughter of a mighty king, suffer him to take her, and I will go with her, and I doubt not thus to become a great lord, and your part will come to you." The father answered: "I know well that this is some treason which thou would'st practise on her and me, taking her out of my house to dishonour her, that thou mayest not have to take her to wife, and she shall never go with thee, which would be great scathe, but God has ordered better." And he cast his son forth by the door, notwithstanding his mother who took his part. But when he went in quest of the damsel and found her not, there was no bound to his sorrow, and when inquiring of the neighbours he came to know that the old steward had carried her off, and they had been seen to enter the galley and set sail, he was so overcome that there was no stay for his affliction. When the youth heard that they had departed he was ready to die with passion for the damsel, whom he loved more than his life, and moreover was consumed with remorse for not having brought the five thousand crusadoes from the galley, by aid of which he might have gone to seek her, but he had forgotten them for thinking of his lady, whom he prized above all the gold in the world. And thus he roved about distracted, and would have lost his wits but for friends and virtuous persons who comforted him, saying, you know who has taken her and whither she is bound; follow after her by land, and you will overtake her in good time. And receiving from them some money for

his journey, he took a horse and travelled through Spain and France to arrive where he would be. But as he had little money, and was free with what he had, ere he had performed two thirds of the journey he was obliged to sell his horse that that he might have wherewith to eat, and to go on foot. As he was little accustomed to this he proceeded but slowly, and his money came to an end before his travel. And so it came to pass that being one day at the door of an inn, he forbore to enter, having no money to pay for his meal, but looking within he saw two men sitting eating at a table who seemed to be noble and well mannered persons, and had with them in a case a viol and a psaltery, upon which the youth looked earnestly, being well seen in the art and mystery of music. The men seeing him gazing on the instruments called him in and bade him eat; but he thanking them said he had not wherewith to pay. They offered to pay, and made him eat, and talking at table asked him if he could dance or play, and he told them that he knew somewhat of all such things. "We," they said, "are performers on these instruments, and having heard that the King of England's daughter has been brought to him from abroad, and that she has fallen into such melancholy that nothing can make her glad we have determined to go before her to play, dance and sing, and with the help of God and our skill cure her of her melancholy, for which the King, her father, has promised a great reward. If you know ought of this art, and will come with us, you shall have your share in what we may gain." He, who desired nothing better,

and surmised that the Princess's melancholy was caused by his absence and the love she bore him, and the promise of marriage which she had given him in requital for his having delivered her from captivity, straightway determined to go with them, and told them that he would serve them all he could, and that he would not go as their companion but as their servant, to aid all he might in so excellent a work. And they replied with no less courtesy that they could not treat him as their servant, but that they would go as brothers, and he, having made them the acknowledgements that were due, took one of their instruments, and touching it gave them proof of his skill, which was indeed exquisite, at which they showed great content. When they came forth from the inn three youths issued from the stables, and brought six horses, and all mounting took their way until they came to the capital city of England, and made the King to wit that they had heard of the melancholy of his daughter, and begged leave to play and sing before her. The King thanked them for the trouble of their journey, and promised to repay them, and bade them to the palace, where if they could cure the daughter he had mourned for as dead, and the sight of whom now filled him with sadness, reminding him of his wife who had died of grief for her sake, they should be welcome all their lives. And so the three comrades went to play and sing before the King and the princess, she sitting inside in another room where she could see and hear without being seen; thus for a long time they played and sang with such melody and charm that none could but com-



DEATH OF PAN.

mend them, hearing the sweetness of their well blended instruments, to which the youth sang this song in our language:—

Land of Lusía was my home,
Weary now the world I roam,
Since I set from bondage free
Who hath bondsman made of me.

Woe is me and well away!
Bearing to wild Barbary
Ransom for the royal may
Foe to my felicity!
I the cup of youth have spilled,
I the joy of life have killed,
Freeing from captivity
Who hath captive made of me.

Now in lowlihead I lie,
Fallen as doth well befit
Him who taught his heart to fly
Toward a hope too high for it.
All my worth is clean forgot,
Care is none of knightly lot,
Since from bonds I set her free
Who hath captive made of me.

And this he sang with such sweetness and tenderness that although those knew not what he said who understood not his language, all knew him for most skilful in music, and were content with him, especially the princess who heard him,

and knowing by his lay who he was and of what he sang, rejoiced greatly to perceive that he was in the country. And when the musicians took their leave she sent to tell her father to make them come again and often, and so it was done. And the musicians and singers continuing their performance, which was the more lauded every time they came, the Princess manifested the greatest pleasure, and the King twice as much. And she, desiring to fulfil the promise of marriage which she had made to the Portuguese, and knowing what manner of man she had in him, spoke to her father; and he and the nobles of his realm decreed that a great royal tournament should be held, and that whoso won most honour should have the Princess to wife, and become heir to the kingdom; and the Princess accepted this upon condition that she should be present among the judges when the prize should be awarded. Whereat all the nobles of the court rejoiced greatly, and the jousts were proclaimed throughout the kingdom, and great and small had much contentment, having lately been in so great affliction. And the nobles and knights seeing how great a prize was to be given to the best champion desired exceedingly to enter the lists and show forth their strength, valour and wealth; so that all the chief gentry in the land came, and some foreigners who chanced to be in the kingdom, but none came from a distance, for the tournament was appointed for the Assumption of Our Lady, which was only twenty days distant. Nor were they missed, for so many flocked together that there could not have been more at the Court of the greatest

Emperor in the world, and there not being room for them in London they encamped upon the fields in tents, which were so many and rich and splendid that all rejoiced to see them who could see them with a light heart. But our Portuguese, seeing all this magnificence and himself so poor and in want of everything that belonged to such an occasion, and despairing of being able to enter the jousts, went about so sad and dismal that it seemed as though his last hour was come. And had he had any means of discovering his necessities to the Princess, doubtless he would have done so, but not having any he remained awaiting his perdition and death, which must soon have come to pass if God had not put it into the hearts of the two musicians, perceiving his melancholy, to thus discourse with him: "Comrade," they said "we pray you much to disclose to us the cause of your discontent, which we trust in Christ to be able to remedy if remedy be in the power of man; our wills, powers, and persons being wholly yours. Tell us therefore, whence is your grief?" He, seeing their goodwill and offers, said: "Were I but apparelled for this tourney I would be bold to enter it, and would so bear myself that with the aid of God I should win the prize; and since I see myself deprived of all that is necessary, and so placed that I cannot obtain it I die of passion, for I am losing all that I might have gained." To which they replied that it still wanted five days to the tourney, and that he must hasten to equip himself, for they had and would provide all that was needful, as in truth they did. And he rejoiced and became so gay and knew so well how to fit

himself and prefer requests, that he came forth as well equipped for what he needed as you will see on the day of the tournament. Not to make too long a story, when the appointed day came the King and the Princess, with many ladies and damsels, seated themselves in a balcony of the palace overlooking the great court where the lists were opened. And the Princess was so beautiful and richly attired that the sight of her gave strength and courage to numbers who adventured themselves for her sake, and endeavoured more than they were able to compass ; and with her were the judges, being four old men who were great nobles in the kingdom. Then the knights began to enter the square on all sides, which was beautiful to see, as the flower of all the chivalry of the world seemed to be there, all men regarding in silence the suits, colours, and devices which they bore.

Our Portuguese entered the lists fully armed with rich white armour gilded in places, which gave it great lustre, and covered with a short surcoat made in the fashion of the country, quartered in green and white damask, slashed with embroidery of large round Oriental pearls of greatest price. His visage was uncovered, which if of itself it was comely and of gentle semblance, seemed so much the more lovely with the martial mien of armour, insomuch that all viewed it with delight. In his company were the two master musicians, whom some knew for what they were, vested in silk raiment of the same colour as the surcoat, made in the fashion of that court, and bearing the joster's arms. One carried his helmet,

which with great white and green plumes, and gilded in places, gave forth great brightness, and the other his lance painted with the like colours, and three pages followed wearing the same livery, insomuch that all eyes were turned upon him and his retinue. The Princess recognised him immediately with great content, knowing him of old for one of the best cavaliers in the world, and all who saw him enter the square said with one voice "He is the most spirited, the best equipped, and the comeliest knight that hath come hither, God make him such in the fray as he promiseth by his countenance." And he riding round the lists that all might view him, came before the King and Princess, made his due reverence with all grace and courtesy, and well marked by the signs which the Princess gave him, how content she was to behold him. And so when all were ranged in quietness in the square, the signal was given with trumpets and other martial instruments, as customary on the like occasions, and the jousting began. And there were many and fine encounters; sometimes with shocks so fierce that the armour of the knights was wrested from their bodies and sent flying through the air, and some who could not recover themselves came to the ground, and some fell, horse and man. But it so befell our Portuguese that while all the rest received some check, great or small, he received none, but did great displeasure to others, for in his three first courses he overthrew three famous knights who little deemed to have fallen so soon, and this without breaking his first lance. When this was broken his pages gave him another, and with

this and many more he performed such feats that when it was time to cease and the King gave the signal, all praised him and pronounced him worthy of the prize. And if the tourney had been but for one day he would then have gained it, but it had been ordained for three. The jousting being over for this day he rode to the balcony where the King was, about to leave the square, and attended upon him on horseback to the palace, and having made meet reverence to the Princess and being dismissed by the King, went to his companions who awaited him, and quitting the courtyard with the same dignity as he had entered it, repaired to his inn.

The Princess withdrew from the balcony to her apartment, content with what she had beheld and with what she had heard all say in praise of the stranger knight, nor was she amazed to see his arms and trappings of such exceeding richness, supposing that he had brought them from his father, whom she knew for a man of great possessions. This night there was a festival in the palace, with concerts of music and dances of nobles, courtiers, and ladies; and some who had been unlucky in the jousts took courage to return and again make trial of their fortune; and those who were proud of having done well took pleasure in hearing themselves commended by the ladies. And yet the stranger knight being absent, upon whom all eyes had been turned, the King asked concerning him, but could hear no other account save that he had retired to his hostel with his people. After the evening had been spent in gaiety all went

to rest, for the tourney was to be held again next day, and it was needful to repair the arms of many who had suffered from the violence of their encounters, in which many spent the most of the night, and chiefly they who had made trial of the dexterity and strength of the Portuguese cavalier. But it was not so with him, for when he had disarmed himself he found his arms as complete as if they had never been proved, and this by their goodness, and not because they had not been smitten hard and often, at which he greatly rejoiced. And after the supper which his companions had caused to be prepared for him he went to sleep and repose, as was needful after the much he had done on that day. Yet was not his sleep so sound but that by day break he was already vesting himself for the new tourney, not knowing how well equipped were his companions, who rejoiced to have care of him, and assuring him that they had all that was needful entreated him to rest till it was time to partake of food. After breakfast he armed himself as you shall hear. And the King went to hear mass in the Princess's Chapel, where it was said with great solemnity, and when it was over went to his meal in the banqueting hall in great state, and heard many instruments of music, and thence repaired to the balcony as the day before, bringing the Princess with him; and the judges came, and took their seats as they had done on the first day, and the knights thronged in so many and so richly armed, with such liveries and devices, that it was glorious and beautiful to see them. And our Portuguese wore that day a suit of green armour with a

dalmatic of white damask powdered with gold, and with spurs richly gilded and exquisitely wrought. Entering the square accompanied by his companions and the pages whom he had brought the day before, he rode below the balcony, and made his accustomed obeisance to the King and Princess, and took up his place until all were assembled and it was time to begin, and to relate all he did would be to make a large volume. To conclude, the youth performed such feats on that and the following day that all affirmed with one voice that there was no better cavalier in the world, and even they who strove with him, pretending to the hand of the Princess, could not deny it, but laid it to his charge that he was a foreigner, and peradventure not of blood to deserve such greatness.

The three days' joustings being now over, the King commanded that all grandees, nobles, and knights should come to the great hall, for he would that judgment should be made as to who had deserved the prize. Many came not, for knowing that their desert was small, they would not be present at the award, and so departed. Yet notwithstanding there were so many that it seemed the hall could hold no more, to whom a king at arms made a discourse in the King's name, saying: "Sirs, the King our lord has well marked the great deeds which all of you have done for the honour of this court, and the great valour and vigour of you all, and certes this is so much that he will remember it for all the length of life which it shall please God to give him; and he would be glad to have so many kingdoms and daughters that he could give one to

each of you, for he deems that each of you hath well deserved them, but he hath only this one daughter and this one kingdom which may not be divided. He asks you all together, and each one severally, to abide by the judges' sentence, and to accept him whom they shall determine to have gained as their Prince and Lord, since it needs must be one and not all, and so doing you shall find him so propitious that he trusts in God that none of you shall ever at any time forfeit his friendship and favour." It seemed to all that the king at arms said well, and the chiefs who were charged to reply said that the King showed them great favour in making them this compliment, seeing that he might well have commanded, and now let the judges pronounce as they deemed fit. Then the king at arms spoke in the name of the judges, and declared that though all had done well the stranger knight had done better, wherefore they adjudged him the prize, and called upon him to come forward to receive due reward of his labours. He, who had placed himself amid the throng in the background, now came forward wearing a suit of crimson satin trimmed with gold and embroidered with devices of quaint invention, and cap and shoes of the same, which declared the joy of his heart. And as this was seen by some who grieved that he should have the honour which they coveted for themselves, they came and stood before him ere he could speak, saying: "Sir, let him show who he is and whether he deserves such honour as your Majesty accords him, otherwise it will be grievous to us to obey him." These were commanded to sit

down, as the knight of Portugal desired to speak; and he, not knowing enough of English to discourse in it, spoke thus in Latin, for he was a good scholar :

“ Sir, these lords, nobles, and cavaliers are of such estimation and worship that they would be right in yielding obedience to none of lesser worth than your Majesty now present, could your Majesty’s equal be found in the world, but since such hath not been found, nor, as I deem can ever be, it seems to me that they will do what is just for the service of your Majesty, being well affectioned to you as reason would. Wherefore before them all I beg your Majesty to hear me, and in his wisdom determine the issue of what I am to declare. Which is to let your Majesty know that I passed into Barbary, and it was God’s pleasure that by great cost and labour of my person I should deliver the Princess, my Lady here present, who if I deceive not myself will remember how the matter came to pass, and of my poor service, which although it was not such as her great desert merited, was the best that my ability could render. Thus I brought her to Portugal, treating her with great honour, and though I knew nothing of her greatness, continually serving her as if I had known, and undergoing great dispeace with my father for her sake. Then I came to this kingdom, bearing to your Majesty the work she had wrought, and tidings of herself, and your Majesty was pleased to bestow on me the five thousand crusadoes I asked, which have been left in the galley which has brought her Highness here. And besides this money your Majesty, without my

asking it, gave me this scroll for a testimony that he in the presence of the Princess would confer upon me any favour I might ask that should be agreeable to righteousness, provided that I should produce my Lady the Princess to his steward as I have done ; here he is to confirm it. Now for the first time do I produce this scroll, and being in the presence of her Highness, I pray your Majesty, having respect to the service rendered by me to you and to my Lady the Princess, to grant me the favour of becoming a gentleman of his house, and his subject like these other gentlemen ; and if they deem that my services do not deserve so much, I am ready to serve all my life without resting until they do." And when his discourse was ended, replying to some who asked him, he told where and how the Princess had been captive and he had obtained her freedom, whereat those who knew it not already had great marvel. And when he had finished they all, greatly commending him, asked the King to grant him the favour he sought, seeing that it was just, and that moreover he might have the honour he had well earned. The King rejoiced much to hear and see that all were well agreed, and rising from his throne and advancing two paces towards where the Portuguese was standing, he said : " I am content to grant you what you desire, and moreover from this day forth hold you as Prince of this kingdom as though you were my own son, and I will that you should forthwith espouse my daughter, and hereby ask her consent." And all the hall was full of voices crying, " This is reason and right." And straightway he was wedded

to her by the Archbishop of the City, and festivals, jousts, and tournaments were held in honour of the marriage, which endured much time.

The Prince immediately sent tidings of his good fortune to his father and mother; and his father, yearning to see the Princess, departed without delay, bringing his family, kindred, friends and servants in three galleys, and brought with him a great treasure of jewels, gold, and silver, which he gave to the Prince and Princess, so that he had much to bestow upon those to whom it seemed to him right. Also he sent to the Moor of Fez, who had counselled him so well in his traffic, who came at once with his wife, sons, and household, bringing with him all the substance he had. As soon as he found himself in England he would have kissed the hands of the Prince and Princess, but they would not suffer him, and with many demonstrations of affection made him rise; and the Moor kissed the hands of the King, who gave them a noble apartment, and ere long they became Christians, the King and Princess being their God-parents, and bestowing great favours on the day of the baptism. And while these festivities were being held the two musicians who had accompanied the Prince took him aside and spoke thus; "Our company is no longer needful for you, wherefore we are minded to depart, and before we go we are fain to tell you who we are, that you may know that what you laid out upon us was well employed, and that you have been abundantly repaid for it. Have you memory of those bones which you ransomed in the land of the Moors?"

Know that these were aforetime our bodies, and that the bodies you now behold are but phantoms, assumed by us to accompany you in your enterprise in requital for what you have done for us; and this God hath permitted, for he leaves not without recompense those who, like you, have served and honoured his saints. Now you dwell in quietness with your father and mother, kindred and friends, and wife, and have honour and royalty which you have well deserved, but do not for this forget the service of God and his saints. If you have need of us at any time we are with you, and now farewell with God's blessing." And thus they departed, leaving the Prince in amaze, for he had been devising how to repay them for what they had done for him, and thus he remained with great devotion and love to our Lord God who had given such prosperity to his undertakings. And after no great space of time the King died, and the Prince and Princess were proclaimed King and Queen, and governed the land with great quietness and all mens' love, and from them descend the great kings of England.

R. GARNETT.