

TWO POEMS INTRODUCING *DON QUIXOTE*

The Knight of Phoebus to Don Quixote of La Mancha

My sword was not to be compared with thine
Phoebus of Spain, marvel of courtesy,
Nor with thy famous arm this hand of mine
That smote from east to west as lightnings fly.
I scorned all empire, and that monarchy
The rosy east held out did I resign
For one glance of Claridiana's eye,
The bright Aurora for whose love I pine.
A miracle of constancy my love;
And banished by her ruthless cruelty,
This arm had might the rage of Hell to tame.
But, Gothic Quixote, happier thou dost prove,
For thou dost live in Dulcinea's name,
And famous, honoured, wise, she lives in thee.

Dialogue Between Babioca and Rocinante: SONNET

B. "How comes it, Rocinante, you're so lean?"
R. "I'm underfed, with overwork I'm worn."
B. "But what becomes of all the hay and corn?"
R. "My master gives me none; he's much too mean."
B. "Come, come, you show ill-breeding, sir, I ween;
'T is like an ass your master thus to scorn."
R. "He is an ass, will die an ass, an ass was born;
Why, he's in love; what's plainer to be seen?"
B. "To be in love is folly?"--R. "No great sense."
B. "You're metaphysical."--R. "From want of food."
B. "Rail at the squire, then."--R. "Why, what's the good?
I might indeed complain of him, I grant ye,
But, squire or master, where's the difference?
They're both as sorry hacks as Rocinante."

—Miguel Cervantes (1547-1616)

In the last issue of this journal, we featured Hamlet's famous soliloquy in honor of the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death in 1616. Coincidentally, Miguel Cervantes, Spain's most famous writer, died the same year. His epic work, *Don Quixote*, is a wonderful book—part road novel, part romance, part short story collection, part farce, and part lament. Cervantes was also a poet and introduced *Don Quixote* with ten madcap poems praising and criticizing its characters and its author. In this issue, we reprint two of these from the 1885 translations of John Ormsby (1829-1895). The first is a sonnet addressed to Don Quixote of La Mancha from the fictitious Knight of Phoebus. (Phoebus is another name for Apollo, variously the sun god and god of music and poetry.) The second, also a sonnet, is a conversation between Babioca, El Cid's stallion, and Rocinante, the Don's nag.