

THE RENOWNED
H I S T O R Y,
O F T H E
Seven Champions of Chriltendom.

V I Z,

St. George of England,		St. Dennis of France,
St. James of Spain,		St. Anthony of Italy,
St. Andrew of Scotland,		and
St. David of Wales,		St. Patrick of Ireland.

S H E W I N G,

Their valiant Exploits both by Sea and Land: their combating with Giants, Monsters, Lions and Dragons: Their Tilts and Tournaments in honour of their Mistresses: Their overcoming Magicians and Necromancers, and putting an end to their direful Enchantments: Their Knight-hood, Chivalry and magnificent prowess, against the enemies of Christ, and in honour of Chriltendom, in Europe, Asia, and Africa.



G L A S G O W,
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M D C C X C I V.



T H E
 R E N O W N E D H I S T O R Y
 O F T H E
 S e v e n C h a m p i o n s o f C h r i s t e n d o m .

C H A P. I.

The birth of St. George; how he was stolen away from his nurses, and how he delivered himself, and the other six Champions, from the Cave of Kalby, the Enchantress.

AFTER that this our island (first inhabited by Brute) began to flourish with arts and arms, in the famous city of Coventry lived the renowned Albert, Lord High Steward of England, that took to wife a lady of matchless beauty and virtue, who, having been long barren, at last conceived with child, but nightly dreams so tormented her mind, that she was conceived of a Dragon which should cause her death, that she never ceased, but caus'd her lord by art to learn what should be the meaning thereof, who, condescending to her desires, accompanied only with one knight, repaired to Kalby, the lady of the woods, from whom he received this mysterious Oracle :

Sir Knight return home to thy Lady,
 Who hath brought forth a worthy baby,
 A Champion bold, of courage stout,
 Whose fame shall ring the world throughout.

Having received this answer, they soon returned, but

ere he came home, his Lady by losing her own life, brought another life into the world, being delivered of a son, upon whose breast was figured a dragon, on his right hand a blood-red cross, and on his left leg a golden garter: his name was given him, George, and three nurses provided to look to him: notwithstanding which, he was stolen away by the enchantress Kalby; which, when his father upon his return found, he left his habitation for very grief, and ended his life in a strange country.

In the mean time, St. George grew in strength and beauty, whose noble deportment (being now grown to man's estate) so fired the heart of the enchantress with lust, that with all the seducement imaginable she sought to accomplish her desires, and to gain his affections, revealed to him of what lineage he was, and also gave him the command of her cave, by the gift of a silver wand, which she put in his hand, leading him to a rock to behold some trophies of her forceries, but she entering in before him, he struck the rock with his wand, which presently closed, and in it this miserable woman, where she ended her wretched life.

St. George then, like a valiant knight, released from thralldom six worthy Champions, whom this enchantress Kalby had a long time kept prisoners; viz. St. Dennis of France, St. James of Spain, St. Anthony of Italy, St. Andrew of Scotland, St. Patrick of Ireland, and St. David of Wales; he with them mounting their steeds, and girding on their swords, which also they found in the cave, departed forth to seek out adventures, travelling till they came to a spacious plain, in the midst whereof stood a brazen pillar that had seven several ways leading to it, which invited these seven Champions to take each of them a diverse path. Where we will leave six of them to their different progresses, and relate in the first place the adventures of our English knight, as you may read in the chapter following.

C H A P. II.

How St. George killed the burning Dragon in Egypt, and redeemed Sabine the King's Daughter from death. How he was betrayed by Almidor the black King of Morocco, and sent unto the Sultan of Persia, where he remained seven years in prison.

THE valiant St. George, having left the other six Champions, as you have heard, after some few months travel, arrived within the Egyptian territories, which country was at that time annoyed with a burning dragon, whose hunger, if it were not every day appeased with the body of a true virgin, he would breathe forth such a stench from his nostrils, as infected the whole country with a horrible plague, which for four and twenty years together continued, till there was not one virgin left but the King's Daughter only, and she ready next day to be offered up in sacrifice to him, if the dragon in the mean time was not destroyed: wherefore the King, her father, proclaimed, that whosoever would combat with the dragon, and preserve his daughter's life, in renown thereof should have her to wife, and the crown of Egypt after his decease; all which was made known to St. George, by a hermit of that country; whereupon he resolved to undertake the adventure, and lodging with the hermit that night, the next morning mounting his steed, he took his journey to a valley, whither the King's Daughter was leading by sage matrons to be made a prey to the dragon's jaws, whom our English Knight accosting, returning her back to her father, promised to kill that enemy of Egypt's health, or lose his life in the encounter, and so, like a bold adventurous knight, rode to the place where the dragon had his residence.

This horrible dragon, whose monstrous proportion would have frightened any body but only St. George, as soon as she beheld him, wallowed from her hideous den, and gave him a fierce assault with her wings

and tail, who nimbly avoided her fury, gave her such a thrust with his spear, that it shivered into five hundred pieces; the dragon coming on afresh, smote him such a deadly blow, as felled both horse and man to the ground; when again rising and stepping a little backwards, he went under the protection of an orange tree, which was of such virtue, that no venomous thing durst approach unto it, where this valiant knight a while rested him, and refreshed himself with the joice of one of the oranges, he again entered combat with the dragon, after many fierce assaults with an eager courage closed with her, and thrust his sword up to the hilt in her belly, being penetrable in no other place, from whence issued such abundance of purple gore as turned the grass into vermilion colour, and then redoubling his blows, gave her such another thrust under the wing with his sword, as pierced her heart, liver, and bone, and made her yield her life to the force of the conquering champion, who returned thanks to heaven for his victory: With his good sword, which was called Ascalon, he cut off the dragon's head, and pitched it upon the trunchson of his spear, rode towards the court, expecting for his good service to be most royally entertained.

At that time Almidor, the black king of Morocco, was in earnest suit with king Ptolemy, for to have his daughter Sabine in marriage, and having notice of St. George's victory, fearing he would become his rival, he intended to rob him of his honour, and to that purpose, hired twelve Egyptian Knights, who set upon St. George as he was coming to court; but the valiant Champion so behaved himself, that in a little space he made their lives pay for their treachery; which Almidor perceiving, when he could do no otherwise, ran to the court, crying, Victoria! Victoria! The enemy of Egypt is overthrown.

This being made known to K. Ptolemy, St. George was most royally received by him, but far more cour-

teously by his beautiful daughter, Sabine, who then set her affections so deeply on him, as length of time would not wear it out, which she could not forbear to express unto him, and once at such a time, as she was overheard by this black-a moor King, whose love she derided in respect to the English Knight's, proffering to forsake her parents and idol gods, and to travel with him wheresoever Fortune would guide their steps; all which was by Almidor made known to king Ptolemy, who thereupon consulting together, framed a letter to the Sultan of Persia, in which was contained his sentence of death, and he made the messenger to carry his own condemnation, which he very innocently undertook to do; and coming to Persia, near the Sultan's palace, observing their monstrous idolatry, he could no longer hold, but threw down their images of Mahomet and Apollo, and slew those who offered to withstand him; insomuch that the rumour thereof being noised at the court, great forces were sent against him, whom he opposed in single self, and sent many of them to the Stygian river; but multitudes overcoming valour, his numerous enemies so wearied his arm, that his never daunted courage was forced to yield, and let his weapon fall to the ground.

There was he taken and carried before the Sultan, to whom he delivered Ptolemy's letter, who thereat much enraged, commanded St. George to be laid in a deep dungeon, vowing he should never return there-out unless it was to execution; where now we must leave our English Champion, to relate the deeds of the other six. And first what befel St. Dennis of France.

C H A P. III.

How St. Dennis was transformed into a hart by enchanted mulberries, and how he recovered his shape, and put an end to the enchantment of Eglantine the King's Daughter of Thessaly.

S A I N T Dennis the worthy champion of France, after he parted from the other six Champions at the brazen pillar, travelled till he came into the desert country of Thessaly, inhabited only by wild beasts, where being almost famished with hunger, he chanced to feed upon the berries of a mulberry tree, which being enchanted by magic art, in an instant transformed his body into the likeness of a hart (only his natural reason remained) in which condition he remained a long time, bewailing his misfortune, till one day shading himself under the leaves of that luckless tree, he heard a hollow voice from the trunk thereof breathe forth these words, "Worthy Champion of France, know that this tree proceeds from fair Eglantine, the King's Daughter of Thessaly, who for my pride was transformed into this mulberry-tree; seven years thou must continue in the shape of a hart, when thou shalt be restored by eating of roses, which being done, cut down this tree, and thereby shall the enchantment be ended."

At the end of which prefixed time, his horse, who had a long time left him, brought two roses in his teeth, which St. Dennis took and ate, and immediately fell into a deep sleep, and upon his awaking, he found himself returned again to his former shape, for which he returned thanks to God, and curiously decked and trimmed his horse for his worthy service. Then taking his sword in hand, proceeded to finish the enchantment, and with one blow cut in sunder the tree, from which issued a most beautiful damsel, of such an angelical form, as fired the French Champion's heart with affection to her, and after some parley's of love past betwixt them, they plighted their faiths to each other, and then travelled together to her father's court, who received them with unspeakable joy and comfort; where we will leave this Champion of France to relate what happened to St. James the champion of Spain.

C H A P. IV.

How St. James the Champion of Spain, killed a wild boar in India: how, for the Christian religion, he would have been shot to death; and how he stole away the King's Daughter.

THE renowned Spanish champion, in his progress in seeking out adventures, after many worthy acts by him atchieved, came to the magnificent city of Jerusalem, just at such a time as Nebuzarad, the King thereof was going out on a royal hunting, having made proclamation, That whosoever slew the first wild beast in the forest, should have in reward a corselet of steel worth a thousand shekels of silver.

Thirst of honour, and hope of gain, the two spurs that prick men forward to worthy enterprizes, caused St. James to join himself to this honourable company, yea, to outgo them in noble resolutions; for scouring over the plain before the hunters, he came into a spacious forest, where his valour quickly had an object to work upon, being a mighty wild boar, lying before his mossy den, of such a wonderful bigness and proportion, as is almost incredible to declare, but the magnanimous champion St. James, nothing daunted, courageously set upon him, dealing such blows with his keen falchion that ere the rest of the company came in, he overcame that monstrous boar, cutting off his head, and presenting it to the king of Jerusalem, who accordingly gave him the reward promised: but, having intelligence immediately, that he was a Spanish Christian, his mind was altered, that immediately he condemned him to die; yet, for his good service in killing the boar, gave him leave to chuse his own death. St. James seeing it would be no otherwise, desired to be bound to a pine tree, and, after an hour's respite to make his peace with heaven, to be shot to death by a true virgin.

But, when the same came to be put in execution, not one maid could be found that would undertake it:

whereupon the King commanded that lots should be cast, which fell upon his own daughter, the beauteous Celestine, whose heart was already fired with the love of the heroic champion; and, therefore, on her bare knees, earnestly begged his life of her father, which with much ado, he granted, but for ever banished him the land, and departing a little space, out of the love he bore to Celestine, who had preserved his life, he ventured again, discolouring his face and hands, and remaining dumb that he might not be known, at last got an opportunity to discover himself, and obtaining her consent to go along with him in the dead time of the night, mounted her on his steed (which he shoed backward to prevent pursuit) and after many dangers narrowly escaped, at last they happily arrived in Spai.

C H A P. V.

The adventures of St. Anthony, St. Andrew, and St. Patrick, the Champions of Italy, Scotland and Ireland.

THE noble Champion, St. Anthony of Italy having (after leaving the other six Champions travelled over many hills and dales, woods and forests, came at last into the country of Thrace, where, upon the top of an high mountain, stood an impregnable castle, wherein lived a terrible giant, named Blonde-ron, that had over the principal gate of his castle these verses written:

What Champion to this Castle doth repair,
Here lives a Giant bold within this place,
Who pris'ners keeps seven virgins chaste and fair,
Daughters to the noble King of Thrace.

All these who with this Giant fierce will fight,
Shall have a Virgin's prayers day and night.

Thirst of glory and honourable renown, so fired the breast of the noble Champion, that he thundred at the gate with the pummel of his sword as loud as the cyclops when they formed the armour of Achilles; the giant being roused at this terrible noise, came running

out of the gate with a great oak tree flourishing about his head, intending with one blow, to crush in pieces the bones of St. Anthony for disturbing him of his repose, but the nimble knight so avoided his strokes by skipping continually out of his reach, that the Giant, in a short space grew weary with brandishing so unweildy a weapon, which when St. Anthony perceived he lightly leaped to him, and with one blow brought the Giant upon his knees, which being seconded with another of mighty force, bereaved the Giant of his life, sending his soul into the dark regions, there to inhabit with grim Pluto; then, thanking God for his victory, he entered the castle, where he was kindly entertained by Rosalinda, one of the Thracian King's Daughters; she shewed him all the rarities of the castle, and amongst the rest, six silver swans swimming on a great pond of water, which were the other six daughters of the King of Thrace, whose chastities the lustful giant attempting to violate, the kinder destinies (in commiseration) transformed them into milk-white swans, to signify their chastities were without spot and blemish.

After some short repose to refresh himself, St. Anthony with Rosalinda posted to the Thracian court, where they were kindly entertained; but the King hearing of his daughters' transformation, with great grief departed to the castle, resolving there to spend his days with invoking his country gods, to restore his daughters to their shapes: whereupon St. Anthony, not willing to spend his days in ease and luxury, resolved privately to depart from thence, which being made known to Rosalinda, she also secretly departed with him.

In the mean time, the famous Champion, St. Andrew of Scotland, having passed thro' many dangers in a vale of walking spirits, came wandering also into this country of Thrace, fortune guiding his steps to the same castle wherein the Thracian King was worshipping his heathen gods, which he perceiving, and know-

ing the cause of his great idolatry, St. Andrew, like a true Christian Champion, taught him the worship of the living God; which, when they had rightly performed, on a sudden the milk white swans were changed into the shape of beautiful ladies, to the great joy of all present: For St. Andrew, having knowledge it was St. Anthony that had slain the great Blanderon, and how he was departed with the lady Rosalinda, he secretly stole away from the Thracian King, to seek St. Anthony whom he greatly longed to see, and the King's Daughters understanding he was gone, travelled after him, whose sudden departure caused great sorrow throughout all Thrace.

The six ladies having travelled many a weary mile, in a fruitless search after St. Andrew, came at last to an uninhabited wilderness, save only with beasts and savage monsters, where they were surprized by thirty bloody satyrs, that hauled them by the hair of their heads, regardless of their shouts and loud sounding outcries, intending to have ravished them of their virgin honours, but heaven (that always favours the virtuous) had so ordered it, that St. Patrick, that magnanimous Irish Champion, after many heroic actions by him performed, was, at the same instant, also in the desert place, who beholding the inhumanity of those savage creatures courageously set upon them, and put them to flight, delivering thereby those most excellent princesses from death, or what they accounted worse than death, the spoiling of their virginities, who after some pause of time, being a little come to themselves, related to St. Patrick the occasion of their journey, with an account of the achievements both of St. Anthony and St. Andrew, as you heard before in the beginning of this chapter, St. Patrick comforted them the best he could; like a noble knight undertook to be their conductor in their undertakings, having himself a mind to behold those magnanimous Knights who formerly had been his companions in the cave of Kal-

by, in which journeys we will for a while leave them till we relate the actions of the seventh and last Champion, St. David of Wales.

C A A P. VI.

How St. David the Champion of Wales, by art of magic, slept seven years in the enchanted garden of Ormondine the Necromancer, and how St. George escaped out of prison in Persia, and redeemed the Champion of Wales from his enchantment.

WE come next to speak of that magnanimous Hero, St. David of Wales, whose valiant exploits and heroic performances were nothing inferior to the rest of the six Champions, making the name of Christendom famous in those nations that acknowledge the true God: especially his actions in the Tartarian court, are not to be passed over in silence, where his prowess gained him the honour to become the Emperor's Champion. But, upon a solemn feast day, whereupon were kept royal tilts and tournaments in honour of the Emperor's birth, it was St. David's unlucky fortune to kill the count Palatine, being heir apparent to the Tartarian crown, at which the Emperor was so incensed that he would have slain him presently, but that in honour he could not do it: Whereupon he bethought himself of a clear conveyance, which was to the enchanted garden upon the confines of that country, kept by a famous necromancer, named Ormondine, binding him by the oath of knighthood, to bring him from thence the necromancer's head: all which St. David promised faithfully to perform, and, with an undaunted courage, went to the place, where at the entrance in was a rock of stone, in which was enclosed a most rich sword, nothing appeared outwardly but the hilt; about the pommel thereof, in letters of gold, was thus engraven:

This sword cannot be pulled forth,
But by a Knight out of the North.

St. David verily imagining himself to be that knight of the north, courageously assayed to pull it forth: but no sooner was his hand on the hilt, but his senses were oppressed with a somniferous sleep, that it was impossible for him to awake till the enchantment was finished, which afterwards was performed by St. George whose exploits we now come to relate.

Seven times had the world's bright eye run his annual course thro' the twelve signs of the Zodiac, since St. George was confined in that nasty Persian prison by the treachery of the king of Morocco, when by chance stumbling upon a bar of iron, he made such use of it, that with continual labour he digged himself passage thro' the ground; till, in the dead time of the night, he ascended just in the middle of the Sultan's court: time and place thus favouring his designs, he ceased not to lend his assisting arms, to work out the rest; for, hearing some grooms in the Sultan's stable preparing their horses to go on hunting the next day, he took the bar of iron and killed them all: which being done, he took the strongest gelding, and richest comparisons, wherewith he bravely furnished himself, then with chalk upon a black marble pillar, he thus wrote

Sultan, farewell, for GEORGE is fled,
Thy steed is lost, thy grooms are dead.

So setting forward towards the gate, he thus salutes the porter, 'Porter, open the gates with speed for George of England is escaped out of prison, and hath murdered all the Sultan's grooms, which hath alarmed the whole court.' The porter, ignorant of what had happened, opened the gate for St. George who, with a nimble pace, never rested till he came without the confines of Greece, beyond the reach of the Persian horsemen, who in vain pursued after. But now hunger again oppressed him as sharp as imprisonment did before, so that several days his horse and he fared alike, being forced to eat the grass of the field.

S E V E N C H A M P I O N S

ad to drink the water of the running streams; at last
 he espied a castle not far off, whether he directed his
 weary steps, desiring of a lady who stood looking over
 the walls, a meal of meat to relieve a knight almost
 famished; but she, with a cursed frown, bid him be-
 gone, or else his life must pay for his presumption, her
 lord being a mighty giant, that, with crushed bones,
 did recompense the sauciness of such intruders. Now,
 with St. George, by the honour of my knighthood,
 ere will I obtain my dinner, or else become food for
 crows by his accursed hand. The lady, abash'd at these
 words, gave information to the giant, who immedi-
 ately came forth, of such a monstrous and deformed pro-
 portion, that he would have daunted a courageous
 knight; tho' strong and lustful for an encounter; yet
 St. George (tho' much enfeebled by hunger) with a mag-
 nanimous resolution set upon him, and notwithstanding
 the giant was armed with a mighty bar of iron,
 the Christian Champion dealt him such blows, that, in
 a few moments, the giant was forced to surrender his life, and the
 command of the castle into the hands of St. George.
 St. George having now finished his work, went into
 the castle to receive his wages, viz. his dinner which
 he had earned, but for fear the lady should mingle
 poison in his food, he made her first to taste of every
 thing, and, having staid some time to refresh himself
 and his horse, he left the castle in keeping of the lady,
 and went on in pursuit of his travels, passing thro'
 the rest of Greece and Phrygia, until he came into the
 confines of Tartary, to the enchanted garden of Or-
 pondine, where he espied a sword enclosed into the en-
 charmed rock, when he no sooner put his hand into the
 slit, then he drew it out with much ease, then imme-
 diately the heavens were overcast with a thick dark-
 ness, and the earth shook and rumbled like mighty
 peals of thunder, the winds blew so impetuously that
 the strongest oaks were rent in pieces by the same, and then
 the enchanted garden vanished away, and the champion

of Wales awaked out of his sleep, where he had lain for seven years. The necromancer after he had briefly declared his forepast life to St. George, gave a most terrible groan and died; whose head, with the enchanted sword, the English Champion gave to St. David, to carry to the Tartarian court, according to his promise, whilst he himself travelled towards Barbary, where our muse will now attend him.

C H A P. VII.

How St. George arrived at Tripoli in Barbary, from whence he stole away Sabine the King of Egypt's daughter from the black-moor king, and how she was known to be a pure virgin by the means of two lions.

THE noble St. George having, after many weary steps got to the kingdom of Barbary, he thought it vain to attempt upon Almidor by force of arms, seeing he was attended by so many worthy knights and yet desiring above all things, to have a sight of his beloved Sabine, for whose sake he had endured so long imprisonment; therefore he resolved to patch out the lion's skin with the fox's tail, and gain by policy what he could not gain by force; to this end he exchanged his horse, armour and furniture with a palmer for his gown, staff and scrip, and so accoutred went directly to the court, where he beheld a number of palmers, waiting in the gate for alms, which the queen herself in person daily bestowed, in remembrance of the English champion; in distributing of which, when she espied this strange palmer, remembering how he resembled the princely countenance of St. George, she took him by the hand and led him aside from all the company, where he soon made himself known to her, who wept for joy of finding him whom she never expected to see again; and after some short discourse of her health and welfare, she related to him how her father had forced her to marry Almidor against her will, but tho' outwardly she was linked to him, yet none but St.

George enjoyed her heart, for whose love she had hitherto continued a pure virgin, by virtue of a golden chain steeped in tyger's blood, which she wore seven times doubled about her neck. Then delivered she to him, his horse and sword with which he had formerly encountered the burning dragon. And now, my George, quoth she, nothing remains but to free me from the power of my forced husband, which opportunity invites us unto; he having with the whole court rode out a hunting. St. George willingly condescended to her motion, sealing the same with as sweet a kiss as ever Leander bestowed on Hero; and having gotten the good will of an eunuch to go along with them, storing themselves with provisions, being gallantly mounted, they posted away with all the speed they could make, passing through divers woods, desarts and unknown places, to escape the pursuit of those whom the black-moor king would send after them.

Having travelled thus for some few days together, at last the beautiful Sabine began to faint with hunger, which made St. George to leave her under the shade of a broad spreading oak, accompanied with the eunuch, while he went out in pursuit of some prey, to satisfy their craving appetite; so it was his fortune to kill a deer, which, having cut out with his keen edged sword, he brought a haunch thereof along with him, to present to his beloved lady; but, a sad accident happened in his absence, for two hungry lions raging about for prey, came directly to the oaken tree, where these two weary travellers were reposing themselves. who with angry mood, seized upon the eunuch, and soon buried him in their hungry entrails, then they tore his steed in pieces. Sabine all the while beholding it, expected herself to be the next morsel to allay their hunger; but, quite foreign to her expectation, with fawning gestures they came unto her, and laid their heads in her tender lap, and there quietly fell fast asleep, at which time St. George returned, who,

standing a while in amaze what to do, at last he threw down his venison, and with his trusty sword Ascalon, soon dispatched both the lions. Now Sabine, saith he, I have sufficient proof of thy true virginity, the nature of these beasts being such, that they will bow their heads to none but such as have kept their chastities inviolable. Therefore, divine Paragon, nature's wonder and love's abstract, doubt not but thy fame shall resound for love and chastity, so far as Phœbus darts his golden rays.

Then dressed he the venison for her which he had brought, and having refreshed themselves, they set forward on their wonted travels, till they came into the country of Greece, where they soon had news of great tilts and tournaments suddenly to be held at the Emperor's court, in honour of his royal nuptials with the Emperor of China's daughter; the fame whereof had summoned hither all the most approved and magnanimous heroes, both in Europe, Asia, and Africa, to try their man-hood, and, by noble exercises of arms, to mount up into honour's throne, among the rest the seven Champions of Christendom arrived there unknown to each other, of whose valiant acts, to their country's honour, we come now to declare.

C H A P. VIII.

How the seven Champions performed valiant exploits in the Grecian court; where, having intelligence of the great preparations that were made by the Pagans, every Champion returned into his own country, for forces to withstand them.

Infinite was the number of the knights assembled in the Grecian court, to adventure their chance in fortune's lottery for the purchasing of renown, but the seven champions attained to such favour with the Grecian Emperor, that he appointed them to be his own peculiar champions against all comers, each his several day, seven days together, the appointed time for

holding the juffs. To relate all their several adventures, how they foiled each one that came against them, would take too much time for our intended brevity; let it suffice to know, that their prowess was so highly admired by the Emperor, as (in reward of their valour) he bestowed upon them a golden tree with seven branches, in the dividing whereof they came to be known unto each other, which so rejoiced their hearts, that they accounted that day as fortunate unto them as when first they were delivered from the thraldom of the enchantress Kalby. But they had not long enjoyed the fruition of each other's company, when there arrived at the Emperor's court, a hundred heralds, from a hundred several countries, which by the command of their princes, proclaimed war against all Christendom, in these words:

"We the most puissant Monarchs of Asia, and Africa, by a general consent of us all, proclaim open war, fire and sword, with utter destruction to all the countries and kingdoms of Christendom, in a just revenge against them for the injuries sustained by their seven Champions, desiring all the followers of Mahomet, Termagant and Apollo, in this our determination, to join with us and take our parts."

The Grecian Emperor being also a Pagan associated with them, giving commandment to muster up the greatest forces his land could afford. All which, when the seven champions understood, to prevent their bloody purposes, after due consideration had amongst themselves, each one with his betrothed lady departed home to his own country, there to raise forces to withstand the common enemy: St. George into England, St. Denis into France, St. James into Spain, St. Anthony into Italy, St. Andrew into Scotland, St. Patrick into Ireland, and St. David into Wales: the prospect of whose delightful habitations they had not beheld in many years before; where they were most royally entertained according unto their own heart's desire, each several Prince in his common cause, contributing the

utmost assistance he could make, appointing the bay of Portugal for their great rendezvous; and all with one general consent, nominating St. George to be their general, whose valiant exploits and honourable performances, shall be discoursed of in the following chapter.

C H A P. IX.

How the seven Champions of Christendom arrived, with all their troops, in the bay of Portugal, where St. George made an oration to his soldiers. The dissention in the Pagan army; with other things that happened

AT the appointed time, the Christian Champions with each one a well approved army, met in the bay of Portugal, the number of which joined together was about five hundred thousand; unto whom St. George, their appointed general, made this following oration:

“Fellow soldiers and kind country-men, whose valour the world admires and dreads, we are now going into the field of honour, and to the work of manhood, the time is now at hand we have long looked and prayed for, and your work the noblest in the world pour forth, therefore, your utmost forces, that against to come may know what the lance, the ax, the sword and the bow, can do in the hand of the valiant: forget not the numerous force of our enemies, whose number is rather a burthen than an advantage unto them, but know, your cause is the best, the defence of the Christian religion, and your native countries, which will oppose all their vast numbers. Whosoever therefore desires riches, honours and rewards, know that they are all to be gotten by the overthrow of these miscreants, who will fly before your valour, as flock of sheep before the greedy wolf.”

This soldier-like oration put such courage into the breasts of the soldiers, that, with a general voice, they cried out, ‘To arms, to arms, with the magnanimous Champion St. George of England,’ in which gal-

resolution we will leave them for a while, to relate what happened in the army of the Pagans, who, like grasshoppers overspreading a country, met in the land of Hungary, in such multitudes, that had not God frustrated their intentions, the Christian army had been but a morsel, scarce sufficient for them for one meal; by his invincible power, he confounded them in their own practices; for being about to elect a general, each nation was obstinate to have their king the person, that should command in chief; and so eager were they in these resolutions, that from words they fell to blows, which ended at last in a most dreadful fight against each other, till the ground was changed from a verdant green to a purple hue, and each place strewed with the carcases of dead bodies. Here you might see head new lopt off from the shoulders, with a gasping mouth, complaining as it were for his separation from the rest of its body: there lay an arm with a hand grasping a sword, as if it would fight yet in its body's absence. In another place you might behold one who could run away from danger, but that his legs are so tangled in his fellows guts he could not stir; here lay the brains of one, there another with his mouth and nose cut away, so that he could not complain of his wretched misfortunes. In fine, such horror and destruction grees amongst them, as would make the heart of an enemy to relent. Those that remained, after this bloody encounter, withdrew themselves into their own countries, cursing the time that ever they undertook so unadvisably an enterprize, and confessing it was vain for them to attempt any thing against the Christian's God.

This it was not long ere the news of this bloody encounter came to the ears of St. George, and the rest of the Christian Champions; who having received the intelligence, soon raised their armies and marched directly to Barbary, against the bloody king of Morocco; who chastise his treachery committed against the most renowned English Champion.

The terrible battle between the Christians and Moors in Barbary, the great overthrow of the Pagans, and how Almidor the black king of Morocco, was boiled to death in a brazen caldron of lead and brimstone.

THE Christian army under the conduct of the magnanimous English champion, St. George, being arrived in Barbary, and, with their victorious arms, turning all into ruin wheresoever they came, the noise thereof made Almidor's guilty conscience to quake, and thereupon he raised a mighty host to withstand them, who with great courage fell upon the Christians, so that between them ensued a most terrible battle, each side striving to outdo the other in victorious exploits; to purchase renown; the Moors in defence of their country, their wives and children. Three days together did this bloody conflict hold, the night scarce giving them time to breath in, but before the sun began his eternal race, they returned their strength to a more eager encounter; horror, bloodshed and amazement was on their side, and death rode triumphant thro' the whole host; but the valiant St. George (whose courage was never wanting at all essays) being minded to put an end to the fight, singled out the Morocco king, betwixt whom and the English champion was a long and dangerous encounter; but Almidor, not able to withstand the mighty puissance of St. George, was forced to yield himself to his mercy, and became his prisoner, which the Moors seeing, presently would have fled to the chief city, but the Christians intercepting them, made amongst them such a slaughter, that not one of a hundred escaped to tell the sad disaster of their misfortunes.

The Christian army then marched directly to Tripoly, carrying along with them the wicked Almidor to whom (notwithstanding his evil deserts) upon a promise of forsaking his heathen gods, and to turn to be a Christian, mercy was proffered, which refusing,

with direful execrations against the Christian religion, he was boiled to death in a brazen caldron filled with lead and brimstone; at the sight of whose death, as well Pagans as Christians, with a loud voice cried out, "Long live St. George, the victorious Champion of England, who, by his valiant prowess, hath freed Barbary from their miserable thraldom."

Hereupon the Morocco peers, with banded knees, came to St. George; proffering unto him the imperial crown of Barbary, and promising to be christened in the Christian faith; all which was presently performed, by placing the crown upon his head, and abolishing Mahometanism with all the superstitious rites of that false prophet; whereupon a great alteration suddenly ensued, Pagan temples were pulled down, and a Christian church erected: instead of a tyranaical government, good and wholesome laws were ordained: peace and plenty flourished every where, and a general rejoicing was throughout the whole kingdom.

But the heroic Champions, not minding to spend their time in the idle bower of peace, and to let their armour hang rustling on the wall, when so much action was to be done in the world; they therefore summoned their soldiers to re-assume their courage, and to put themselves in an equipage for war. St. George leaving the government of the land, in his absence, to four of the principal peers of Morocco; the whole army marched directly to Egypt against K. Ptolemy, who had confederated with Almidor for sending St. George into Persia.

C H A P. IX.

How the Christians arrived in Egypt, and what happened to them there. The tragedy of the Earl of Coventry. How the Egyptian king broke his neck, and how St. George redeemed his Lady from being burnt to death at a stake.

THE seven Champions of Christendom, with their victorious army, being arrived in Egypt, they

supposed presently to have met armed troops to withstand them; but, contrary to their expectation, they find both cities, towns and villages uninhabited: the terror of their coming striking such an amazement to the inhabitants, that they hid themselves in the most obscure places they could find: wherefore they marched to king Ptolemy's court, intending first to burn that, and then afterwards the rest of the city into cinders. But whilst they were in these thoughts, and being come near thereto, they were met by Ptolemy and his chiefest Peers, all in mourning, bearing broken weapons, shivered lances, and torn ancients, with many thousands of women and children wearing cypress leaves about their heads, all with one voice crying for mercy, and to spare their country from utter ruin, king Ptolemy the foremost of them all, addressing himself to the Christian Champions, in these words:

“Most noble Knights and renowned Champions, whose names are enrolled in the book of fame, let my grey hairs move you to pity, and my bended knees that never bowed to any till now, cause compassion in you: but if no mercy be reserved for me, let me plead for pity for my poor commons, who are altogether ignorant of the injuries offered to the English champion, occasioned by the treachery of that wicked Almidor working upon my easy nature: O let me fall a sacrifice for their safety, and stain not your hands in their guiltless blood, but spare them and us, and we shall not only become your servants, but forsake the belief of our false prophets, and henceforth believe in the Christians' God.”

This sorrowful lamentation and request of king Ptolemy, made the heart of the English Champion to relent, so that he not only granted mercy to the whole land, but also life to king Ptolemy upon the conditions before promised; which gracious grant was so welcome both to king and commons, that all on a sudden the people returned from their lurking places to their former habitations. Bone-fires were made in every place,

the bells rang day and night, and so much banqueting, dancing and masquing was used, as exceeded that which the Trojans made, when Paris returned from Greece, with the conquest of the Spartan Queen.

But this sun-shine weather was soon overshadowed with a cloud of sorrow; for, in the interim of all their joy, there arriv'd at the court an English knight, who thus delivered himself to St George.

“ Renowned Champion of England, if ever you expect to see your beloved lady again, make all the haste you can unto her, who is adjudged to be burned to death at a stake, for murdering the Earl of Covenry; who, by gifts, entreaties, and allurements, sought to betray her of her honour, and by lustful acts to stain her name with infamy, which your virtuous lady always withstood: but at last, he finding her alone, and renewing his suit, with threatenng of force upon her denial: she, with kind words, lulled him asleep, and then sheathed his own poinard in his breast, which on a sudden bereaved him of life; for which fact she is condemned to die the death aforesaid: yet this favour is granted her, that if in two years space, a champion be found, that for her sake will venture his life; if he overcome the challenger, her life shall be saved, but if not, then she must die.”

These words struck a wonderful astonishment and sorrow to all that heard them, especially to king Ptolemy, who, in a desperate mood, cast himself from the top of a high pinnacle, and broke his neck. Whereupon St. George was immediately proclaimed, and soon after crowned king of Egypt; and then, leaving the Christian Champions, he went into England, where he combated with the Baron of Chester, who was champion against the Lady Sabine, whom he overcame in battle, to the great joy of the English knight and his beloved Sabine, with whom he afterwards spent his life in much joy and felicity.

F I N I S.