

THE

HISTORY

OF

Valentine and Orson.

*Reader, you'll find this little Book contains
Enough to answer thy expense and pains;
And if with caution you will read it through,
'Twill both instruct, and delight thee too.*



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THE
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OF
Valentine and Orson.



CHAP. I.

The Banishment of the Lady Bellifant, who is delivered of Valentine and Orson at one Birth, in a wood,

IT is recorded, that PEPEN, King of France, had a fair sister named Bellifant, who was married to Alexander, the Emperor of Greece, and by him carried to his Capital at Constantinople; from whence, after having lived with great virtue, she was banished through the means of a false accuser, whom she had severely checked for his imprudence; and though at the same time she was big with Child, yet she was compelled to

leave her husband's empire, to the great regret of the people, attended only with a squire named Blandiman.

After great fatigue and travel, she arrived in the forest of Orleans, where finding her pains come thick upon her, she dismissed her attendant for a midwife, but before his return was delivered of two lovely children, one of which was conveyed away by a she bear, but she willing to save it pursued on her hands and knees, leaving the other behind.

But before her return, King Pepin being a hunting in the forest, came to the tree where she left the other babe, and causing it to be taken up, sent it to nurse, and when it grew up called his name Valentine.—Blandiman at length came back, and instead of finding his mistress found her brother Pepin at the tree, to which he declared all that had happened, and how his sister was banished through the false suggestions of the arch priest; which when King Pepin heard he was greatly enraged against the lady Bellifant, saying the Emperor ought to have put her to death; so leaving Blandiman, he returned to his nobles at Paris.—The lady Bellifant having followed the bear to no pur-

pose, returned to the place where she had left the other babe ; but great was her sorrow when Blandiman said he had seen her brother Pepin, but could tell nothing of the child ; and having comforted her for the loss of it, they went to the sea-side took shipping, and arrived at the castle of the Giant Feragus, in Portugal.

All this while the bear nourished the infant amongst her young ones, until at length it grew up a wild hairy man, doing great mischief to all that passed thro' the forest ; in which we will leave him, and return to the arch priest, who did great mischief, till he was impeached by a merchant of having wrongfully accused the Empress ; upon which they fought, and the merchant conquering, made the priest confess all his treasons, the Emperor wrote about it to the King of France, and he was hanged.





CHAP II.

Valentine conquers his Brother in the forest of Orleans.

NOW was Valentine grown a lusty young man, and by the King as greatly beloved as if he had been his own son : commanding him to be taught the use of arms, in which he soon became so expert, that few in the court dared to encounter him : which made Huf-ray and Heny the King's bastard sons exceedingly envy him. At this juncture great complaints were made against the Wild Man, from whom no Knight had escaped with his life, that had encountered him : which made the King promise a thousand marks to any that would bring him dead or alive, which offer none dare except ; but Huf-ray and Henry desired King Pepin to send Valentine, with a view of getting rid of so powerful a rival in the King's favour, but his Majesty seeing their malady, was very angry, telling them, he would rather lose the best Baron in the land.

However Valentine desired leave of his Majesty to go to the forest, resolving either to conquer the Wild Man, or die in the attempt. Accordingly having furnished himself with a good horse and arms, he set forward on his journey, and after two days travelling, he arrived in the forest; in the evening he tied his horse to a large spreading oak, and got up in a tree himself, for his security, where he rested that night.

Next morning he beheld the Wild Man traversing the forest in search of his prey, at length he came to the tree where Valentine's horse stood, from whom he pulled many hairs, upon which the horse kicked him. The Wild Man feeling the pain, was going to tear him to pieces, which Valentine seeing, made signs as if he would fight him, and accordingly he leaped down, and gave him a blow, but the Wild Man caught him and threw him to the ground. Then taking up Valentine's shield, he beheld it with amaze, with respect to the divers colours thereon emblazoned.

Valentine being much bruised, got up and went towards his brother in great anger: but Orson ran to a tree, and then

they engaged; but both being terrible wounded gave out by consent; after which Valentine signified to Orson, that if he would yield to him, he would order matters so as he should become a rational creature.

Orson thinking that he meant him no harm, stretched forth his hand to him; upon which he bound him, and then led him to Paris, where he presented him to King Pepin, who had the Wild Man baptized by the name of Orson, from his being taken in a wood. Orson's actions during their stay there very much amused the court, that at length the Duke of Aquitain sent letters importing, that whosoever would overthrow the Green Knight, a pagan champion, should have his daughter Fazon in marriage. Upon which proposition Valentine set out for that province, attended by his brother Orson, by which means he came to the knowledge of his parents, as we shall find hereafter.





CHAP. III.

The fight between Orson and the Green Knight.

AFTER a long journey, Valentine and Orson arrived at Duke Savary's palace in Aquitain; and making known the reason that they came there, were presented to Fazon; to whom Valentine thus addressed himself:

“Sweet creature, King Pepin has sent me hither with the bravest Knight in all his realm to fight the Green Knight, who though he his dumb and naked, is endued with such valour, that no Knight under the sun is able to cope with him.”

During this speech she viewed Orson narrowly, and he her; but supper coming in, interrupted them, and they sat down to eat.

Whilst they were in the midst of all their feasting, the Green Knight entered saying, Duke Aquitain hast thou any more Knights to cope with me for thy daughter? Yes, replied the Duke, I have seventeen, and then shewed them to

him. The Green Knight then said to them, eat your fill, for to-morrow will be your last. Orson hearing what he said, was much incensed against him, and suddenly rising from the table, threw the Green Knight with such force against the wall as laid him dead for some time; which very much pleased the whole company.

Next day many Knights went to fight the Green Knight, but he overcame and slew them all; till at last, Orson being armed in Valentine's armour, came to the Green Knight's pavilion, and defying him, they began the most desperate combat as ever was heard of, and the Green Knight made so great a stroke at him, as to cut of the top of his helmit, half his shield, and wounded him much. But this served only to enrage the valiant Orson, who coming up to him on foot, took hold of him, and pulled him from his horse, got astride him, and was just going to kill him, but was prevented by the sudden arrival of Valentine, who interceded with Orson to spare his life, on condition of his turning Christian, and acquainting King Pepin how he was conquered.

The Green Knight having promised to perform all that was desired, they led him prisoner to the city of Aquitain, and the Duke received them with great joy, and offered the lady Fazon to Orson; but he would not marry her till his brother had won the Green Knight's sister, lady Clerimond; not till they had talked with the enchanted head of brass to know his parents, and get the proper use of his tongue; which when the lady knew she was very sorry, because she loved Orson, and was resolved to marry none but him, who had so nobly conquered the Green Knight.



CHAP. IV.

Valentine and Orson go in search of Lady Clerimond, who had the Brazen Head in her possession.

VALENTINE and Orson having taken leave of the Duke of Aquitain and his daughter Fazon, proceeded on their journey, in search of the lady Clerimond, and at last came to a tower of burnished brass; which upon enquiry, they disco-

vered to be kept by Clerimond, sister to Feragus and the defeated Green Knight, and having demanded entrance was refused it by the centinal who guarded the gate, which provoked Valentine to that degree, that he run against him with such fury that the centinal fell down dead immediately.

The lady Clerimond beheld all this dispute, and seeing them brave Knights, received them courteously.—Valentine having presented tokens from the Green Knight told her, he came there for the love of her, and to discourse with the Allknowing Head, concerning their parents. After dinner, the lady took them by the hand, and led them to the chamber of rarities, where the Head was placed between four pillars of pure jasper, when, as they entered it made the following speech to Valentine :

“Thou famous Knight of royal extract art called Valentine the valient, who of right ought to marry the lady Clerimond. Thou art, son to the Emperor of Greece Empress Bellifant, who is now in the castle of Feragus, in Portugal, where they have resided for twenty years. King Pepin is thine uncle, and the Wild Man thy brother ; the Empress Bellifant brought ye two forth in the forest of Orleans ; he was

taken away by a ravenous bear, and thou wast taken up by thy uncle Pepin, who brought thee up to man's estate. Moreover I likewise tell thee, that thy brother shall never speak till thou cuttest the thread that grows under his tongue.

The Brazen Head having ended his speech, Valentine embraced Orson and cut the thread which grew under his tongue; and he directly related many surprising things. After which Valentine married Lady Clerimond, but not before she turned Christian.

In this castle lived a dwarf, named Pa-colet, who was an enchanter, and by his art had contrived a horse of wood, and in the forehead a fixed pin, by turning of which he could convey himself to the farthest part of the world.

This enchanter flies to Portugal, and informs Feragus of his sister's nuptials, and of her turning Christian; which so enraged him that he swore by Mahomet he would make her rue it, and thereupon he got ready his fleet, and sailed towards the castle of Clerimond, where when he arrived he concealed his malice from his sister, and also the two Knights, telling them that he came to fetch them into Portugal, the bet-

ter to solemnize the marriage, and he would turn Christian at their arrival at the castle, all which they believed, and soon after embarked with him. When he had got them on board, he ordered them to be put in irons, which so grieved his sister Clerimond, that she would have thrown herself into the sea had she not been stopped.



CHAP. V.

Pecolet comforts the Ladies, and delivers Valentine and Orson out of Prison.

WHEN they were come to Portugal, he put Valentine and Orson in a dungeon, fed them with bread and water, but allowed his sister Clerimond the liberty of the castle, where she meets the Empress Bellifant, who had been confined twenty years in the castle of Feragus: She seeing her so full of grief, comforts her, enquiring the reason which she told her. The Empress was mighty grieved, but Pacolet comforted them by telling them he should release them all that evening, which he accordingly did in the following manner :

In the dead of the night he goes to the dungeon, where lay Valentine and Orson bound in chains, and touching the doors with his magical wand they flew open; and coming to the Knights, he released them and conducted them to the apartment where Bellifant and Clerimond were, who were exceedingly transported; but Pacolet hindered them from discoursing long by telling them they must depart before the guards of Feragus awaked, which would put a stop to his proceedings.

So Pacolet led them to the gates of the castle, and having prepared a ship he conveyed them to Lady Fazon, at the City of Aquitain; next morning when Feragus heard of their escape, he was enraged to the last degree. The Knights and Ladies being out of danger, soon arrived at Aquitain, to the great joy of Lady Fazon, who was soon after married to Orson with great solemnity; upon which tilts and tournaments were performed for many days; but Valentine carried the prize by overthrowing at least above an hundred brave Knights.



CHAP. VI.

Valentine dies, and Orson turns Hermit.

NOW Valentine being greatly distressed in his mind for the death of his father, (who lately died) resolved to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre; and thereupon taking leave of his wife Clerimond; and giving the government of the Empire unto his brother, he departed, to the great sorrow of all, particular his mother Bellifant, and the fair Clerimond.

Valentine, after seven years absence returned, dressed like a poor palmer, begging victuals at the gate of his own palace; and at length being sick and about to die, he called for Clerimond and made himself known to her, at which she was ready to give up the ghost.

At last having recommended the care of her to his brother, and the Empress, his dear mother, and blessing of them, he turned on one side, and breathed out his noble soul from his illustrious body, to the great grief of all the valiant Knights of Christendom, to whom he had been a no-

ble example, and a generous reliever of.—
But Clerimond never could espouse any
one, but betook her to a single life, always
lamenting the loss of her beloved husband.

After his death, Orson governed the Em-
pire with great wisdom and justice for seven
years, till at length, seeing the frail state of
human affairs, he gave the charge of his
Empire, Wife, and Children, to the Green
Knight, and then turning Hermit, he be-
came a resident of the forests and woods,
where, after living to a great age, this mag-
nanimous and invincible hero surrendered
up his body unto never sparing death, and
his soul to the immortal deities of whose
attributes it had a true resemblance.

*Thus reader, you may see that none with-stand
Tho' great in valour, or in vast command,
The mighty force of death's all conquering hand.*

