

CHAPTER XXXIX.

HOW PRESTER JOHN TREATED THE GOLDEN KING HIS PRISONER.

AND on this the Golden King was so sorely grieved that he was like to die. And he said to them: "Good, my sons, for God's sake have pity and compassion upon me. Ye wot well what honourable and kindly entertainment ye have had in my house; and now ye would deliver me into the hands of mine enemy! In sooth, if ye do what ye say, ye will do a very naughty and disloyal deed, and a right villainous." But they answered only that so it must be, and away they had him to Prester John their Lord.

And when Prester John beheld the King he was right glad, and greeted him with something like a malison.* The King answered not a word, as if he wist not what it behoved him to say. So Prester John ordered him to be taken forth straightway, and to be put to look after cattle, but to be well looked after himself also. So they took him and set him to keep cattle. This did Prester John of the grudge he bore the King, to heap contumely on him, and to show what a nothing he was, compared to himself.

And when the King had thus kept cattle for two years, Prester John sent for him, and treated him with honour, and clothed him in rich robes, and said to him: "Now Sir King, art thou satisfied that thou wast in no way a man to stand against me?" "Truly, my good Lord, I know well and always did know that I was in no way a man to stand against thee." And when he had said this Prester John replied: "I ask no more; but

* "Lui dist que il feust le mal venuz."