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### **Travels into several remote nations of the world**

in 4 pt.

**Swift, Jonathan**

**London, 1726**

Chap. IV. The Author leaves Laputa, is conveyed to Balnibarbi, arrives at the Metropolis. A Description of the Metropolis, and the Country adjoining. The Author hospitably received by a great Lord. ...

[urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-48460](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-48460)



## C H A P. IV.

*The Author leaves Laputa, is conveyed to Balnibarbi, arrives at the Metropolis. A Description of the Metropolis, and the Country adjoining. The Author hospitably received by a great Lord. His Conversation with that Lord.*

**A**LTHOUGH I cannot say that I was ill-treated in this Island, yet I must confess I thought myself too much neglected, not without some degree of Contempt. For neither Prince nor People appeared to be curious in any Part of Knowledge, except Mathematicks and Musick, wherein I was far their Inferior, and upon that account very little regarded.

ON the other side, after having seen all the Curiosities of the Island, I was very desirous to leave it, being heartily weary of those People. They were indeed excellent for two Sciences for which I have great esteem, and wherein I am not unvers'd; but at the same time, so abstracted and involved in Speculation, that I never met with such disagreeable Companions. I convers'd only with Women, Tradesmen, *Flappers*, and Court-Pages, during two Months of my Abode here, by which, at last, I render'd my self extremely contemptible; yet these were the only People from whom I could ever receive a reasonable Answer.

I had obtained, by hard Study, a good degree of Knowledge in their Language; I was weary of being confined to an Island where I received so little Countenance, and resolv'd to leave it with the first Opportunity.

THERE was a great Lord at Court, nearly related to the King, and for that

reason alone used with Respect. He was universally reckoned the most ignorant and stupid Person among them. He had performed many eminent Services for the Crown, had great natural and acquired Parts, adorned with Integrity and Honour, but so ill an Ear for Musick, that his Detractors reported he had been often known to beat Time in the wrong Place; neither could his Tutors, without extreme difficulty, teach him to demonstrate the most easy Proposition in the Mathematicks. He was pleased to shew me many Marks of Favour, often did me the honour of a Visit, desired to be informed in the Affairs of *Europe*, the Laws and Customs, the Manners and Learning, of the several Countries where I had travelled. He listned to me with great Attention, and made very wise Observations on all I spoke. He had two *Flappers* attending him for State, but never made use of them except at Court, and in Visits of Ceremony, and would always command them

them to withdraw when we were alone together.

I intreated this illustrious Person to intercede in my behalf with his Majesty for Leave to depart; which he accordingly did, as he was pleased to tell me, with Regret: For, indeed he had made me several Offers very advantageous, which however I refused with Expressions of the highest Acknowledgment.

ON the 16th Day of *February* I took Leave of his Majesty and the Court. The King made me a Present to the value of about two hundred Pounds *English*, and my Protector his Kinsman as much more, together with a Letter of Recommendation to a Friend of his in *Lagado*, the Metropolis: The Island being then hovering over a Mountain about two Miles from it, I was let down from the lowest Gallery, in the same manner as I had been taken up.

THE Continent, as far as it is subject to the Monarch of the *Flying Island*, passes under the general Name of *Balnibarbi*, and the Metropolis, as I said before, is called *Lagado*. I felt some little Satisfaction in finding my self on firm Ground. I walked to the City without any Concern, being clad like one of the Natives, and sufficiently instructed to converse with them. I soon found out the Person's House to whom I was recommended, presented my Letter from his Friend the Grandee in the Island, and was received with much Kindness. This great Lord, whose Name was *Munodi*, ordered me an Apartment in his own House, where I continued during my Stay, and was entertained in a most hospitable manner.

THE next Morning after my arrival, he took me in his Chariot to see the Town, which is about half the bigness of *London*, but the Houses very strangely built, and most of them out of Repair.

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The People in the Streets walked fast, looked wild, their Eyes fixed, and were generally in Rags. We passed through one of the Town-Gates, and went about three Miles into the Country, where I saw many Labourers working with several sorts of Tools in the Ground, but was not able to conjecture what they were about; neither did I observe any Expectation either of Corn or Grass, although the Soil appeared to be excellent. I could not forbear admiring at these odd Appearances both in Town and Country, and I made bold to desire my Conductor, that he would be pleased to explain to me what could be meant by so many busy Heads, Hands, and Faces, both in the Streets and the Fields, because I did not discover any good Effects they produced; but on the contrary, I never knew a Soil so unhappily cultivated, Houses so ill contrived, and so ruinous, or a People whose Countenances and Habit expressed so much Misery and Want.

THIS Lord *Munodi* was a Person of the first Rank, and had been some Years Governor of *Lagado*; but by a Cabal of Ministers was discharged for Insufficiency. However, the King treated him with Tenderness, as a well-meaning Man, but of a low contemptible Understanding.

WHEN I gave that free Censure of the Country, and its Inhabitants, he made no further Answer than by telling me, that I had not been long enough among them to form a Judgment; and that the different Nations of the World had different Customs, with other common Topicks to the same purpose. But when we returned to his Palace, he asked me how I liked the Building, what Absurdities I observed, and what Quarrel I had with the Dress and Looks of his Domesticks. This he might safely do, because every thing about him was magnificent, regular, and polite. I answered,



swered, that his Excellency's Prudence, Quality, and Fortune, had exempted him from those Defects which Folly and Beggary had produced in others. He said, if I would go with him to his Country House about twenty Miles distant, where his Estate lay, there would be more Leisure for this kind of Conversation. I told his Excellency, that I was entirely at his disposal; and accordingly we set out next Morning.

DURING our Journey, he made me observe the several Methods used by Farmers in managing their Lands, which to me were wholly unaccountable; for, except in some very few Places, I could not discover one Ear of Corn or Blade of Grass. But, in three hours travelling, the Scene was wholly altered; we came into a most beautiful Country; Farmers Houses at small distances, neatly built; the Fields enclosed, containing Vineyards, Corn-grounds and Meadows. Neither do I remember to have seen a

more delightful Prospect. His Excellency observed my Countenance to clear up; he told me, with a Sigh, that there his Estate began, and would continue the same till we should come to his House; that his Countrymen ridicul'd and despis'd him for managing his Affairs no better, and for setting so ill an Example to the Kingdom, which however was followed by very few, such as were old, and wilful, and weak, like himself.

We came at length to the House; which was indeed a noble Structure, built according to the best Rules of ancient Architecture. The Fountains, Gardens, Walks, Avenues, and Groves, were all disposed with exact Judgment and Taste. I gave due Praises to every thing I saw: whereof his Excellency took not the least notice till after Supper, when, there being no third Companion, he told me, with a very melancholy Air, that he doubted he must throw down his Houses in Town and  
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Country, to rebuild them after the present Mode, destroy all his Plantations, and cast others in such a Form as modern Usage required, and give the same Directions to all his Tenants, unless he would submit to incur the Censure of Pride, Singularity, Affectation, Ignorance, Caprice, and perhaps increase his Majesty's Displeasure.

THAT the Admiration I appeared to be under, would cease or diminish, when he had informed me of some Particulars, which, probably, I never heard of at Court; the People there being too much taken up in their own Speculations, to have regard to what passed here below.

THE Sum of his Discourse was to this Effect: That about forty Years ago, certain Persons went up to *Laputa*, either upon Business or Diversion, and after five Months continuance, came back with a very little Smattering in Mathematicks,

matics, but full of volatile Spirits acquired in that airy Region. That these Persons upon their Return began to dislike the Management of every thing below, and fell into Schemes of putting all Arts, Sciences, Languages, and Mechanicks upon a new foot. To this end, they procured a Royal Patent for erecting an Academy of PROJECTORS in *Lagado*; and the Humour prevailed so strongly among the People, that there is not a Town of any consequence in the Kingdom without such an Academy. In these colleges, the Professors contrive new Rules and Methods of Agriculture and Building, and new Instruments and Tools for all Trades and Manufactures; whereby, as they undertake, one Man shall do the Work of ten; a Palace may be built in a Week, of Materials so durable, as to last for ever, without repairing; all the Fruits of the Earth shall come to Maturity at whatever Season we think fit to chuse, and increase an hundred fold more than they

they do at present, with innumerable other happy Proposals. The only Inconvenience is, that none of these Projects are yet brought to Perfection, and in the mean time the whole Country lies miserably waste, the Houses in Ruins, and the People without Food or Clothes. By all which, instead of being discouraged, they are fifty times more violently bent upon prosecuting their Schemes, driven equally on by Hope and Despair: That as for himself, being not of an enterprizing Spirit, he was content to go on in the old Forms, to live in the Houses his Ancestors had built, and act as they did in every part of Life without Innovation: That, some few other Persons of Quality and Gentry had done the same, but were looked on with an Eye of Contempt and ill Will, as Enemies to Art, ignorant and ill Commonwealthsmen, preferring their own Ease and Sloth before the general Improvement of their Country.

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HIS Lordship added, that he would not by any further Particulars prevent the Pleasure I should certainly take in viewing the Grand Academy, whither he was resolv'd I should go. He only desired me to observe a ruined Building upon the side of a Mountain about three Miles distant, of which he gave me this Account: That he had a very convenient Mill within half a Mile of his House, turned by a Current from a large River, and sufficient for his own Family, as well as a great number of his Tenants: That, about seven Years ago, a Club of those Projectors came to him with Proposals to destroy this Mill, and build another on the side of that Mountain, on the long Ridge whereof a long Canal must be cut for a Repository of Water, to be conveyed up by Pipes and Engines to supply the Mill: Because the Wind and Air upon a Height agitated the Water, and thereby made it fitter for Motion; and because the Water descending down a Declivity, would turn the Mill with half the Current

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rent of a River whose Course is more upon a Level. He said, that being then not very well with the Court, and pressed by many of his Friends, he complied with the Proposal; and, after employing an hundred Men for two Years, the Work miscarried, the Projectors went off, laying the blame entirely upon him, railing at him ever since, and putting others upon the same Experiment, with equal Assurance of Success, as well as equal Disappointment.

IN a few days we came back to Town, and his Excellency, considering the bad Character he had in the Academy, would not go with me himself, but recommended me to a Friend of his to bear me Company thither. My Lord was pleased to represent me as a great Admirer of Projects, and a Person of much Curiosity and easy Belief; which, indeed, was not without Truth, for I had my self been a sort of Projector in my younger days.

C H A P.