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### Travels into several remote nations of the world

in 4 pt.

**Swift, Jonathan**

**London, 1726**

Chap. VIII. A farther Account of Glubbdubdribb. Antient and Modern  
History corrected.

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Age of the World cannot add a 20  
year.



to had I had to  
the World in every Period of Ann-  
CHAP. VIII.

*A further Account of Glubbudrib.  
Antient and Modern History cor-  
rected.*



HAVING a desire to see  
those Ancients, who were  
most renowned for Wit and  
Learning, I set apart one  
Day on purpose. I propos'd that *Homer*  
and *Aristotle* might appear at the head of  
all their Commentators; but these were  
too numerous, that some hundreds were  
forced to attend in the Court, and out-  
ward Rooms of the Palace. I knew and  
could distinguish those two Heroes at

CHAP.

H

first



first sight, not only from the Croud, but from each other. *Homer* was the taller and comelier Person of the two, walked very erect for one of his Age, and his Eyes were the most quick and piercing I ever beheld. *Aristotle* stooped much, and made use of a Staff. His Visage was meager, his Hair lank and thin, and his Voice hollow. I soon discovered that both of them were perfect Strangers to the rest of the Company, and had never seen or heard of them before. And I had a Whisper from a Ghost, who shall be nameless, that these Commentators always kept in the most distant Quarters from their Principals in the lower World, through a Consciousness of Shame and Guilt, because they had so horribly misrepresented the Meaning of those Authors to Posterity. I introduced *Didymus* and *Eustathius* to *Homer*, and prevailed on him to treat them better than perhaps they deserved; for he soon found they wanted a Genius to enter into the Spirit of a Poet.

But



But *Aristotle* was out of all patience with the account I gave him of *Scotus* and *Ramus*, as I presented them to him; and he asked them, whether the rest of the Tribe were as great Dunces as themselves.

I then desired the Governor to call up *Descartes* and *Gassendi*, with whom I prevailed to explain their Systems to *Aristotle*. This great Philosopher freely acknowledged his own Mistakes in Natural Philosophy, because he proceeded in many things upon Conjecture, as all Men must do; and he found, that *Gassendi*, who had made the Doctrine of *Epicurus* as palatable as he could, and the *Vortices* of *Descartes* were equally exploded. He predicted the same Fate to *Attraction*, whereof the present Learned are such zealous Assertors. He said, that new Systems of Nature were but new Fashions, which would vary in every Age; and even those who pretend to demonstrate them from Mathematical

Prin:



Principles, would flourish but a short Period of time, and be out of vogue when that was determined.

I spent five days in conversing with many others of the antient Learned. I saw most of the first *Roman* Emperors. I prevailed on the Governor to call up *Eliogabalus's* Cooks to dress us a Dinner, but they could not shew us much of their Skill, for want of Materials. A *Helot* of *Agefilaus* made us a Dish of *Spartan* Broth, but I was not able to get down a second Spoonful.

THE two Gentlemen who conducted me to the Island, were pressed by their private Affairs to return in three days, which I employed in seeing some of the modern Dead, who had made the greatest Figure for two or three hundred Years past in our own and other Countries of *Europe*; and having been always a great Admirer of old illustrious Families, I desired the Governor would call  
up



up a dozen or two of Kings with their Ancestors in order for eight or nine Generations. But my Disappointment was grievous and unexpected. For instead of a long train with Royal Diadems, I saw in one Family two Fiddlers, three spruce Courtiers, and an *Italian* Prelate. In another a Barber, an Abbot, and two Cardinals. I have too great a Veneration for Crowned Heads to dwell any longer on so nice a Subject. But as to Counts, Marquesses, Dukes, Earls, and the like, I was not so scrupulous. And I confess it was not without some pleasure that I found my self able to trace the particular Features, by which certain Families are distinguished, up to their Originals. I could plainly discover from whence one Family derives a long Chin, why a second hath abounded with Knaves for two Generations, and Fools for two more; why a third happened to be crack-brained, and a fourth to be Sharpers. Whence it came what *Polydore Virgil* says of a certain great House,

*Nec*



*Nec Vir fortis, nec Fœmina casta.* How Cruelty, Falshood, and Cowardice grew to be Characteristicks by which certain Families are distinguished as much as by their Coat of Arms. Who first brought the Pox into a noble House, which hath lineally descended in scrophulous Tumours to their Posterity. Neither could I wonder at all this, when I saw such an Interruption of Lineages by Pages, Lacqueys, Valets, Coachmen, Gamesters, Captains, and Pick-pockets.

I was chiefly disgusted with modern History. For having strictly examined all the Persons of greatest Name in the Courts of Princes for an hundred Years past, I found how the World had been misled by prostitute Writers, to ascribe the greatest Exploits in War to Cowards, the wisest Counsel to Fools, Sincerity to Flatterers, *Roman* Virtue to Betrayers of their Country, Piety to Atheists, Chastity to Sodomites, Truth to Informers. How many innocent and excellent Persons



sons had been codemned to Death or Banishment, by the practising of great Ministers upon the Corruption of Judges, and the Malice of Faction. How many Villains had been exalted to the highest Places of Trust, Power, Dignity, and Profit: How great a share in the Motions and Events of Courts, Councils, and Senates might be challenged by Bawds, Whores, Pimps, Parasites, and Buffoons: How low an opinion I had of human Wisdom and Integrity, when I was truly informed of the Springs and Motives of great Enterprizes and Revolutions in the World, and of the contemptible Accidents to which they owed their Success.

HERE I discovered the Roguery and Ignorance of those who pretend to write *Anecdotes*, or secret History, who send so many Kings to their Graves with a Cup of Poison; will repeat the Discourse between a Prince and Chief-Minister, where no Witness was by;

unlock



to LAPUTA, &c. III

unlock the Thoughts and Cabinets of  
Embassadors and Secretaries of State,  
and have the perpetual misfortune to  
be mistaken. Here I discovered the se-  
cret Causes of many great Events that  
have surprized the World, how a Whore  
can govern the Back-stairs, the Back-  
stairs a Council, and the Council a  
Senate. A General confessed in my  
presence, that he got a Victory purely  
by the force of Cowardice and ill Con-  
duct; and an Admiral, that for want  
of proper Intelligence, he beat the Ene-  
my to whom he intended to betray the  
Fleet. Three Kings protested to me,  
that in their whole Reigns they did never  
once prefer any Person of Merit, unless by  
Mistake, or Treachery of some Minister  
in whom they confided: Neither would  
they do it, if they were to live again;  
and they shewed with great strength of  
Reason, that the Royal Throne could not  
be supported without Corruption, because  
that positive, confident, resolute Temper,  
which



which Virtue infused into Man, was a perpetual Clog to Publick Business.

I had the Curiosity to enquire in a particular manner, by what method great numbers had procured to themselves high Titles of Honour, and prodigious Estates; and I confined my Enquiry to a very modern Period: However, without grating upon present Times, because I would be sure to give no Offence even to Foreigners, (for I hope the Reader need not be told, that I do not in the least intend my own Country in what I say upon this occasion) a great number of Persons concerned were called up, and upon a very slight Examination, discover'd such a Scene of Infamy, that I cannot reflect upon it without some Seriousness. Perjury, Oppression, Subornation, Fraud, Pandarism, and the like *Infirmities* were amongst the most excusable Arts they had to mention, and for these I gave, as it was reasonable, great allowance. But when some confessed they



they owed their Greatness and Wealth to Sodomy or Incest, others to the prostituting of their own Wives and Daughters; others to the betraying their Country or their Prince; some to Poisoning, more to the perverting of Justice in order to destroy the innocent: I hope I may be pardoned if these Discoveries inclined me a little to abate of that profound Veneration which I am naturally apt to pay to Persons of high Rank, who ought to be treated with the utmost Respect due to their sublime Dignity, by us their Inferiors.

I had often read of some great Services done to Princes and States, and desired to see the Persons by whom those Services were performed. Upon enquiry I was told that their Names were to be found on no Record, except a few of them whom History hath represented as the vilest Rogues and Traitors. As to the rest, I had never once heard of them. They all appeared with dejected Looks, and



in the meanest Habit, most of them telling me they died in Poverty and Disgrace, and the rest on a Scaffold or a Gibbet.

AMONG the rest, there was one Person whose Case appeared a little singular. He had a Youth about eighteen Years old standing by his side. He told me he had for many Years been Commander of a Ship, and in the Sea-Fight at *Actium*, had the good fortune to break through the Enemy's great Line of Battle, sink three of their Capital Ships, and take a fourth, which was the sole Cause of *Anthony's* Flight, and of the Victory that ensued; that the Youth standing by him, his only Son, was killed in the Action. He added, that upon the Confidence of some Merit, this War being at an end, he went to *Rome*, and solicited at the Court of *Augustus* to be preferred to a greater Ship, whose Commander had been killed; but without any regard to his Pretensions,



to LAPUTA, &c. 115

it was given to a Youth who had never seen the Sea, the Son of *Libertina*, who waited on one of the Emperor's Mistresses. Returning back to his own Vessels, he was charged with neglect of Duty, and the Ship given to a Favourite Page of *Publicola* the Vice-Admiral; whereupon he retired to a poor Farm at a great distance from *Rome*, and there ended his Life. I was so curious to know the truth of this Story, that I desired *Agrippa* might be called, who was Admiral in that Fight. He appeared, and confirmed the whole Account, but with much more advantage to the Captain, whose Modesty had extenuated or concealed a great part of his Merit.

I was surprized to find Corruption grown so high and so quick in that Empire, by the force of Luxury so lately introduced, which made me less wonder at many parallel Cases in other Countries, where Vices of all kinds have reigned so much longer, and where the whole



Praise as well as Pillage hath been engrossed by the chief Commander, who perhaps had the least Title to either.

As every Person called up made exactly the same appearance he had done in the World, it gave me melancholy Reflections to observe how much the Race of human kind was degenerated among us, within these hundred Years past. How the Pox under all its Consequences and Denominations had altered every Lineament of an *English* Countenance, shortned the Size of Bodies, unbraced the Nerves, relaxed the Sinews and Muscles, introduced a fallow Complexion, and rendered the Flesh loose and *Rancid*.

I descended so low, as to desire that some *English* Yeomen of the old stamp, might be summoned to appear, once so famous for the Simplicity of their Manners, Dyet and Dress, for Justice in their Dealings, for their true Spirit of Liberty,  
for



for their Valour and Love of their Country. Neither could I be wholly unmov'd after comparing the Living with the Dead, when I considered how all these pure native Virtues were prostituted for a piece of Money by their Grand-children, who in selling their Votes, and managing at Elections, have acquired every Vice and Corruption that can possibly be learned in a Court.

