



UNIVERSITÄTS-
BIBLIOTHEK
PADERBORN

Universitätsbibliothek Paderborn

Travels into several remote nations of the world

in 4 pt.

Swift, Jonathan

London, 1726

Chap. III. The Author diverts the Emperor and his Nobility of both Sexes, in a very uncommon manner. The Diversions of the Court of Lilliput described. The Author hath his Liberty granted him, upon ...

[urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-48497](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-48497)



C H A P III.

The Author diverts the Emperor and his Nobility of both Sexes in a very uncommon manner. The Diversions of the Court of Lilliput described. The Author has his Liberty granted him upon certain Conditions.



MY Gentleness and good Behaviour had gained so far on the Emperor and his Court, and indeed upon the Army and People in general, that I began to conceive Hopes of getting my Liberty in a short time. I took all possible Methods to cultivate this favourable Disposition. The Natives came by degrees to be less apprehensive of any Danger from me. I would sometimes lie down, and let five or
 six

six of them dance on my Hand. And at last the Boys and Girls would venture to come and play at Hide and Seek in my Hair. I had now made a good Progress in understanding and speaking their Language. The Emperor had a mind one day to entertain me with several of the Country Shows, wherein they exceed all Nations I have known, both for Dexterity and Magnificence. I was diverted with none so much as that of the Rope-Dancers, performed upon a slender white Thread, extended about two Foot, and twelve Inches from the Ground. Upon which I shall desire liberty, with the Reader's Patience, to enlarge a little.

THIS Diversion is only practised by those Persons who are Candidates for great Employments, and high Favour, at Court. They are trained in this Art from their Youth, and are not always of noble Birth, or liberal Education. When a great Office is vacant either by Death or Disgrace (which often happens) five or

or

or six of those Candidates petition the Emperor to entertain his Majesty and the Court with a Dance on the Rope, and whoever jumps the highest without falling, succeeds in the Office. Very often the Chief Ministers themselves are commanded to shew their Skill, and to convince the Emperor that they have not lost their Faculty. *Flimnap*, the Treasurer, is allowed to cut a Caper on the strait Rope, at least an Inch higher than any other Lord in the whole Empire. I have seen him do the Summerset several times together upon a Trencher fixed on the Rope, which is no thicker than a common Packthread in *England*. My Friend *Reldresal*, principal Secretary for private Affairs, is, in my opinion, if I am not partial, the second after the Treasurer; the rest of the great Officers are much upon a Par.

THESE Diversions are often attended with fatal Accidents, whereof great Numbers are on Record. I my self have seen two or three Candidates break a Limb.

But

But the Danger is much greater when the Ministers themselves are commanded to shew their Dexterity; for by contending to excel themselves and their Fellows, they strain so far, that there is hardly one of them who hath not received a Fall, and some of them two or three. I was assured that a Year or two before my Arrival, *Flimnap* would have infallibly broke his Neck, if one of the King's Cushions, that accidentally lay on the Ground, had not weakened the Force of his Fall.

THERE is likewise another Diversion which is only shewn before the Emperor and Empress, and first Minister, upon particular Occasions. The Emperor lays on a Table three fine silken Threads of six Inches long. One is Purple, the other Yellow, and the third White. These Threads are proposed as Prizes for those Persons whom the Emperor hath a mind to distinguish by a peculiar Mark of his Favour. The Ceremony is performed in his Majesty's great Chamber of State,

where

where the Candidates are to undergo a Tryal of Dexterity very different from the former, and such as I have not observed the least Resemblance of in any other Country of the old or the new World. The Emperor holds a Stick in his Hands, both ends parallel to the Horizon, while the Candidates advancing one by one, sometimes leap over the Stick, sometimes creep under it backwards and forwards several times, according as the Stick is advanced or depressed. Sometimes the Emperor holds one end of the Stick, and his first Minister the other; sometimes the Minister has it entirely to himself. Whoever performs his Part with most Agility, and holds out the longest in leaping and creeping, is rewarded with the Purple coloured Silk; the Yellow is given to the next, and the White to the third, which they all wear girt twice round about the middle; and you see few great Persons about this Court, who are not adorned with one of these Girdles.

THE

THE Horses of the Army, and those of the royal Stables, having been daily led before me, were no longer shy, but would come up to my very Feet without starting. The Riders would leap their Horses over my Hand as I held it on the Ground and one of the Emperor's Huntsmen, upon a large Courser, took my Foot Shoe and all; which was indeed a prodigious Leap. I had the good fortune to divert the Emperor one Day after a very extraordinary manner. I desired he would order several Sticks of two Foot high and the thickness of an ordinary Cane, to be brought me; whereupon his Majesty commanded the Master of his Woods to give Directions accordingly, and the next Morning six Wood-men arrived with many Carriages, drawn by eight Horses to each. I took nine of these Sticks, fixing them firmly in the Ground in a quadrangular Figure, two foot and a half Square. I took four other Sticks, and tied them parallel at each Corner, about

two foot from the Ground; then I fastned my Handkerchief to the nine Sticks that stood erect, and extended it on all sides till it was as tight as the top of a Drum; and the four parallel Sticks rising about five Inches higher than the Handkerchief, served as Ledges on each side. When I had finished my Work, I desired the Emperor to let a Troop of his best Horse, twenty four in number, come and exercise upon this Plain. His Majesty approved of the Proposal, and I took them up one by one in my hands, ready mounted and armed, with the proper Officers to exercise them. As soon as they got into order they divided into two Parries, performed mock Skirmishes, discharged blunt Arrows, drew their Swords, fled and pursued, attacked and retired, and in short discovered the best military Discipline I ever beheld. The parallel Sticks secured them and their Horses from falling over the Stage; and the Emperor was so much delighted, that he ordered this Entertainment to be re-

peated several days, and once was pleased to be lifted up, and give the word of Command; and, with great difficulty persuaded even the Empress her self to let me hold her in her close Chair within two yards of the Stage, from whence she was able to take a full View of the whole Performance. It was my good fortune that no ill Accident happened in the Entertainments, only once a fiery Horse that belonged to one of the Captains pawing with his Hoof struck a hole in my Handkerchief, and his Foot slipping he overthrew his Rider and himself; but I immediately relieved them both; and covering the hole with one Hand, I laid down the Troop with the other, in the same manner as I took them up. The Horse that fell was strained in the Shoulder, but the Rider got no hurt, and I repaired my Handkerchief as well as I could; however, I would not trust to the Strength of it any more in such dangerous Enterprizes.

ABOUT two or three days before I was set at liberty, as I was entertaining the Court with these kind of Feats, there arrived an Express to inform his Majesty, that some of his Subjects riding near the Place where I was first taken up, had seen a great black Substance lying on the Ground very odly shaped, extended its Edges round as wide as his Majesty's Bed-chamber, and rising up in the middle as high as a Man; that it was no living Creature, as they at first apprehended, for it lay on the Grass without Motion; and some of them had walked round it several times: That by mounting upon each other's Shoulders, they had got to the top, which was flat and even, and stamping upon it they found it was hollow within; that they humbly conceived it might be something belonging to the *Mountain*; and if his Majesty pleased, they would undertake to bring it with only five Horses. I presently knew what they meant, and was glad at heart to re-

ceive this Intelligence. It seems upon my first reaching the Shore after our Shipwreck, I was in such confusion, that before I came to the place where I went to sleep, my Hat which I had fastned with a String to my Head while I was rowing and had stuck on all the time I was swimming, fell off after I came to Land; the String, as I conjecture, breaking by some Accident which I never observed, but I thought my Hat had been lost at Sea. I intreated his Imperial Majesty to give Orders it might be brought to me as soon as possible, describing to him the Use and the Nature of it: And the next Day the Waggoners arrived with it, but not in very good condition; they had bored three Holes in the Brim, within an Inch and half of the Edge, and fastned two Hooks in the Holes; these Hooks were tyed by a long Cord to the Harness, and thus my Hat was dragged along for above half an *English* Mile: but the Ground in that Country being extremely smooth and level, it receiv'd less Damage than I expected.

Two Days after this Adventure, the Emperor having ordered that Part of his Army which quarters in and about his Metropolis to be in a readiness, took a fancy of diverting himself in a very singular manner. He desired I would stand like a *Colossus*, with my Legs as far asunder as I conveniently could. He then commanded his General, (who was an old experienced Leader, and a great Patron of mine) to draw up the Troops in close Order, and march them under me; the Foot by twenty-four in a Breast, and the Horse by sixteen, with Drums beating, Colours flying, and Pikes advanced. This Body consisted of three thousand Foot, and a thousand Horse. His Majesty gave Orders, upon pain of Death, that every Soldier in his March should observe the strictest Decency, with regard to my Person; which, however, could not prevent some of the younger Officers from turning up their Eyes as they passed under me. And, to confess the Truth,

my Breeches were at that time in so ill Condition, that they afforded some Opportunities for Laughter and Admirati

I had sent so many Memorials and Petitions for my Liberty, that his Majesty at length mentioned the Matter first to the Cabinet, and then in a full Council where it was opposed by none, except *Skyresh Bolgolam*, who was pleased, without any Provocation, to be my mortal Enemy. But it was carried against me by the whole Board, and confirmed by the Emperor. That Minister was Governor or Admiral of the Realm, very much in his Master's Confidence, and a Person well versed in Affairs, but of a morose and sour Complexion. However, he was at length persuaded to comply; so prevailed that the Articles and Conditions upon which I should be set, and to which I must swear, should be drawn up by himself. These Articles were brought to me by *Skyresh Bolgolam* in Person, attended by two Under-S

soil
ne O
iratio
and
Ma
fir
oun
, exc
d, w
mo
inf
med
s. Ga
mud
Pe
mo
eyer,
ply;
l Co
set
houl
Art
Bol
er-S
t

taries, and several Persons of Distinction. After they were read, I was demanded to swear to the Performance of them; first in the manner of my own Country, and afterwards in the method prescribed by their Laws: which was to hold my right Foot in my left Hand, to place the middle Finger of my right Hand on the Crown of my Head, and my Thumb on the Tip of my right Ear. But because the Reader may perhaps be curious to have some idea of the Style and manner of Expression peculiar to that People, as well as to know the Articles upon which I recovered my Liberty, I have made a translation of the whole Instrument word for word, as near as I was able, which I here offer to the Publick.

GOLBASTO MOMAREN EVLAME GUR-
DILO SHEFIN MULLY ULLY GUE, most
Mighty Emperor of *Lilliput*, Delight and
Terror of the Universe, whose Domi-
nions extend five thousand *Blustrugs*, (a-
bout twelve Miles in Circumference) to
E 4 the

the Extremities of the Globe; Monarch of all Monarchs, taller than the Sons of Men; whose Feet press down to the Center, and whose Head strikes against the Sun: At whose Nod the Princes of the Earth shake their Knees; pleasant as the Spring, comfortable as the Summer, fruitful as Autumn, dreadful as Winter. His most sublime Majesty proposeth to the *Man-Mountain*, lately arrived to our Celestial Dominions, the following Article which by a solemn Oath he shall be oblig'd to perform.

FIRST, The *Man-Mountain* shall not depart from our Dominions, without our Licence under our Great Seal.

2^d, He shall not presume to come to our Metropolis, without our express Order; at which time the Inhabitants shall have two hours warning to keep within their doors.

3^d, The

3^d, T H E said *Man-Mountain* shall confine his Walks to our principal high Roads, and not offer to walk or lie down in a Meadow or Field of Corn.

4th, A s he walks the said Roads, he shall take the utmost care not to trample upon the Bodies of any of our loving Subjects, their Horses, or Carriages, nor take any of our said Subjects into his hands, without their own Consent.

5th, I F an Express requires extraordinary Dispatch, the *Man-Mountain* shall be obliged to carry in his Pocket the Messenger and Horse a Six Days Journey once in every Moon, and return the said Messenger back (if so required) safe to our Imperial Presence.

6th, H E shall be our Ally against our Enemies in the Island of *Blefuscu*, and do his utmost to destroy their Fleet, which is now preparing to invade us.

7th, T H A T

7th, THAT the said *Man-Mountain* shall, at his times of leisure, be aiding and assisting to our Workmen, in helping to raise certain great Stones, towards covering the Wall of the principal Park, and other our Royal Buildings.

8th, THAT the said *Man-Mountain* shall, in two Moons time, deliver in an exact Survey of the Circumference of our Dominions by a Computation of his own Paces round the Coast.

LASTLY, That upon his solemn Oath to observe all the above Articles, the said *Man-Mountain* shall have a daily Allowance of Meat and Drink sufficient for the Support of 1728 of our Subjects with free Access to our Royal Person and other Marks of our Favour. Given at our Palace at *Belfaborac* the twelfth day of the ninety-first Moon of our Reign.

I swor

I swore and subscribed to these Articles with great Chearfulness and Content, although some of them were not so honourable as I could have wished; which proceeded wholly from the Malice of *Skyresh Bolgolam* the High-Admiral: whereupon my Chains were immediately unlocked, and I was at full liberty; the Emperor himself in Person did me the Honour to be by at the whole Ceremony. I made my Acknowledgments by prostrating myself at his Majesty's Feet: But he commanded me to rise; and after many gracious Expressions, which, to avoid the Censure of Vanity, I shall not repeat, he added, that he hoped I should prove a useful Servant, and well deserve all the Favours he had already conferred upon me, or might do for the future.

THE Reader may please to observe, that in the last Article for the Recovery of my Liberty, the Emperor stipulates

to

to allow me a Quantity of Meat and Drink sufficient for the Support of 1728 *Lilliputians*. Some time after, asking a Friend at Court how they came to fix on that determinate Number; he told me, that his Majesty's Mathematicians, having taken the height of my Body by the help of a *Quadrant*, and finding it to exceed theirs in the Proportion of twelve to one, they concluded from the Similarity of their Bodies, that mine must contain at least 1728 of theirs, and consequently would require as much Food as was necessary to support that number of *Lilliputians*. By which, the Reader may conceive an Idea of the Ingenuity of that People, as well as the prudent and exact Oeconomy of so great a Prince.

