

Werk

Titel: The Surprising Travels & Adventures, Of Baron Munchausen, Also An Account Of A Vo...

Autor: Raspe, Rudolf Erich

Verlag: Fordyce

Ort: Newcastle Upon Tyne

Jahr: 1840

Kollektion: Bucherhaltung; Itineraria

Werk Id: PPN80693235X

PURL: http://resolver.sub.uni-goettingen.de/purl?PID=PPN80693235X|LOG_0031

OPAC: <http://opac.sub.uni-goettingen.de/DB=1/PPN?PPN=80693235X>

Terms and Conditions

The Goettingen State and University Library provides access to digitized documents strictly for noncommercial educational, research and private purposes and makes no warranty with regard to their use for other purposes. Some of our collections are protected by copyright. Publication and/or broadcast in any form (including electronic) requires prior written permission from the Goettingen State- and University Library.

Each copy of any part of this document must contain these Terms and Conditions. With the usage of the library's online system to access or download a digitized document you accept the Terms and Conditions.

Reproductions of material on the web site may not be made for or donated to other repositories, nor may be further reproduced without written permission from the Goettingen State- and University Library.

For reproduction requests and permissions, please contact us. If citing materials, please give proper attribution of the source.

Contact

Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Göttingen
Georg-August-Universität Göttingen
Platz der Göttinger Sieben 1
37073 Göttingen
Germany
Email: gdz@sub.uni-goettingen.de

The venerable marquis de Bellecourt stopped for a moment ere he entered his carriage. Thrice he looked back, and thrice he wiped the starting tear from his eye.—Yes, said he, for once at least, Truth shall be found—in the bottom of a well.

Peace to thy ghost, most noble marquis, —a King of kings shall pity thee; and thousands who are yet unborn shall owe their happiness to thee, and have cause to bless thee, thousands, perhaps, that shall never even know thy name—but Munchausen's self shall celebrate thy glory!

CHAPTER XXII.

Preparations for the Baron's Expedition into Africa—Description of his Chariot; the beauties of its Interior Decorations; the Animals that drew it; and the Mechanism of the Wheels.

EVERY thing being concluded, and having received my instructions for the voyage, I was conducted by the illustrious Hilario Frosticos, the lady Fragantia, and a prodigious crowd of nobility, and placed sitting upon the summit of the whale's bones, at the palace: and having remained in this situation for three days and three nights as a trial ordeal, and a specimen of my perseverance and resolution, the third hour

after midnight they seated me in the chariot of Queen Mab. It was of a prodigious dimension, large enough to contain more stowage than the tun of Heidelberg, and globular like a hazel nut: in fact, it seemed to be really a hazel nut grown to a most extravagant dimension, and that a great worm of proportionable enormity had bored a hole in the shell. Through this same entrance I was ushered. It was as large as a coach door, and I took my seat in the centre, a kind of chair self balanced without touching any thing, like the fancied tomb of Mahomet. The whole interior surface of the nutshell appeared a luminous representation of all the stars of heaven, the fixed stars, the planets, and a comet. The stars were as large as those worn by the first nobility! and the comet, excessively brilliant, seemed as if you had assembled all the eyes of the beautiful girls in the kingdom, and combined them, like a peacock's plumage, into the form of a comet—that is, a globe, and a bearded tail to it, diminishing gradually to a point. This beautiful constellation seemed very sportive and delightful. It was much in the form of a tadpole! and without ceasing, went full of playful giddiness up and down, all over the heaven, on the concave surface of the nutshell. One

time it would be at that part of the heavens under my feet, and in the next minute would be over my head. I was never at rest, but for ever going east, west, north, or south; and paid no more respect to the different worlds than if they were so many lanterns without reflectors. Some of them he would dash against and push out of their places; others he would burn up and consume to ashes: and others again he would split into fritters, and their fragments would instantly take a globular form like spilled quicksilver, and become satellites to whatever other worlds they should happen to meet with in their career. In short, the whole seemed an epitome of the creation past present, and future,—and all that passes among the stars during one thousand years, was here generally performed in as many second.

I surveyed all the beauties of the chariot with wonder and delight.—Certainly, cried I, this is heaven in miniature! In short I took the reins in my hand.—But before I proceeded on my adventures, I shall mention the rest of my attendant furniture. The chariot was drawn by a team of nine bulls harnessed to it, three after three. In the first rank was a most tremendous bull named John Mowmowsky; the rest were called Jacks in general, but

not dignified by any particular denomination. They were all shod for the journey, not indeed like horses, with iron, or as bullocks commonly are, to drag on a cart; but were shod with men's skulls. Each of their feet was, hoof and all, crammed into a man's head cut off for the purpose, and fastened therein with a kind of cement or paste, so that the skull seemed to be a part of the foot and hoof of the animal. With these skull-shoes the creatures could perform astonishing journeys, and slide upon the water, or upon the ocean, with great velocity. The harnesses were fastened with golden buckles, and decked with studs in a superb style; and the creatures were ridden by nine postilions, crickets of a great size, as large as monkeys, who sat squat upon the heads of the bulls, and were continually chirping at a most infernal rate loud in proportion to their bodies.

The wheels of the chariot consisted of upwards of ten thousand springs, formed so as to give the greater impetuosity to the vehicle, and were more complex than a dozen clocks like that of Strasburgh. The external of the chariot was adorned with banners, and a superb festoon of the laurel that formerly shaded me on horseback. And now having given you a very concise description of my machine for travelling

into Africa, which you must allow to be far superior to the apparatus of Monsieur Valiant, I shall proceed to relate the exploits of my voyage.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The Baron proceeds on his Voyage—Conveys a Squadron to Gibraltar—Declines the Acceptance of the Island of Candia—His Chariot damaged by Pompey's Pillar and Cleopatra's Needle—The Baron outdoes Alexander—Breaks his chariot, and splits a great Rock at the Cape of Good Hope.

TAKING the reins in my hand, while the music gave a general salute, I cracked my whip—away they went—and in three hours I found myself just between the Isle of Wight and the main land of England. Here I remained four days, until I received part of my accompaniment, which I was ordered to take under my convoy. 'Twas a squadron of men and war that had been a long time preparing for the Baltic, but which were now destined for the Mediterranean. By the assistance of large hooks and eyes, exactly such as are worn in our hats, but of a greater size, some hundred weight each, the men of war hooked themselves to the wheels of the vehicle; and in fact nothing could be more simple or convenient; because they could be hooked or unhooked in an instant with