

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_0033

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 there 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

knocked off, the ghost of the Cape, that tremendous spright, which cuts such a figure in the Lusiad, was discovered sitting squat, in an excavation formed for him in the centre of the mountain. He seemed just like a young bee in his little cell before he comes forth; or like a bean in a bean-pod; and when the upper part of the mountain was split across and knocked off, the superior half of his person was discovered. He appeared of a bottle-blue colour, and started, dazzled with the unexpected glare of the light: hearing the dreadful rattle of the wheels and the loud chirping of the crickets, he was thunder-struck! and instantly giving a shriek, sunk down ten thousand fathoms into the earth; which the mountain, vomiting out some smoke, silently closed up after him, and left not a trace behind!

CHAPTER XXIV.

The Baron secures his Chariot, &c. at the Cape, and takes his passage for England in an homeward bound Indiaman—Wrecked upon an island of ice near the Coast of Guinea—Escapes from the wreck, and rears a variety of vegetables upon the island—Meets some Vessels belonging to the Negroes bringing white Slaves from Europe, in retaliation, to work upon their plantations in a cold climate near the South Pole—Arrives in England, and lays an Account of his Expedition before the Privy

Council—Great preparations for a new Expedition—The Sphinx, Gog and Magog, and a great company attend him—The ideas of Hilaro Frosticos respecting the interior parts of Africa.

I PERCEIVED with grief and consternation the miscarriage of all my apparatus; yet I was not absolutely dejected; a great mind is never known but in adversity. With permission of the Dutch governor, the chariot was properly laid up in a great storehouse, erected at the water's edge, and the bulls received every refreshment possible after so terrible a voyage. Well, you may be sure, they deserved it; and therefore every attendance was engaged for them, until I should return.

As it was not possible to do any thing more, I took my passage in a homeward-bound Indiaman, to return to London, and lay the matter before the privy council.

We met with nothing particular until we arrived upon the coast of Guinea, where, to our utter astonishment, we perceived a great hill, seemingly of glass, advancing against us in the open sea: the rays of the sun were reflected from it with such splendour, that it was extremely difficult to gaze at the phenomenon. I immediately knew it to be an island of ice, and though in so very warm a latitude, determined to make

all possible sail from such horrible danger. We did so, but all in vain, for about eleven o'clock at night, blowing a very hard gale, and exceedingly dark, we struck upon the island. Nothing could equal the distraction, the shrieks, and despair of the whole crew, until I, knowing there was not a moment to be lost, cheered up their spirits, and bade them not despond, but do as I should request them. In a few minutes the vessel was half full of water; and the enormous castle of ice that seemed to hem us on every side, in some places falling in hideous fragments upon the deck killed the one half of the crew; upon which, getting upon the summit of the mast, I contrived to make it fast to a great promontory of the ice, and calling to the remainder of the crew to follow me, we all escaped from the wreck, and got upon the summit of the island.

The rising sun soon gave us a dreadful prospect of our situation, and the loss, or rather icification of the vessel; for being closed in on every side with castles of ice during the night, she was absolutely frozen over and buried, in such a manner, that we could behold her under our feet, even in the central solidity of the island. Having debated what was best to be done, we immediately cut down through the

ice, and got up some of the cables of the vessel, and the boats, which making fast to the island, we towed it with all our might, determined to bring home island and all, or perish in the attempt. On the summit of the island we placed what oakum and dregs of every kind of matter we could get from the vessel; which in the space of a very few hours, on account of the liquefying of the ice, and the warmth of the sun, were transformed into a very fine manure; and as I had some seeds of exotic vegetables in my pocket, we very shortly had a sufficiency of fruits and roots growing upon the island to supply the whole crew; especially the bread-fruit tree, a few plants of which had been in the vessel; and another tree, which bore plum-puddings so very hot, and with such exquisite proportion of sugar, &c. that we all acknowledged it was not possible to taste any thing of the kind more delicious in England, in short, though the scurvy had made dreadful progress among the crew before our striking upon the ice, the supply of vegetables, and especially the bread fruit, and pudding fruit, put an almost immediate stop to the distemper.

We had not proceeded thus many weeks, advancing with incredible fatigue by continual towing, when we fell in with a fleet

of Negromen, as they called them. These wretches, I must inform you, my dear friends, had found means to make prizes of those vessels from some Europeans upon the coast of Guinea ; and tasting the sweets of our luxury, had formed colonies in several new-discovered islands, near the south pole, where they had a variety of plantations of such matters as would only grow in coldest of climates. As the black inhabitants of Guinea were unsuited to the climate, and excessive cold of the country, they formed the diabolical project of getting Christian slaves to work for them. For this purpose, they sent vessels every year to the coast of Scotland, the northern parts of Ireland and Wales, and were even sometimes seen off the coast of Cornwall. And having purchased, or intrapped, by fraud or violence, a great number of men, women, and children, they proceeded with their cargo of human flesh to the other end of the world, and sold them to their planters ; where they are flogged into obedience, and made to work like horses all the rest of their lives.

My blood ran cold at the idea, while every one on the island also expressed his horror that such an iniquitous traffic should be suffered to exist. But, except by open violence, it was found impossible to destroy the trade

on account of a barbarous prejudice, entertained of late by the negroes, that the white people have no souls! However, we were determined to attack them, and steering down our island upon them, soon overwhelmed them; we saved as many of the white people as possible, but pushed all the blacks into the water again. The poor creatures we saved from slavery were so overjoyed, that they wept aloud through gratitude; and we experienced every delightful sensation, to think what happiness we should shower upon their parents, their brothers, and sisters, and children, by bringing them home safe, redeemed from slavery, to the bosom of their native country.

Having happily arrived in England, I immediately laid a statement of my voyage, &c. before the Privy Council; and entreated an immediate assistance to travel into Africa, and, if possible, to refit my former machine, and take it along with the rest. Every thing was instantly granted to my satisfaction, and I received orders to get myself ready for departure as soon as possible.

As the Emperor of China had sent a most curious animal as a present to Europe which was kept in the Tower; and it being of an enormous stature, and capable of performing the voyage with eclat, she was or-

dered to attend me. She was called Sphinx, and was one of the most tremendous though magnificent figures I ever beheld. She was harnessed with superb trappings to a large flat-bottomed boat, in which was placed an edifice of wood exactly resembling Westminster Hall. Two balloons were placed over it, tackled by a number of ropes, to the boat, to keep a proper equilibrium, and prevent it from overturning, or filling, from the prodigious weight of the fabric.

The interior of the edifice was decorated with seats, in the form of an ampitheatre, and crammed as full as it could hold with ladies and lords, as a council and retinue for your humble servant. Nearly in the centre was a seat elegantly decorated for myself, and on either side of me was placed the famous Gog and Magog in all their pomp.

The Lord Viscount Gossamer being our postilion, we floated gallantly down the river, the noble Sphinx gamboling like the huge Leviathan, and towing after her the boat and balloons.

Thus we advanced, sailing gently, into the open sea; being calm weather, we could scarce feel the motion of the vehicle, and passed our time in grand debate upon the glorious intention of our voyage, and the discoveries that would result.

I am of opinion, said my noble friend, Hilaro Frosticos, that Africa was originally inhabited for the greater part, or, I may say subjugated by lions ; which, next to man, seem to be the most dreaded of all mortal tyrants. The country in general, at least what we have been hitherto able to discover, seems rather inimical to human life ; the intolerable dryness of the place, the burning sands that overwhelmed whole armies, and cities in general ruin, and the hideous life many roving hordes are compelled to lead, incline me to think, that if ever we form any great settlement therein, it will become the grave of our countrymen. Yet it is nearer to us than the East Indies ; and I cannot but imagine, that in many places, every production of China, and of the East and West Indies, would flourish if properly attended to. And as the country is so prodigiously extensive and unknown, what a source of discovery must not it contain ! In fact, we know less about the interior of Africa than we do of the moon ; for in this latter, we measure the very prominences, and observe the varieties and equalities of the surface through our glasses.

Forests and mountains on her spotted orb.

But we see nothing in the interior of

Africa, but with some compilers of maps or geographers are fanciful enough to imagine. What a happy event, therefore, should we not expect from a voyage of discovery and colonization, undertaken in so magnificent a style as the present—what a pride—what an acquisition to philosophy!

CHAPTER XXV.

Count Gossamer thrown by Sphinx into the snow on the top of Teneriffe—Gog and Magog conduct Sphinx for the rest of the voyage—the Baron arrives at the Cape, and unites his former Chariot, &c. to his new retinue—Passes into Africa, proceeding from the Cape northward—Defeats a host of Lions by a curious stratagem—Travels through an immense Desert His whole company, chariot, &c. overwhelmed by a Whirlwind of sand—Extricates them, and arrives in a fertile country.

THE brave Count Gossamer with a pair of hell-fire spurs on, riding upon Sphinx, directed the whole retinue towards the Madeiras. But the Count had no small share of an amiable vanity; and perceiving great multitudes of people, Gascons, &c. assembled upon the French coast, he could not refrain from showing some singular capers, such as they had never seen before: but especially when he observed all the members of the National Assembly extend