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OXFORD WORLD'S CLASSICS

JONATHAN SWIFT

Gulliver's Travels

Edited with an Introduction by
CLAUDE RAWSON
and Notes by
IAN HIGGINS

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
GULLIVER’S TRAVELS

Advertisement
A Letter from Capt. Gulliver to his Cousin Sympsom
The Publisher to the Reader
A VOYAGE TO LILIPUT
A VOYAGE TO BROBDINGNAG
A VOYAGE TO LAPUTA, BALNIBARBI,
LUGGNAGG, GLUBBDUBDRIB, AND JAPAN
A VOYAGE TO THE COUNTRY OF THE
HOYHYHNHNMS
Explanatory Notes
NOTE ON THE TEXT

The text of *Gulliver’s Travels* given here is taken from volume xi of Herbert Davis’s edition of Swift’s *Prose Writings* (1965 reprint). It is based on volume iii of George Faulkner’s Dublin edition of Swift’s *Works* (1735). This text of 1735 seems to have come closer to what Swift originally wrote than the first edition of 1726, and also to have contained revisions representing his last ideas for the book.
ADVERTISEMENT

Mr. Symson's Letter to Captain Gulliver, prefixed to this Volume, will make a long Advertisement unnecessary. Those Interpolations complained of by the Captain, were made by a Person since deceased, on whose Judgment the Publisher rely'd to make any Alterations that might be thought necessary. But, this Person, not rightly comprehending the Scheme of the Author, nor able to imitate his plain simple Style, thought fit among many other Alterations and Insertions, to compliment the Memory of her late Majesty, by saying, That she governed without a Chief Minister. We are assured, that the Copy sent to the Bookseller in London, was a Transcript of the Original, which Original being in the Possession of a very worthy Gentleman in London, and a most intimate Friend of the Authors; after he had bought the Book in Sheets, and compared it with the Originals, bound it up with blank Leaves, and made those Corrections, which the Reader will find in our Edition. For, the same Gentleman did us the Favour to let us transcribe his Corrections.
A LETTER FROM CAPT. GULLIVER, *TO HIS COUSIN SYMPSON*

I hope you will be ready to own publickly, whenever you shall be called to it, that by your great and frequent Urgency you prevailed on me to publish a very loose and incorrect Account of my Travels; with Direction to hire some young Gentlemen of either University to put them in Order, and correct the Style, as my Cousin Dampier* did by my Advice, in his Book called, A Voyage round the World. But I do not remember I gave you Power to consent, that any thing should be omitted, and much less that any thing should be inserted: Therefore, as to the latter, I do here renounce every thing of that Kind; particularly a Paragraph* about her Majesty the late Queen Anne, of most pious and glorious Memory; although I did reverence and esteem her more than any of human Species. But you, or your Interpolator, ought to have considered, that as it was not my Inclination, so was it not decent to praise any Animal of our Composition* before my Master Houyhnhnm:* And besides, the Fact was altogether false; for to my Knowledge, being in England during some Part of her Majesty's Reign, she did govern by a chief Minister; nay, even by two successively; the first whereof was the Lord of Godolphin, and the second the Lord of Oxford,* so that you have made me say the thing that was not.* Likewise, in the Account of the Academy of Projectors, and several Passages of my Discourse to my Master Houyhnhnm, you have either omitted some material Circumstances, or minced or changed them in such a Manner, that I do hardly know mine own Work.* When I formerly hinted to you something of this in a Letter, you were pleased to answer, that you were afraid of giving Offence; that People in Power were very watchful over the Press; and apt not only to interpret, but to punish every thing which looked like an Innuendo (as I think you called it.)* But pray, how could that which spoke so many Years ago, and at about five Thousand Leagues distance, in another Reign, be applied to any of the Yahoos,* who now are said to govern the Herd; especially, at a time when I little thought on or feared the Unhappiness of living under them. Have not I the most Reason to complain, when I see these very Yahoos carried by Houyhnhnms in a Vehicle, as if these* were Brutes, and those* the rational Creatures? And, indeed, to avoid so monstrous and
detestable a Sight, was one principal Motive of my Retirement hither.*

Thus much I thought proper to tell you in Relation to yourself, and to the Trust I reposed in you.

I do in the next Place complain of my own great Want of Judgment, in being prevailed upon by the Intreaties and false Reasonings of you and some others, very much against mine own Opinion, to suffer my Travels to be published. Pray bring to your Mind how often I desired you to consider, when you insisted on the Motive of publick Good, that the Yahoos were a Species of Animals utterly incapable of Amendment by Precepts or Examples: And so it hath proved; for instead of seeing a full Stop put to all Abuses and Corruptions, at least in this little Island, as I had Reason to expect: Behold, after above six Months Warning, I cannot learn that my Book hath produced one single Effect according to mine Intentions: I desired you would let me know by a Letter, when Party and Faction were extinguished; Judges learned and upright; Pleaders honest and modest, with some Tincture of common Sense; and Smithfield* blazing with Pyramids of Law-Books; the young Nobility’s Education entirely changed; the Physicians banished; the Female Yahoos abounding in Virtue, Honour, Truth and good Sense: Courts and Levees of great Ministers thoroughly weeded and swept; Wit, Merit and Learning rewarded; all Disgracers of the Press in Prose and Verse, condemned to eat nothing but their own Cotten* and quench their Thirst with their own Ink. These, and a Thousand other Reformations, I firmly counted upon by your Encouragement; as indeed they were plainly deducible from the Precepts delivered in my Book. And, it must be owned, that seven Months were a sufficient Time to correct every Vice and Folly to which Yahoos are subject; if their Natures had been capable of the least Disposition to Virtue or Wisdom: Yet so far have you been from answering mine Expectation in any of your Letters; that on the contrary, you are loading our Carrier every Week with Libels, and Keys, and Reflections, and Memoirs, and Second Parts,* wherein I see myself accused of reflecting upon great States-Folk; of degrading human Nature, (for so they have still the Confidence to stile it), and of abusing the Female Sex. I find likewise, that the Writers of those Bundles are not agreed among themselves; for some of them will not allow me to be Author of mine own Travels; and others make me Author of Books to which I am wholly a Stranger.

I find likewise, that your Printer hath been so careless as to confound the Times,* and mistake the Dates of my several Voyages and Returns; neither assigning the true Year, or the true Month, or Day of the Month: And I hear the original Manuscript is all destroyed,* since the Publication of my Book. Neither have I any Copy left; however, I have sent you some Corrections, which you may insert, if ever there should be a second Edition: And yet I cannot stand to them,* but shall leave that Matter to my judicious and candid Readers, to adjust it as they please.

I hear some of our Sea-Yahoos find Fault with my Sea-Language, as not proper in many Parts, nor now in Use.* I cannot help it. In my first Voyages, while I was young, I was instructed by the oldest Mariners, and learned to speak as they did. But I have since found that the Sea-Yahoos are apt, like the Land ones, to become new fangled in their Words; which the latter change every Year_in scarcely, as I remember upon each Return to mine own Country, their old Dialect was so altered, that I could hardly understand the new. And I observe, when any Yahoo comes from London out of Curiosity to visit me at mine own House, we neither of us are able to deliver our Conceptions* in a Manner intelligible to the other.

If the Censure of Yahoos could any Way affect me, I should have great Reason to complain, that some of them are so bold as to think my Book of Travels a mere Fiction out of mine own Brain; and have gone so far as to drop Hints, that the Houyhnhnms and Yahoos have no more Existence than the Inhabitants of Utopia.*

Indeed I must confess, that as to the people of Lilliput, Brobdingnag, (for so the Word should have been spelt, and not erroneously Brobdingnag), and Laputa, I have never yet heard of any Yahoo so presumptuous as to dispute their Being, or the Facts I have related concerning them; because the Truth immediately strikes every Reader with Conviction.* And, is there less Probability in my Account of the Houyhnhnms or Yahoos, when it is manifest as to the latter, there are so many Thousands even in this City, who only differ from their Brother Brutes in Houyhnhnmland, because they use a Sort of Jabber, and do not go naked. I wrote for their Amendment, and not their Approbation. The united Praise of the whole Race would be of less Consequence to me, than the neighing of those two degenerate Houyhnhnms I keep in my Stable; because, from these,
I have other Complaints to make upon this vexatious Occasion; but I forbear troubling myself or you any further. I must freely confess, that since my last Return, some Corruptions of my Yahoo Nature have revived in me by conversing with a few of your Species, and particularly those of mine own Family, by an unavoidable Necessity; else I should never have attempted so absurd a Project as that of reforming the Yahoo Race in this Kingdom; but I have now done with all such visionary Schemes for ever.

April 2, 1727

THE PUBLISHER TO THE READER*

The Author of these Travels, Mr Lemuel Gulliver, is my ancient and intimate Friend; there is likewise some Relation between us by the Mother's Side. About Three Years ago Mr Gulliver growing weary of the Concours of curious People coming to him at his House in Redriff,* made a small Purchase of Land, with a convenient House, near Newark, in Nottinghamshire, his native Country; whereas he now lives retired, yet in good Esteem among his Neighbours.

Although Mr Gulliver was born in Nottinghamshire, where his Father dwelt, yet I have heard him say, his Family came from Oxfordshire; to confirm which, I have observed in the Church-Yard at Banbury,* in that County, several Tombs and Monuments of the Gullivers.

Before he quitted Redriff, he left the Custody of the following Papers in my Hands, with the Liberty to dispose of them as I should think fit. I have carefully perused them three Times: The Style is very plain and simple; and the only Fault I find is, that the Author, after the Manner of Travellers, is a little too circumstantial. There is an Air of Truth apparent through the whole; and indeed the Author was so distinguished for his Veracity,* that it became a Sort of Proverb among his Neighbours at Redriff, when any one affirmed a Thing, to say, it was as true as if Mr Gulliver had spoke it.

By the Advice of several worthy Persons, to whom, with the Author's Permission, I communicated these Papers, I now venture to send them into the World, hoping they may be, at least for some time, a better Entertainment to our young Noblemen, than the common Scribbles of Politicks and Party.

This Volume would have been at least twice as large,* if I had not made bold to strike out innumerable Passages relating to the Winds and Tides,* as well as to the Variations and Bearings in the several Voyages; together with the minute Descriptions of the Management of the Ship in Storms, in the Style of Sailors: Likewise the Account of the Longitudes and Latitudes; wherein I have Reason to apprehend that Mr Gulliver may be a little dissatisfied: But I was resolved to fit the Work as much as possible to the general Capacity of Readers. However, if my own Ignorance in Sea-Affairs shall have led
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 Admiring of Projects, and a Person of much Curiosity and easy Belief; which indeed was not without Truth, for I had myself been a Sort of Projector in my younger Days.*

CHAPTER FIVE

The Author permitted to see the grand Academy of Lagado.* The Academy largely* described, The Arts wherein the Professors employ themselves.

This Academy is not an entire single Building, but a Continuation of several Houses* on both Sides of a Street; which growing waste,* was purchased and applied to that Use.

I was received very kindly by the Warden, and went for many Days to the Academy. Every Room hath in it one or more Projectors; and I believe I could not be in fewer than five Hundred Rooms.*

The first Man I saw was of a meagre Aspect, with sooty Hands and Face, his Hair and Beard long, ragged and singed in several Places. His Clothes, Shirt, and Skin were all of the same Colour. He had been Eight Years upon a Project for extracting Sun-Beams out of Cucumbers,* which were to be put into Vials hermetically sealed, and let out to warm the Air in raw inclement Summers. He told me, he did not doubt in Eight Years more, he should be able to supply the Governors Gardens with Sun-shine at a reasonable Rate; but he complained that his stock was low, and intreated me to give him something as an Encouragement to Ingenuity, especially since this had been a very dear Season for Cucumbers. I made him a small Present, for my Lord had furnished me with Money on purpose, because he knew their Practice of begging from all who go to see them.

I went into another Chamber, but was ready to hasten back, being almost overcome with a horrible Stink.* My Conductor pressed me forward, conjuring me in a Whisper to give no Offence, which would be highly resented; and therefore I durst not so much as stop my Nose. The Projector of this Cell was the most ancient Student of the Academy. His Face and Beard were of a pale Yellow; his Hands and Clothes dawbed over with Filth. When I was presented to him, he gave me a close Embrace, (a Compliment I could well have excused.) His Employment from his first coming into the Academy, was an Operation to reduce human Excrement to its original Food, by separating the several Parts, removing the Tincture
which it receives from the Gall, making the Odour exhale, and
scumming off the Saliva. He had a weekly Allowance from the
Society, of a Vessel filled with human Ordure, about the Bigness of
a Bristol Barrel.

I saw another at work to calcine Ice into Gunpowder; who likewise
showed me a Treatise he had written concerning the Malleability of
Fire,* which he intended to publish.

There was a most ingenious Architect who had contrived a new
Method for building Houses, by beginning at the Roof, and work-
ing downwards to the Foundation; which he justified to me by the
like Practice of those two prudent Insects the Bee and the
Spider.*

There was a Man born blind,* who had several Apprentices in his
own Condition: Their Employment was to mix Colours for Painters,
which their Master taught them to distinguish by feeling and
smelling. It was indeed my Misfortune to find them at that Time not
very perfect in their Lessons; and the Professor himself happened to
be generally mistaken: This Artist is much encouraged and esteemed
by the whole Fraternity.

In another Apartment I was highly pleased with a Projector, who
had found a Device of plowing the Ground with Hogs,* to save the
Charges of Plows, Cattle, and Labour. The Method is this: In an
Acre of Ground you bury at six Inches Distance and eight deep, a
Quantity of Acorns, Dates, Chestnuts, and other Maste* or Vegeta-
bles whereof these Animals are fondest; then you drive six Hundred
or more of them into the Field, where in a few Days they will root up
the whole Ground in search of their Food, and make it fit for sowing,
at the same time manuring it with their Dung. It is true, upon
Experiment they found the Charge and Trouble very great, and they
had little or no Crop. However, it is not doubted that this Invention
may be capable of great Improvement.

I went into another Room, where the Walls and Ceiling were all
hung round with Cobwebs, except a narrow Passage for the Artist* to
go in and out. At my Entrance he called aloud to me not to disturb
his Webs. He lamented the fatal Mistake the World had been so long
in of using Silk-Worms, while we had such plenty of domestick
Insects, who infinitely excelled the former, because they understood
how to weave as well as spin. And he proposed farther, that by
employing Spiders, the Charge of dying Silks would be wholly
saved; whereof I was fully convinced when he shewed me a vast
Number of Flies most beautifully coloured, wherewith he fed his
Spiders; assuring us, that the Webs would take a Tincture from
them; and as he had them of all Hues, he hoped to fit every Body's
Fancy, as soon as he could find proper Food for the Flies, of certain
Gums, Oyls, and other glutinous Matter, to give a Strength and
Consistence to the Threads.

There was an Astronomer who had undertaken to place a Sun-Dial* upon
the great Weather-Cock on the Town-House,* by adjusting the
annual and diurnal Motions of the Earth and Sun, so as to answer
and coincide with all accidental Turnings of the Wind.

I was complaining of a small Fit of the Cholick,* upon which my
Conductor led me into a Room, where a great Physician resided,
who was famous for curing that Disease by contrary Operations
from the same Instrument. He had a large Pair of Bellows,* with a
long slender Muzzle of Ivory. This he conveyed eight Inches up the
Anus, and drawing in the Wind, he affirmed he could make the Guts
as lank as a dried Bladder. But when the Disease was more stubborn
and violent, he let in the Muzzle while the Bellows were full of
Wind, which he discharged into the Body of the Patient; then
withdrew the Instrument to replenish it, clapping his Thumb strongly
against the Orifice of the Fundament; and this being repeated three
or four Times, the adventitious Wind would rush out, bringing the
noxious along with it (like Water put into a Pump) and the Patient
recovers. I saw him try both Experiments upon a Dog,* but could not
discern any Effect from the former. After the latter, the Animal was
ready to burst, and made so violent a Discharge, as was very offen-
sive to me and my Companions. The Dog died on the Spot, and we
left the Doctor endeavouring to recover him by the same Operation.

I visited many other Apartments, but shall not trouble my Reader
with all the Curiosities I observed, being studious of Brevity.

I had hitherto seen only one Side of the Academy, the other being
appropriated to the Advancers of speculativ Learning; of whom I
shall say something when I have mentioned one illustrious Person
more, who is called among them the universal Artist.* He told us, he
had been Thirty Years employing his Thoughts for the Improve-
ment ofhuman Life. He had two large Rooms full of wonderful
Curiosities, and Fifty Men at work. Some were condensing Air into a
dry tangible Substance, by extracting the Nitre, and letting the
a aqueous or fluid Particles percolate: Others softening Marbles for Pillows and Pin-cushions; others petrifying the Hoofs of a living Horse to preserve them from foundering. The Artist himself was at that Time busy upon two great designs: The first, to sow Land with Chaff, wherein he affirmed the true seminal Virtue to be contained, as he demonstrated by several Experiments which I was not skilful enough to comprehend. The other was, by a certain Composition of Guns, Minerals, and Vegetables outwardly applied, to prevent the Growth of Wool upon two young Lambs; and he hoped in a reasonable Time to propagate the Breed of naked Sheep all over the Kingdom.

We crossed a Walk to the other Part of the Academy, where, as I have already said, the Projectors in speculative Learning resided.

The first Professor I saw was in a very large Room, with Forty Pupils about him. After Salutation, observing me to look earnestly upon a Frame, which took up the greatest Part of both the Length and Breadth of the Room; he said, perhaps I might wonder to see him employed in a Project for improving speculative Knowledge by practical and mechanical Operations. But the World would soon be sensible of its Usefulness; and he flattered himself, that a more noble exalted Thought never sprang in any other Man's Head. Every one knew how laborious the usual Method is of attaining to Arts and Sciences; whereas by his Contrivance, the most ignorant Person, at a reasonable Charge, and with a little bodily Labour, may write Books in Philosophy, Poetry, Politicks, Law, Mathematicks and Theology, without the least Assistance from Genius or Study. He then led me to the Frame, about the Sides whereof all his Pupils stood in Ranks. It was Twenty Foot square, placed in the Middle of the Room. The Superficies was composed of several Bits of Wood, about the Bigness of a Dye, but some larger than others. They were all linked together by slender Wires. These Bits of Wood were covered on every Square with Paper pasted on them; and on these Papers were written all the Words of their Language in their several Moods, Tenses, and Declensions, but without any Order. The Professor then desired me to observe, for he was going to set his Engine at work. The Pupils at his Command took each of them hold of an Iron Handle, whereof there were Forty Fixed round the Edges of the Frame; and giving them a sudden Turn, the whole Disposition of the Words was entirely changed. He then commanded Six and Thirty of the Lads to read the several Lines softly as they appeared upon the Frame; and
was therefore offered, that since Words are only Names for Things,* it would be more convenient for all Men to carry about them, such Things as were necessary to express the particular Business they are to discourse on. And this Invention would certainly have taken Place, to the great Ease as well as Health of the Subject, if the Women in Conjunction with the Vulgar and Illiterate, had not threatened to raise a Rebellion, unless they might be allowed the Liberty to speak with their Tongues, after the Manner of their Forefathers: Such constant irreconcilable Enemies to Science are the common People.* However, many of the most Learned and Wise adhere to the new Scheme of expressing themselves by Things; which hath only this Inconvenience attending it; that if a Man's Business be very great, and of various Kinds, he must be obliged in Proportion to carry a greater Bundle of Things upon his Back, unless he can afford one or two strong Servants to attend him. I have often beheld two of those Sages almost sinking under the Weight of their Packs, like Pedlars among us; who, when they met in the Streets, would lay down their Loads, open their Sacks, and hold Conversation for an Hour together; then put up their Implements, help each other to resume their Burthens, and take their Leave.

But, for short Conversations a Man may carry Implements in his Pockets and under his Arms, enough to supply him, and in his House he cannot be at a Loss; therefore the Room where Company meet who practice this Art, is full of all Things ready at Hand, requisite to furnish Matter for this Kind of artificial Converse.

Another great Advantage proposed by this Invention, was, that it would serve as an universal Language* to be understood in all civilized Nations, whose Goods and Utensils are generally of the same Kind, or nearly resembling, so that their Uses might easily be comprehended. And thus, Ambassadors would be qualified to treat with foreign Princes or Ministers of State, to whose Tongues they were utter Strangers.

I was at the Mathematical School, where the Master taught his Pupils after a Method scarce imaginable to us in Europe. The Proposition and Demonstration were fairly written on a thin Wafer, with Ink composed of a Cephalick Tincture.* This the Student was to swallow upon a fasting Stomach, and for three Days following eat nothing but Bread and Water. As the Wafer digested, the Tincture mounted to his Brain, bearing the Proposition along with it. But the