

The Surprising Adventures of Baron Munchausen

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PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

Baron Munnikhouson or Munchausen, of Bodenweder, near Hamelyn on the Weser, belongs to the noble family of that name, which gave to the King's German dominions the late prime minister and several other public characters equally bright and illustrious. He is a man of great original humour; and having found that prejudiced minds cannot be reasoned into common sense, and that bold assertors are very apt to bully and speak their audience out of it, he never argues with either of them, but adroitly turns the conversation upon indifferent topics and then tells a story of his travels, campaigns, and sporting adventures, in a manner peculiar to himself, and well calculated to awaken and shame the common sense of those who have lost sight of it by prejudice or habit.

As this method has been often attended with good success, we beg leave to lay some of his stories before the public, and humbly request those who shall find them rather extravagant and bordering upon the marvellous, which will require but a very moderate share of common sense, to exercise the same upon every occurrence of life, and chiefly upon our English politics, in which /old habits/ and /bold assertions/, set off by eloquent speeches and supported by constitutional mobs, associations, volunteers, and foreign influence, have of late, we apprehend, but too successfully turned our brains, and made us the laughing-stock of Europe, and of France and Holland in particular.

TO THE PUBLIC

Having heard, for the first time, that my adventures have been doubted, and looked upon as jokes, I feel bound to come forward and vindicate my character /for veracity/, by paying three shillings at the Mansion House of this great city for the affidavits hereto appended.

This I have been forced into in regard of my own honour, although I have retired for many years from public and private life; and I hope that this, my last edition, will place me in a proper light with my readers.

AT THE CITY OF LONDON, ENGLAND.

/We/, the undersigned, as true believers in the /profit/, do most solemnly affirm, that all the adventures of our friend Baron Munchausen, in whatever country they may /lie/, are positive and

simple facts. /And/, as we have been believed, whose adventures are tenfold more wonderful, /so/ do we hope all true believers will give him their full faith and credence.

GULLIVER. x
SINBAD. x
ALADDIN. x

/Sworn at the Mansion House
9th Nov. last, in the absence
of the Lord Mayor./

JOHN (/the Porter/).

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