

BARON MUNCHAUSEN'S

N A R R A T I V E

O F H I S

MARVELLOUS TRAVELS, &c.

[Price ONE SHILLING.]



BARON MUNCHAUSEN'S
N A R R A T I V E

OF HIS
MARVELLOUS TRAVELS

AND
C A M P A I G N S
IN
R U S S I A.

HUMBLY DEDICATED AND RECOMMENDED

TO
COUNTRY GENTLEMEN;

AND, IF THEY PLEASE,

TO BE REPEATED AS THEIR OWN, AFTER A HUNT,
AT HORSE RACES, IN WATERING-PLACES, AND
OTHER SUCH POLITE ASSEMBLIES; ROUND THE
BOTTLE AND FIRE-SIDE.

O X F O R D :

Printed for the Editor, and sold by the Bookfellers there and
at Cambridge, also in London by the Bookfellers of Picca-
dilly, the Royal Exchange and M. SMITH, at No. 46, in
Fleet-street.

MDCCLXXXVI.

[PRICE ONE-SHILLING.]

E R R A T A.

Page 12, Line 6, for, *my readers*; read *you Gentlemen*:

————— 9, — *them*, read *you*.

———— 13, — 1, — *their*, read *yours*.

———— 3, — *they*, read *you*.

———— 40, — 6, — *miftery*, read *mystery*.



††† *The Baron is supposed to relate these extraordinary Adventures over his Bottle, when surrounded by his Friends.*

P R E F A C E.

BARON MUNNIKHOU-
SON, or MUNCHAU-
SEN, of Bodenweder, near
Hameln 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
right and illustrious. He is
a man

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 topicks, 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

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

occurrence of life, and chiefly upon our English politicks, 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.

BARON

BARON MUNCHAUSEN'S

NARRATIVE, &c.

I Set off from home on my journey to Ruffia, in the midst of winter, from a just notion that frost and snow must of course mend the roads, which every traveller had described, as uncommonly bad

B through

through the northern parts of Germany, Poland, Courland, and Livonia. I went on horseback, which, provided mare and rider are in order, is the most convenient manner of travelling. I was but lightly clothed; of this, I felt the inconvenience, the more I advanced north-east. What must not a poor old man have suffered in that severe weather and climate, whom I saw on a bleak common, in Poland, lying on the road, helpless, shivering, and hardly having wherewithall to cover his nakedness.

I pitied the poor soul. Though I felt exceedingly cold myself, I
threw

threw my mantle over him and immediately I heard a voice from the heavens, blessing me for that piece of charity, saying,

“ I'll be damned my son if I do
“ not reward it in time.”

I went on : night and darkness overtook me. No village was to be seen. The country was covered with snow, and I was unacquainted with the roads.

Tired I alighted at last, and fastened my horse to something of a pointed stump of a tree, which appeared above the snow. For the sake of safety I took my pistols un-

der my arm, and lay down in the snow, not far off, where I slept so soundly, that I did not open my eyes till it was full day light. Great was my astonishment now, to find myself in the midst of a village, lying in the church-yard. Nor was my horse to be seen, but I heard him soon after neigh, somewhere above me. On looking upwards I beheld him tied and hanging to the weather-cock of the steeple. Matters were now very plain to me: The village had been covered with snow that night; a sudden change of weather had taken place; I had sunk down to the church-yard whilst asleep, gently, and in the same

same proportion as the snow had melted away, and what in the dark I had taken to be a stump of a little tree appearing above the snow, to which I had tied my horse, proved to have been the cross or weather-cock of the steeple.

Without long consideration I took one of my pistols, shot off the halter, brought down the horse and proceeded on my journey.

He carried me well—yet advancing into Russia, where travelling on horseback is rather unfashionable in winter, I submitted, as I always do, to the custom of the country,

took a single horse sledge, and drove briskly on towards St. Peterburgh. I do not exactly recollect whether it was in Esthland or Jugemanland, but I remember that in the midst of a dreary forest, somewhere thereabouts, I spied a terrible wolf making after me, with all the speed of ravenous winter hunger. He soon overtook me. There was no possibility of escape. Mechanically I laid myself down flat in the sledge, and let my horse run for our safety. What I apprehended, and hardly hoped or expected happened immediately after. The wolf did not mind me in the least, but took a leap over me, and falling furiously
on

on the horse, begun instantly to tear and devour the hind part of the poor animal, which ran the faster for his pain and terror. Thus unnoticed and safe myself, I lifted my head sily up, and with horror I beheld that the wolf ate and broke his way into the horse's body. It was not long before he had fairly forced himself into it; then I took my advantage, fell upon him with the but end of my whip. This unexpected attack in his rear frightened him much; he leaped forward with all his might; the horse's carcase dropt to the ground; but in his place the wolf was in the harness, and I, on my part whipping him continually

continually, we both arrived, in full career, safe at St. Petersburg, contrary to our respective expectations, and very much to the astonishment of the beholders.

I shall not tire my Readers with the politicks, arts, sciences, and history of this magnificent metropolis of Russia ; nor trouble them with the various intrigues, and pleasing adventures I had in the politer circles of that country, where the lady of the house always receives the visitor with a dram and a salute. I shall confine myself rather to the greater and nobler objects

objects of their attention, to horses and dogs, of which I have always been as fond as they are, to foxes, wolves and bears, of which and other game Russia abounds more than any other part of the world, and to such sport, manly exercises, and feats of gallantry and activity as make and show the gentleman, better than musty Greek or Latin, or all the perfume, finery and capers of French wits or hair dressers.

It was some time before I could obtain my commission in the army, and for several months I was perfectly at liberty to sport away my time and money in the most Gentleman-like

tleman-like manner. You may easily imagine, that I spent much of both, out of town, with such gallant fellows, as knew how to make the most of an open uninclosed forest country. It is a pleasing remembrance, both for the variety of sport it afforded, and for the remarkable success I met with in pursuit of the same.

One morning I saw through the windows of my bed-room, that a large pond, not far off, was, as it were covered with wild ducks. In an instant I took my gun from the corner, run down stairs, and out in such a hurry, that imprudently I struck

struck my face against the door post. Fire, light, and sparks, flew out of my eyes, but it did not prevent my intention. I soon came within shot, when leveling my piece, I observed to my sorrow, that even the flint had sprung from the cock, by the violence of the shock I had just received. There was no time to be lost. I presently remembered the effect it had had upon my eyes, therefore opened the pan, leveled my piece against the wild fowls, and my fist against one of my eyes. A hearty blow drew sparks again, the shot went off, and I had five brace of ducks, four widgeons and a couple of teals.

teals. Prefence of mind is the soul of manly exercises. If soldiers and sailors owe to it many of their lucky escapes, hunters and sportsmen are not less beholden to it for many of their successes. In a noble forest party in Russia, I met a fine black fox, whose valuable skin it would have been a pity to tear by ball or shot. Reynard stood close to a tree. In a twinkling I took out my ball, and placed a good spike nail in its room, fired and hit him so cleverly, that I nailed his brush fast to the tree. I now went up to him, took out my hanger, gave him a cross cut over the face, laid hold of my whip and fairly flogged him out of his

his fine skin, a pleasure and wonder to behold!

Chance and good luck often correct our mistakes: of this I had a singular instance soon after, when in the depth of a forest I saw a wild pig and sow running close behind each other. My ball had missed them, yet the foremost pig only run away, and the sow stood motionless as fixed to the ground. On examining into the matter I found the latter one to be an old sow, blind with age, which had taken hold of her pig's tail, in order to be led along by filial duty. My ball having passed between the two,

C

had

had cut this leading string, of which the old sow was still chewing the remainder ; and as her former guide did not draw her on any longer, she had stopt of course ; I therefore laid hold of the remaining end of the pig's tail, and led the old beast home without any further trouble on my part, and without any reluctance or apprehension on the part of the helpless old animal.

Terrible these wild sows are, but more fierce and dangerous are the boars, one of which I had once the misfortune to meet in a forest unprepared for attack or defence. I retired behind an oak tree, just
when

when the furious animal levelled a side cut at me, with such force, that his tusks pierced through the tree, by which means he could neither repeat the blow or retire.—Ho! ho! thought I, I shall soon have you now——sure enough, —and immediately I laid hold of a stone, wherewith I hammered and bent his tusks in such a manner that he could not retreat at all, and must wait my return from the next village, whither I went for ropes and a cart, to secure him properly, and to carry him off safe and alive, which perfectly succeeded.

Your have heard, I dare say, of the hunters and sportsman's faint and protector, Saint Hubert; and of the noble stag, which appeared to him in the forest, with the holy cross between his antles. I have paid my homages to that faint every year in good fellowship, and seen this stag a thousand times, either painted in churches or embroidered in the stars of his knights; so that upon honour and conscience of a good sportsman, I hardly know whether there may not have been formerly, or whether there are not such crossed stags even at this present day. But let me rather tell what I have seen myself.

Having

Having one day spent all my shot, I found myself unexpectedly in presence of a stately stag, looking at me so unconcernedly, as if he had known of my empty pouches. I charged immediately with powder, and upon it a good handful of cherries, of which I had partly sucked the flesh as far as the hurry would permit. Thus I let fly at him, and hit him just on the middle of the forehead, between his antlers. It stunned him—he staggered—yet he made off. A year or two after I was with a party in the same forest—and behold a noble stag comes out with a fine full-grown cherry-tree between his antlers.

lers. I recollected my former adventure; looked upon him as my property; and brought him to the ground by one shot, which at once gave me the haunce and cherry-fauce; for the tree was covered with the richest fruit, the like I never had tasted before. Who knows but some passionate holy sportsman, or sporting abbot or bishop, may have shot, planted and fixed the cross between the antlers of Saint Hubert's stag in a manner similar to this? They always have been and still are famous for plantations of crosses and antlers; and, in a case of distress or dilemma, which too often happens to gallant sportsmen,

sportsmen, one is apt to grasp at any thing for safety, and to try any expedient, rather than miss the favourable opportunity. I have many times found myself in that trying situation.

What do you say of this for example? Day-light and powder were spent one day in a Polish forest. When I was going home, a terrible bear made up to me in great speed, with open mouth, ready to fall upon me, all my pockets were searched in an instant for powder and ball, but in vain—I found nothing but two spare flints; one I flung with all my might into the monster's open
jaws,

jaws, down his throat. It gave him pain, and made him turn about, so that I could level the second at his back-door, which, indeed, I did with wonderful success, for it flew in, met the first flint in the stomach, struck fire, and blew up the bear with a terrible explosion. Though I came safe off that time, yet I should not wish to try it again, or venture against bears with no other defence.

There is a kind of fatality in it. The fiercest and most dangerous animals, generally come upon me when defenceless, as if they had a notion or foresight of it by way of instinct.

instinct. Thus a frightful wolf rushed upon me so suddenly, and so close that I could do nothing but follow mechanical instinct, and thrust my fist into his open mouth. For safety's sake I pushed on, and on, till my arm was fairly in, up to the shoulder. How should I disengage myself? I was not much pleased with my awkward situation—with a wolf face to face—our ogling was not of the most pleasant kind. If I withdrew my arm, then the animal would fly the more furiously upon me; that, I saw in his flaming eyes. In short, I laid hold of his intrails, turned him inside out like a glove,

a glove, and flung him to the ground, where I left him.

The same expedient would not have answered against a mad dog, which soon after came running against me in a narrow street at St. Petersburg. Run who can, I thought; and the better to run I threw off my fur cloak, and was safe within doors in an instant. I sent my servant for the cloak, and he put it in the wardrobe with my other cloaths. The day after I was amazed and frightened by Jacks bawling: "For God's sake, Sir, your fur cloak is mad!" I hastened up to him, and found almost all
my

my cloaths tossed about and torn to pieces. The fellow was perfectly right in his apprehensions about the fur cloak's madness. I saw him myself just then falling upon a fine full-dress suit, which he shook and tossed in an unmerciful manner.

All these narrow and lucky escapes, Gentlemen, were chances turned to advantage, by presence of mind and vigorous exertions; which taken together, as every body knows, makes the fortunate sportsman, sailor and soldier; but he would be a very blameable and imprudent sportsman, admiral or general, who would always depend upon chance
and

and his stags, without troubling himself about those arts which are their particular pursuits, and without providing the very best implements, which insure success. I was not blameable either way; for I have always been as remarkable for the excellency of my horses, dogs, guns and swords, as for the proper manner of using and managing them, so that upon the whole I may hope to be remembered in the forest, upon the turf, and in the field. I shall not enter here into any detail of my stables, kennel, or armoury, but a favourite dog of mine I cannot help mentioning to you. It was a greyhound. I never had or saw a better

better

better one. He grew old in my service, and was not remarkable for his size, but the rather for his uncommon swiftness. I always coursed with him. Had you seen him, you must have admired him, and would not have wondered at my predilection, and at my coursing him so much. He run so fast, so much, and so long in my service, that he actually run off his legs, so that in the latter part of his life, I was under the necessity of working and using him only as a terrier, in which quality he still served me many years.

Whilst a greyhound—I must observe she was a bitch—She coursed one day a hare, which appeared to

D

me

me uncommonly big. I pitied my poor bitch, she was big with pups, yet she would course as fast as ever. I could follow her on horseback only at a great distance. At once I heard a cry as it were of a pack of hounds—but so weak and faint, that I hardly knew what to make of it. Coming up at last, I was greatly surprised. The hare had littered in running; the same had happened to my bitch in courting—and there were just as many leverets as pups. By instinct the former run, the latter coursed, and thus, I found myself in possession at once of six hares, and as many dogs, at
the

the end of a course, which had only begun with one.

I remember this, my wonderful bitch, with the same pleasure and tenderness, as a superb Lithuanian horse, which no money could have bought. He became mine by an accident, which gave me an opportunity of shewing my horsemanship to a great advantage. I was at Count Przoboffsky's noble country seat in Lithuania, and remained with the ladies at tea, in the drawing room, while the gentlemen were down in the yard, to see a young horse of blood, which was just arrived from the stud. At once we heard a noise

of distress—I hastened down stairs, and found the horse so unruly that nobody durst approach or mount him. The most resolute horsemen stood dismayed and agast; despondency was expressed in every countenance, when in one leap, I was on his back, frightened him by surprize, and worked him quite into gentleness and obedience; with the best display of horsemanship I was master of. Fully to shew this to the ladies, and save them unnecessary trouble, I forced him to leap in at one of the open windows of the tea room, walked round several times, pace, trot, and gallop; and at last made him mount the tea-table, there

to repeat his lessons, in a pretty style of miniature, which was exceedingly pleasing to the ladies, for he performed them amazingly well, and did not break either cup or saucer. It put me so high in the opinion of the ladies, and so well in that of the noble lord, that with his usual politeness he begged I would accept of this young horse, and ride him full career to conquest and honor, in the campaign against the Turks, which was soon to be opened, under the command of Count Munich.

I could not indeed have received a more agreeable present, nor a more

omnious one at the opening of that campaign, in which I made my apprenticeship as a soldier. A horse so gentle, so spirited, and so fierce—at once a lamb and a Bucephalus, put me always in mind of the soldier's and the gentleman's duty, of young Alexander and of the astonishing things he performed in the field.

We took the field, among several other reasons it seems, with an intention to retrieve the character of the Russian arms, which had been blemished a little by Czar Petër's last campaign on the Pruth—and this we fully accomplished by
several

several very fatiguing and glorious campaigns under the command of that great general I mentioned before.

Modesty forbids individuals, to arrogate to themselves great successes or victories, the glory of which is generally engrossed by the commander, nay, which is rather awkward, by kings and queens, who never smelt gun-powder, but at the field days and reviews of their troops, never saw a field of battle or an enemy in battle array.

Nor do I claim any particular share of glory in the great engagements

ments with the enemy. We all did our duty, which, in the patriots, soldiers, and gentleman's language, is a very comprehensive word of great honour, meaning and import, and of which the generality of idle quidnuncs and coffee-house politicians, can hardly form any but a very mean and contemptible idea. However, having had the command of a body of huzars, I have been on several expeditions, with discretionary powers ; and the success I then met with, is, I think, fairly, and only to be put to my account, and to that of the brave fellows whom I led to conquest and to victory. We had very hot work once in the
van

van of the army, when we drove the Turks into Oczackow. My spirited Lithuanian had almost brought me into a scrape. I had an advanced forepost, and saw the enemy coming against me in a cloud of dust, which left me rather uncertain about their actual numbers and real intentions. To wrap myself up in a similar cloud of dust was common prudence, but would not have much advanced my knowledge, or answered the end for which I had been sent out. Therefore I let my flankers on both wings spread to the right and left, and make what dust they could, and I myself led on straight upon the enemy.

my, to have a nearer fight of them; and that I had, gentlemen! for they stood and fought, till for fear of my flankers, they began to move off rather disorderly. This was the moment to fall upon them with spirit—We broke them entirely, made a terrible havock amongst them—and drove them not only back to a walled town in their rear, but even through it, contrary to our most sanguine expectation.

By reason of the swiftness of my Lithuanian I had been foremost in the pursuit; and seeing the enemy fairly flying through the opposite gate, I thought it would be prudent
to

to stop in the market-place to order the trumpet to rendezvous. I stop, gentlemen, but judge of my astonishment, when in this market-place I saw neither trumpet nor any living body of my huzars about me. Are they scouring the other streets? or what is become of them? they could not be far off, and must, at all events, soon join me. In that expectation I walked my panting Lithuanian to a spring in the market-place, and let him drink. He drunk uncommonly—with an eagerness not to be satisfied, but natural enough, for when I looked round for my men, what should I see, gentlemen? the hind part of the poor creature,

creature, croup and legs were missing, as if he had been cut in two, and the water run out as it came in, without either refreshing him or doing him any good. How it could have happened was quite a mystery to me, till I returned with him to the town gate. There I saw that when I rushed in peace-meal with the flying enemy, they had dropt the port-cullis, and unperceived by me, and the spirited animal, it had totally cut off his hind part, which lay still quivering on the outside of the gate. It would have been an irreparable loss, had not our farrier contrived to bring both parts together while hot. He sowed them up with
 sprigs

sprigs and young shoots of laurels that were just at hand—the wound healed and what could not have happened, but to so glorious a horse, the sprigs took root in his body, grew up, and formed a bower over me, so that afterwards I could go upon many other expeditions in the shade of my own and my horse's laurels.

But gentlemen, for all that ; I was not always successful. I had even the misfortune to be overpowered by numbers, to be made prisoner of war ; and what is worse, but always usual among the Turks, to be sold for a slave. In that state of
 E humiliation,

humiliation, my daily task was not very hard, and laborious, but rather singular and irksome. It was to drive the Sultan's bees every morning to their pasture grounds, to attend them all the day long and against night to drive them back to their hives. One evening I missed a bee, and soon observed that two bears had fallen upon her, to tear her to pieces for the honey she carried. I had nothing like an offensive weapon in my hands, but the silver hatchet, which is the badge of the Sultan's gardeners and farmers. I threw it at the robbers with an intention to frighten them away, and set the poor bee at liberty;
but

but by an unlucky turn of my arm, it flew upward—and flew, and flew, till it reached the moon. How should I recover it? How fetch it down again? I recollected that Turkey beans grew very quick, and run up to an astonishing height. I planted one immediately, it grew and actually fastened itself to one of the moon's horns. I had no more to do now, but to climb up by it into the moon, where I safely arrived. I had a troublesome piece of work of it, before I could find my silver hatchet in a place where every thing has the brightness of silver. At last however I found it in a heap of chaf and chopped straw.

I was now for returning, but alas, the heat of the sun had dried up my bean ; it was totally useless for my descent ; so I fell to work, and twisted me a rope of that chopped straw, as long and well as I could make it. This I fastened to one of the moon's horns, and slid down to the end of it. Here I held myself fast with the left hand, and with the hatchet in my right, I cut the long, now useless end of the upper part, which when tied to the lower end brought me a good deal lower. However, this repeated splicing and tying of the rope did not improve its quality nor bring me down to the Sultan's farms. I

was

was still a couple of miles in the clouds when it broke, and with such violence I fell to the ground that I found myself stunned, and in a hole nine fathoms under grass, when I recovered, hardly knowing how to get out again. There was no other way than to go home for a spade and to dig me out by slopes, which I fortunately accomplished, before I had been so much as missed by the steward.

Peace was soon after concluded with the Turks, and it was favourable to Russia in spite of French politics. I recovered my liberty, and left St. Petersburg at the time of

that singular revolution about forty years since, when the emperor in his cradle, his mother, the duke of Brunswick her father, field marshal Munich, and many others were sent to Siberia. The winter was then so uncommonly severe all over Europe, that ever since the sun seems to be frost-bitten—At my return to this place, I felt on the road greater inconveniencies than those I had experienced in my setting out for Russia. One effect of the frost which I then observed, is rather an object for philosophical speculation. I travelled post day and night, and finding myself engaged in a narrow lane, I bid the postilion give a signal

nal with his horn, that other travellers might not meet or stop us in the narrow passage. He blew with all his might, but all his endeavours were in vain. He could not make the horn speak, which, as he pretended to be a good performer, was as unaccountable to him, as to me, and rather unfortunately, for soon after we found ourselves in the presence of another coach coming the other way. It was very troublesome for both parties in this horrid weather, for there was no proceeding either way, without taking the carriages to pieces and putting them together again, past each other. My poor postilion and every body was
almost



