

steer its course—is too great a tax on our credulity, or our capacity of illusion. The Academy of Lagado, the capital city of Balnibarbi, is a conceivable folly, and the schemes projected in that famous centre of wisdom and learning, have perhaps had their parallel, or something analogous to them in actual fact: there have not been wanting at all events, nor were there in Swift's time, those who brought a reproach upon learning, science, and philosophy, by their silly expedients, foolish projects, and idle speculations. It was Swift's object to bring human affairs under altogether new conditions of observation. Lilliput is human society seen through a reversed telescope. Brobdingnag is the same object viewed through an enormous magnifying lens. Dr. Francis Goodwin has favoured us with a fanciful voyage to the Moon, and the 'Man in the Moon' is, doubtless, not the only inhabitant of that satellite of our earth. Sir Humphry Davy transports us to the planet Saturn, and gives us the means of realising the conditions of existence there. Swift accomplished the same object without leaving our own planet, by merely feigning an island like Lilliput, or a continent like Brobdingnag. It was more consistent with Swift's object to restrict his view to the planet in which we dwell, and it was an original idea to find such specimens of our race in such chance quarters of the globe as any ship-wrecked mariner might happen to be cast upon. The little ambitions of life, the distinctions of rank, the effect of riches, of place and honour, the intrigues of courts, the etiquette of royalty, the puny efforts to be great, or to be conspicuous, are all exhibited through the diminishing medium, or are rendered grotesque when associated with a condition of society in which a full-grown man may reach the stature of sixty feet. The evil of allowing learning itself, or the pursuits of science and philosophy, to usurp the whole interest of existence, and fill the entire horizon of man, is happily exposed in the inhabitants of Laputa, and those other territories under the government of its King. We have the spiritualism of our own day at once anticipated and exposed in the practices of the magicians and sorcerers of Glubbdubdrib. The Struldbrugs of Luggnag are a coarser way of showing the consequences that would follow the possession of that immortality which the elixir of philosophers was vainly sought to confer. The doctrines of Paracelsus—the efforts of the Rosicrucians—more ideally portrayed in the modern novel of Zauoni—are held up for warning rather than imitation. Swift gives the more literal evils which Bulwer's imagination has idealized. The bitter satire of the Houyhnhnms is the wild and grotesque offspring of a distorted misanthropy. Swift's own political tergiversation, his fawning for patronage, his actual solicitation of the Episcopal mitre, before yet its wearer had vacated office by death, his clerical incongruities, his heartless treatment of Stella and Vanessa, should have made him more reticent in exposing political abuses and social evils, which satire has never done much to correct, and which the leavening of society with better principles alone can cure.

In Swift's "Tale of a tub," the Roman Catholics and Presbyterians come in for a share in his satire, while the High Church party in the