

1739, *The History of the Life of Peter I, Emperor of Russia*, by John Mottley, pp139-48

One Method which the Czar took to keep Arts and Sciences among his People was certainly very cruel, and that was to confine the Professors of them in his Country, by denying them Passports and by keeping them out of great Part of the Pay or Stipends which were agreed to be given them. Captain Perry who had suffered thus, speaking of this Mr. Fergbarson, says, they had often lamented their Fortunes together, having been both treated in the like Manner. Captain Perry, set forth his Case at large in the following Memorial which he delivered to the Lord Appaxin, when he had been about twelve Years in the Country.

'On April, 1698, an Agreement or Contract was verbally made with me in England for entering into his Czarish Majesty's Service, by his Ambassador the late Lord Theodore Alexyavick Gollowin, for the Salary of three hundred Pound Sterling per Annum, besides a monthly Allowance that was agreed to be paid me sufficient for my Charges and Subsistence and that in Case of my performing any extraordinary Work relating to Rivers, Havens, Moles, Docks, or Sluices, to have moreover an extraordinary Reward given me to my Content. I was thereupon sent directly forward from England to view and make a Report of the Work for making a Communication between the Rivers Wolga and the Don, (that had been deserted by Colonel Breckell) and, according to his Majesty's Orders, I went forward thither, and survey'd it, and returned the same Year back to Moscow, with a Draught of what was necessary to be done, and an Estimate the same: Which being approved of and ordered to be taken in Hand by his Majesty, I required the Settlement of my Wages to be duly paid me every six Months, and that a further Reward of eight thousand Roubles should be given me when the Work should be performed.

Whereupon it was objected by my Lord Kneaz Borice Alexyavitz Galliczin, that a Letter had been writ to him from Holland by the aforesaid Ambassadors, that I should undertake the Paid Work without the Payment of my yearly Wages till it was performed; against which I therefore protested; and on March the 10th, 1699, delivered a Petition into his Czarish Majesty's own Hand, Putting forth the Unreasonableness thereof, and that I could not consent to take the Paid Work in Hand on any such Terms or Conditions, and therefore pray'd, that either I might be employed on some other Business, or have my Discharge given me.

To which his Czarish Majesty, in the Presence of Mr. Stiles, Mr. Lloyd, Mr. Crevett, and several other English Merchants, was pleased to give me repeated Assurances, and commanded me to rely upon his gracious Word, that the aforesaid Objection should have no Force against me; but that my full Wages, as aforesaid, should be yearly paid me, as well as monthly Subsistence Money; and a farther Reward to my Satisfaction more than the Sum above mentioned, upon Performance of the Work: But by Reason that Breckell when he had gathered a Sum of Money had deserted, as was objected by the Lord Galiczin, his Majesty only required me to give Security not to do the like, and promised that I should receive my said Salary every six Months, before hand, if I desired it.

Which gracious Promise I most chearfully embraced; but I being then a Stranger and newly come into the Country, I could not reasonably expect, nor could I ask any Gentleman there to be bound for me in this Case, Yet I did not in the least doubt, but in a Year or two's Time I should have been able to Make such an Advance, and to have given such sufficient Proof of my Abilities and Readiness for performing the Work, that would have quite removed all Scruple of my deserting so considerable and reputable a Service; and that by Consequence no Demur would be made in the Payment of my Salary, although no Security was given against Desertion.

But to my great Surprize, and unthought of Discouragement, when I came upon the Work, I found the Men and Materials which I proposed for the doing of it not provided; my self and Mr. Luke Kenedy, my chief Assistant, treated in a very rough Manner, shew'd the Gallows, and threaten'd to be hang'd by the aforesaid Lord Galliczin because I did not carry on the Work where I found Breckell had begun it, who had deserted it; and although he knew that upon my Representations in Moscow, his Czarist Majesty had expressly order'd me to the contrary and afterwards when his Lordship in Hopes to find an

Occasion of an Objection against me, appointed Persons on Purpose, and ordered a strict Measure and Examination to be taken of both Places; it was found (upon Computation) that there were above twenty thousand cubical Fathoms Russ Measure, less Labour of digging Work in the cutting of the Canal where I began it; besides a very great Advantage in the Necessity of placing the Sluices. But notwithstanding I gave full Satisfaction in this Point, I still found many other great Discouragements and Hinderances to the Work; and my Complaints, and repeated Demands in Writing given into the Precause availing little: Therefore, February 17, 1700, I delivered to his Czarish Majesty himself a Petition, letting forth, that unless his Majesty would be graciously pleased to appoint me a Hearing, and examine himself into the whole Matter, I feared there was no Hopes of my being ever able to perform the said Work.

Whereupon, after I had delivered my said Petition to his Majesty, I was the next Day ordered by the Lord Kneaz Borice Allexyavitz Galliczin to give a new List into the Precause, and told, that all Things should be fully provided for the Work. I was glad to hear so encouraging a Promise, with fresh Hopes that things would now go better on: But the second Summer having passed away also in the same Manner, the needful Men and Materials not given, and several Parts of the Work lying unfinished, and subject thereby to Damage and Ruin by the Floods, particularly for Want of Caulkers, which there was the greatest Necessity for; and finding still no likelihood of Redress upon my Complaints to the Lord Kneaz Borice Allexyavitz Gallitzin, nor in the Precause, I therefore thought myself in Duty bound; and again delivered into his Majesty's own Hand another Writing, dated the 23d Day of January 1701, setting forth particularly, that all the digging Work that was done in two Summers might (by Computation and Measure) have been done in less than fifty Days, at the Rate of twelve Men digging and carrying off but one cubical Fathom a Day, had the Number of labouring Men been given, and things carried on as I required.

Also setting forth, that there still wanted several Sorts of Timber, Caulkers, and other Artificers, and Necessaries, without which it was impossible for any one Sluice ever to be completed; and which, to my very great Trouble and Discouragement, I had seen in two Years not provided. But that yet notwithstanding all the Hindrances that I met with, if the needful Men and Materials were but then fully given, which I had demanded in my first List, the Work that remained to be done might be depended on to be finished in three or four Years Time at farthest.

Upon which I was informed, that now more strict Orders than ever were given that all Necessaries whatsoever that I had demanded, and were wanting, should be duly provided; and I was commanded by his Majesty to prepare new Molds and Directions for the cutting Timber, &c. which I carried and delivered into his Majesty's own Hands at his House at Brebazenski. But notwithstanding at the latter End of this third Summer, I was, in Writing, informed, by Kneaz Peter Evanwich Dashcoff (He was appointed General of the Army then covering the Work, and Governor of the Workmen.), that the several Governors of the Towns, on all the Districts of the Wolga, whither Copies of the said Molds, and Directions for cutting the said Timber were sent, had taken Scascoes or Attestations in Writing, under the Hands of the several Persons employed, that no such Timber was any where possible to be found. Therefore I demanded a Company of Dragoons to go with me, that I might not be surprized by the Tartars, and went my self into the Woods, not two Days Journey from the Work, where in less than fourteen Days Time I found very proper, well grown Timber enough for making the Gates, and finishing two Pair of Sluices; which Timber I shew'd to the Lord Apraxin, who happened to be at that Time sent to supervise the Work; as also I represented to his Lordship, when he was upon the Spot, the great Want of Caulkers, and other Artificers, and Necessaries, which to that Day were never given; nor the small Number of Smiths, Carpenters and Labourers continued in the Winter, which I had demanded in my first List. All which his Lordship took Cognizance of, and promised to represent to the Czar; and that he would be my Patron, and make a just Recommendation of my Endeavours to his Majesty.

On the second of September 1701, I received an Order to leave Directions in Writing with one of my Assistants, whom I should choose to take care of the Work that was performed, and to come myself with my other Assistants and Master Artificers that I had with me, to Moscow. And soon after the Beginning of the Year 1702, I was from thence ordered down to Veronis, where I made an extraordinary Work upon that River, for raising and letting off the Water at any Time when ever required, for lifting his Majesty's Ships upon the Land to be refitted that were then ready to sink as they lay in the River, for want of an effectual Method to repair them; which Work I finished in the Year 1703. And all his Czarish Majesty's Ships have accordingly been there since repaired that have required it. And after I finished this, I was employed in doing another Work for making the said River navigable for Ships of eighty Guns, the whole Way from the City Veronis to the River Don; which I also performed as commanded, where the needful Men and Materials were given me to it; though the Sluices are much larger, and the Floods in the Spring of the Year above ten times greater there than they are on the River Camishinska; and consequently the Works required to be made there with greater Strength against greater Floods, and were far more difficult to perform.

In February 1706, after I had finished the Paid Works, I was ordered to Moscow, and on September following, I was sent down again upon the River Don, to survey a Place for making a Work to preserve his Majesty's Ships from Decay. And to return again to Moscow, with the Report of the same; where I have been ever since (This was in the Year 1710, which a little anticipates and breaks into the Thread of the History, in Point of Time; but I was willing to give this Memorial entire, as he presented it.) petitioning and soliciting for my Arrears to be given me, and to be employed on some other Business, or to have my Discharge, which is not given me, nor any Part of my yearly Wages yet paid me, neither for the Time I have served in the Casans, nor the Admiraltitski Precause; only an Account has been formerly made out in the Admiraltitski Precause for six Years Salary at three hundred Pound per Annum, according to my Agreement; but it was with this Injustice and Hardship; that all the monthly Subsistence Money that I had received for the said six Years should be deducted out of my said yearly Salary, and the same to be reckoned me but at a Russ Copeck for an English Penny, which, according to the Course of Exchange at that Time, was at thirty eight per Cent Loss to me: Not only so, but refusing also to pay me any Part of the said Money, unless I would first set my Hand to agree to a new Contract, on such discouraging Conditions that were altogether unreasonable for me to comply with.

This is the true State of my Case, which I humbly pray may be justly confider'd: First, that it was no Way my Fault that the Work in making a Communication between the Wolga and the Don was not long since performed, as has been shewn. And next, that no Objection at my coming into the Country was made against the immediate Payment of my annual Salary, but the abovesaid Scruple unjustly raised of my deserting, which now, after near twelve Years Proof of the Fidelity of my Service, I hope is sufficiently removed. And since his Czarish Majesty's Favour and Bounty is daily extended to great Numbers of those that come from foreign Countries to serve him, I humbly hope that I shall not be made an unhappy Instance of Misfortune and Ruin thereby: After having relied so many Years on his Czarish Majesty's gracious Promises of my Wages made to me, and having spent the best of my Days and faithfully exerted my utmost Judgment and Endeavours for his Majesty's Service, in all Things wherein I have ever been commanded.

J. PERRY.

After the Services let forth in this Memorial, the farther Hardship Captain Perry underwent, (who was at last forced to come away without his Money, by putting himself under the Protection of Mr. Whitworth the English Ambassador) may be thought to be without Excuse, unless we confider that the Czar thus forcibly detain'd all ingenious Foreigners for the Improvement of his Country, which he had more at Heart than any other Consideration.