

## Big Endians and Little Endians Passage from *Gulliver's Travels*

This passage has been reformatted to break the text into chunk for students to read aloud. In the original, this text is a single paragraph.

Besides, our Histories of six thousand Moons make no mention of any other Regions, than the two great Empires of Lilliput and Blefuscu. Which two mighty Powers have, as I was going to tell you, been engaged in a most obstinate War for six and thirty Moons past.

It began upon the following Occasion. It is allowed on all Hands, that the primitive way of breaking Eggs, before we eat them, was upon the larger End: But his present Majesty's Grand-father, while he was a Boy, going to eat an Egg, and breaking it according to the ancient Practice, happened to cut one of his Fingers. Whereupon the Emperor his Father published an Edict, commanding all his Subjects, upon great Penaltys, to break the smaller End of their Eggs.

The People so highly resented this Law, that our Histories tell us there have been six Rebellions raised on that account; wherein one Emperor lost his Life, and another his Crown. These civil Commotions were constantly fomented by the Monarchs of Blefuscu; and when they were quelled, the Exiles always fled for Refuge to that Empire. It is computed, that eleven thousand Persons have, at several times, suffered Death, rather than submit to break their Eggs at the smaller End.

Many hundred large Volumes have been published upon this Controversy: But the books of the Big-Endians have been long forbidden, and the whole Party rendered incapable by Law of holding Employments. During the Course of these Troubles, the Emperors of Blefuscu did frequently expostulate by their Ambassadors, accusing us of making a Schism in Religion, by offending against a fundamental Doctrine of our great Prophet Lustrog, in the fifty-fourth Chapter of the Brundrecal (which is their Alcoran.) This, however, is thought to be a meer Strain upon the Text: For the Words are these: That all true Believers shall break their Eggs at the convenient End: and which is the convenient End, seems, in my humble Opinion, to be left to every Man's Conscience, or at least in the power of the Chief Magistrate to determine.

Now the Big-Indian Exiles have found so much Credit in the Emperor of Blefuscu's Court, and so much private Assistance and Encouragement from their Party here at home, that a bloody War has been carried on between the two Empires for six and thirty Moons with various Success; during which time we have lost forty Capital Ships, and a much greater number of smaller Vessels, together with thirty thousand of our best Seamen and Soldiers; and the Damage received by the Enemy is reckon'd to be somewhat greater than Ours. However, they have now equipped a numerous Fleet, and are just preparing to make a Descent upon us; and his Imperial Majesty, placing great Confidence in your Valour and Strength, has commanded me to lay this Account of his affairs before you.