Classic Poetry Series

Charles Edward Carryl

- poems -

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Charles Edward Carryl (30 December 1841 – 3 July 1920)

Charles Edward Carryl was an American children's literature author.

Biography

Born in New York, his father was a prosperous businessman. Carryl became a successful businessman and stockbroker, and for 34 years from 1874 he held a seat on the New York Stock Exchange. In 1869 he married Mary Wetmore, and had two children, the eldest of whom was poet and humorist Guy Wetmore Carryl. In 1882 he published his first work: Stock Exchange Primer.

In 1884 he published the children’s fantasy Davy and the Goblin; or, What Followed Reading "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland", serialized in the magazine St Nicholas. His work includes the children’s nonsense poem “The Walloping Window Blind”, published in 1885, in a verse style similar to Lewis Carroll's: A capital ship for an ocean trip/Was the Walloping Window-Blind;/No wind that blew dismayed her crew/Or troubled the captain’s mind. A second novel, The Admiral's Caravan, also serialized in St Nicholas beginning in December 1891, was dedicated to his daughter Constance.

His poems "The Sleepy Giant" and "The Walloping Window Blind" are featured on Natalie Merchant's 2010 concept album Leave Your Sleep.

A Capital Ship

A capital ship for an ocean trip
Was the 'Walloping Window Blind'
No wind that blew dismayed her crew
Or troubled the captain's mind
The man at the wheel was made to feel
Contempt for the wildest blow-ow-ow
Tho' it oft appeared when the gale had cleared
That he'd been in his bunk below
So, blow ye winds, heigh-ho
A-roving I will go
I'll stay no more on England's shore
So let the music play-ay-ay
I'm off for the morning train
To cross the raging main
I'm off to my love with a boxing glove
10,000 miles away
The bos'un's mate was very sedate
Yet fond of amusement too
He played hop-scotch with the starboard watch
While the captain tickled the crew
The gunner he was apparently mad
For he sat on the after ra-ra-rail
And fired salutes with the captain's boots
In the teeth of a booming gale
The captain sat on the commodore's hat
And dined in a royal way
Off pickles & figs & little roast pigs
And gunners bread each day
The cook was Dutch and behaved as such
For the diet he served the crew-ew-ew
Was a couple of tons of hot-cross buns
Served up with sugar and glue
Then we all fell ill as mariners will
On a diet that's rough and crude
And we shivered and shook as we dipped the cook
In a tub of his gluesome food
All nautical pride we cast aside
And we ran the vessel asho-o-ore
On the Gulliby Isles where the poopoo smiles
And the rubbily ubdugs roar
Composed of sand was that favored land
And trimmed with cinnamon straws
And pink and blue was the pleasing hue
Of the ticke-toe teaser's claws
We sat on the edge of a sandy ledge
And shot at the whistling bee-ee-ee
While the rugabug bats wore waterproof hats
As they dipped in the shining sea
On rugabug bark from dawn till dark
We dined till we all had grown
Uncommonly shrunk when a Chinese junk
Came up from the Torrible Zone

She was stubby and square, but we didn't much care
So we cherrily put to sea-ea-ea
And we left all the crew of the junk to chew
On the bark of the rubabug tree.

Charles Edward Carryl

A Nautical Ballad

A capital ship for an ocean trip,
Was the 'Walloping Window-blind';
No gale that blew dismayed her crew
Or troubled the captain's mind.
The man at the wheel was taught to feel
Contempt for the wildest blow,
And it often appeared, when the weather had cleared,
That he'd been in his bunk below.

'The boatswain's mate was very sedate,
Yet fond of amusement, too;
And he played hop-scotch with the starboard watch,
While the captain tickled the crew.
And the gunner we had was apparently mad,
For he sat on the after rail,
And fired salutes with the captain's boots,
In the teeth of the booming gale.

'The captain sat in a commodore's hat
And dined in a royal way
On toasted pigs and pickles and figs
And gummery bread each day.
But the cook was Dutch and behaved as such;
For the diet he gave the crew
Was a number of tons of hot-cross buns
Prepared with sugar and glue.

'All nautical pride we laid aside,
And we cast the vessel ashore
On the Gulliby Isles, where the Poohpooh smiles,
And the Rumbletumbunders roar.
And we sat on the edge of a sandy ledge
And shot at the whistling bee;
And the cinnamon-bats wore water-proof hats
As they danced in the sounding sea.

'On rubgub bark, from dawn to dark,
We fed, till we all had grown
Uncommonly shrunk,—when a Chinese junk
Came by from the torriby zone.
She was stubby and square, but we didn't much care,
And we cheerily put to sea;
And we left the crew of the junk to chew
The bark of the rubgub tree.'

Charles Edward Carryl

Robinson Crusoe's Story

THE night was thick and hazy
When the 'Piccadilly Daisy'
Carried down the crew and captain in the sea;
And I think the water drowned 'em;
For they never, never found 'em,
And I know they didn't come ashore with me.

Oh! 'twas very sad and lonely
When I found myself the only
Population on this cultivated shore;
But I've made a little tavern
In a rocky little cavern,
And I sit and watch for people at the door.

I spent no time in looking
For a girl to do my cooking,
As I'm quite a clever hand at making stews;
But I had that fellow Friday,
Just to keep the tavern tidy,
And to put a Sunday polish on my shoes.

I have a little garden
That I'm cultivating lard in,
As the things I eat are rather tough and dry;
For I live on toasted lizards,
Prickly pears, and parrot gizzards,
And I'm really very fond of beetle-pie.

The clothes I had were furry,
And it made me fret and worry
When I found the moths were eating off the hair;
And I had to scrape and sand 'em,
And I boiled 'em and I tanned 'em,
Till I got the fine morocco suit I wear.

I sometimes seek diversion
In a family excursion
With the few domestic animals you see;
And we take along a carrot
As refreshment for the parrot,
And a little can of jungleberry tea.

Then we gather as we travel,
Bits of moss and dirty gravel,
And we chip off little specimens of stone;
And we carry home as prizes
Funny bugs, of handy sizes,
Just to give the day a scientific tone.

If the roads are wet and muddy
We remain at home and study,—
For the Goat is very clever at a sum,—
And the Dog, instead of fighting,
Studies ornamental writing,
While the Cat is taking lessons on the drum.

We retire at eleven,
And we rise again at seven;
And I wish to call attention, as I close,
To the fact that all the scholars
Are correct about their collars,
And particular in turning out their toes.

Charles Edward Carryl

The Plaint Of The Camel

Canary-Birds feed on sugar and seed,
Parrots have crackers to crunch:
And, as for the poodles, they tell me the noodles
Have chickens and cream for their lunch.
But there's never a question
About MY digestion—
Anything does for me!

'Cats, you're aware, can repose in a chair,
Chickens can roost upon rails;
Puppies are able to sleep in a stable,
And oysters can slumber in pails.
But no one supposes
A poor Camel dozes—
Any place does for me!

'Lambs are enclosed where it's never exposed,
Coops are constructed for hens:
Kittens are treated to houses well heated,
And pigs are protected by pens.
But a Camel comes handy
Wherever it's sandy—
Anywhere does for me!

'People would laugh if you rode a giraffe,
Or mounted the back of an ox;
It's nobody's habit to ride on a rabbit,
Or try to bestraddle a fox.
But as for a Camel, he's
Ridden by families—
Any load does for me!

'A snake is as round as a hole in the ground,
And weasels are wavy and sleek;
And no alligator could ever be straighter
Than lizards that live in a creek,
But a Camel's all lumpy
And bumpy and humpy—
Any shape does for me!'

Charles Edward Carryl

The Song In The Dell

I KNOW a way
Of hearing what the larks and linnets say:
 The larks tell of the sunshine and the sky;
 The linnets from the hedges make reply,
And boast of hidden nests with mocking lay.

  I know a way
Of keeping near the rabbits at their play:
 They tell me of the cool and shady nooks
 Where waterfalls disturb the placid brooks
That I may go and frolic in the spray.

  I know a way
Of catching dewdrops on a night in May,
 And threading them upon a spear of green,
 That through their sides translucent may be seen
The sparkling hue that emeralds display.

  I know a way
Of trapping sunbeams as they nimbly play
 At hide-and-seek with meadow-grass and flowers,
 And holding them in store for dreary hours
When winds are chill and all the sky is gray.

  I know a way
Of stealing fragrance from the new-mown hay
 And storing it in flasks of petals made,
 To scent the air when all the flowers fade
And leave the woodland world to sad decay.

  I know a way
Of coaxing snowflakes in their flight to stay
 So still awhile, that, as they hang in air,
 I weave them into frosty lace, to wear
About my head upon a sultry day.

Charles Edward Carryl

The Walloping Window Blind

A capital ship for an ocean trip
Was the Walloping Window Blind.
No gale that blew dismayed her crew
Or troubled the captain's mind.

The man at the wheel was taught to feel
Contempt for the wildest blow.
And it often appeared when the weather had cleared
That he'd been in his bunk below.

The boatswain's mate was very sedate,
Yet fond of amusement too;
And he played hopscotch with the starboard watch
While the captain tickled the crew.

And the gunner we had was apparently mad
For he stood on the cannon's tail,
And fired salutes in the captain's boots
In the teeth of a booming gale.

The captain sat in a commodore's hat
And dined in a royal way
On toasted pigs and pickles and figs
And gummery bread each day.

But the rest of us ate from an odious plate
For the food that was given the crew
Was a number of tons of hot cross buns
Chopped up with sugar and glue.

We all felt ill as mariners will
On a diet that's cheap and rude,
And the poop deck shook when we dipped the cook
In a tub of his gluesome food.

Then nautical pride we laid aside,
And we cast the vessel ashore
On the Gulliby Isles, where the Poohpooh smiles
And the Anagzanders roar.

Composed of sand was that favored land
And trimmed in cinnamon straws;
And pink and blue was the pleasing hue
Of the Tickletoeteasers claws.

We climbed to the edge of a sandy ledge
And soared with the whistling bee,
And we only stopped at four o'clock
For a pot of cinnamon tea.

From dawn to dark, on rubagub bark
We fed, till we all had grown

Uncommonly thin. Then a boat blew in
On a wind from the torriby zone.

She was stubby and square, but we didn't much care,
And we cheerily put to sea.
We plotted a course for the Land of Blue Horse,
Due west 'cross the Peppermint Sea.

Charles Edward Carryl