Classic Poetry Series

Guy Wetmore Carryl

- 50 poems -

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Guy Wetmore Carryl (1873-1904)

Guy Wetmore Carryl (March 4, 1873 – April 1, 1904) was an American humorist and poet.

Carryl was born in New York City, the first-born of author Charles Edward Carryl and Mary R. Wetmore.

When he was only 20 years old he had his first article published in The New York Times. He graduated from Columbia University in 1895 when he was 22 years of age. During his college years he had written plays for amateur performances. One of his professors was Harry Thurston Peck, who was scandalized by Carryl's famous quote "It takes two bodies to make one seduction," which was a somewhat risqué statement for those times.

After graduation, in 1896 he became a staff writer for Munsey's Magazine under Frank Munsey and he was later promoted to managing editor of the magazine. Later he went to work for Harper's Magazine and was sent to Paris. While in Paris he wrote for Life, Outing, Munsey's, and Collier's, as well as his own independent writings.

Some of Carryl's better-known works were his humorous poems that were parodies of Aesop's Fables, such as "The Sycophantic Fox and the Gullible Raven" and of Mother Goose nursery rhymes, such as "The Embarrassing Episode of Little Miss Muffet," poems which are still popular today. He also wrote a number of humorous parodies of Grimm's Fairy Tales, such as "How Little Red Riding Hood Came To Be Eaten" and "How Fair Cinderella Disposed of Her Shoe." His humorous poems usually ended with a pun on the words used in the moral of the story.

> You are only absurd when you get in the curd,
>
> But you're rude when you get in the whey.
>
> —from "The Embarrassing Episode of Little Miss Muffet"

Guy Carryl died in 1904 at age 31 at Roosevelt Hospital in New York City. His death was thought to be a result of illness contracted from exposure while fighting a fire at his house a month earlier.

Works:

* Fables for the Frivolous (with Apologies to La Fontaine) (1898) (see Jean de La Fontaine)
* Mother Goose for Grown-Ups (1900)

* Grimm Tales Made Gay (1902)
* The Lieutenant Governor (1902)
* Zut and Other Parisians (1903)
* The Transgression of Andrew Vane (1904)
* Far From the Maddening Girls (1904) (posthumous)
* The Garden of Years (1904) (posthumous)

Ad Finem Fideles

Far out, far out they lie. Like stricken women weeping,
Eternal vigil keeping with slow and silent tread—
Soft-shod as are the fairies, the winds patrol the prairies,
The sentinels of God about the pale and patient dead!
Above them, as they slumber in graves that none may number,
Dawns grow to day, days dim to dusk, and dusks in darkness pass;
Unheeded springs are born, unheeded summers brighten,
And winters wait to whiten the wilderness of grass.

Slow stride appointed years across their bivouac places,
With stern, devoted faces they lie, as when they lay,
In long battalions dreaming, till dawn, to eastward gleaming,
Awoke the clarion greeting of the bugles to the day.
The still and stealthy speeding of the pilgrim days unheeding,
At rest upon the roadway that their feet unfaltering trod,
The faithful unto death abide, with trust unshaken,
The morn when they shall waken to the reveille of God.

The faithful unto death! Their sleeping-places over
The torn and trampled clover to braver beauty blows;
Of all their grim campaigning no sight or sound remaining,
The memory of them mutely to greater glory grows.
Through waning ages winding, new inspiration finding,
Their creed of consecration like a silver ribbon runs,
Sole relic of the strife that woke the world to wonder
With riot and the thunder of a sundered people's guns.

What matters now the cause? As little children resting,
No more the battle breasting to the rumble of the drums,
Enlinked by duty's tether, the blue and gray together,
They wait the great hereafter when the last assembly comes.
Where'er the summons found them, whate'er the tie that bound them,
'Tis this alone the record of the sleeping army saith:—
They knew no creed but this, in duty not to falter,
With strength that naught could alter to be faithful unto death.

Guy Wetmore Carryl

At Twilight

Was it so long? It seems so brief a while
Since this still hour between the day and dark
Was lightened by a little fellow's smile;
Since we were wont to mark
The sunset's crimson dim to gold, to gray,
Content to know that, though he loved to roam
Care-free among the comrades of his play,
Twilight would lead him home.

A year ago! The well-remembered hail
Of happy-hearted children on the green
We hear to-night, and see the sunset pale,
The distant hills between:
But when the busy feet shall homeward turn,
When little wearied heads shall seek for rest,
Where shall you find the weight for which you yearn,
Ah, tender mother-breast?

Dear lips, that in the twilight hushed and dim
Lulled him with murmured fantasies of song;
Dear slender arms, that safely sheltered him,
The empty years are long!
The night's caressing wind moves babbling on,
And all the whispered gossip of the firs
Is busy with his name who now is gone—
My little lad and hers!

But if we so, with eager eyes and glad,
Looked forward to his coming in the gloom;
If so our hearts leaped out to meet the lad
Whose smile lit all the room, —
Shall there not be a Presence waiting thus
To still the bitter craving of the quest?
Shall there not be a welcome, too, for us
When we go home to rest?

Yes, God be thanked for this: the ashen-gowned
Sweet presence of the twilight, and, afar,
The strong, enduring hills, in beauty crowned
With one white, steadfast star!
A year ago? What, love, to us are years?
The selfsame twilight, cool and calm and dim,
That led him home to us, despite our fears,
Shall lead us home to him!

Guy Wetmore Carryl

Atlantis

The light of suns unseen, through depths of sea descending,
Within her street awakes the ghost of noon
To bide its little hour and die unheeded, blending
Into her night that knows nor stars nor moon.
The hurrying feet of storms that trample o'er the surges
Arouse no echo in these silent deeps;
No thunder thrills her peace, no sword of lightning scourges
The dim, dead calm where lost Atlantis sleeps.

Long leagues above her courts the stately days advancing
Kindle new dawns and see new sunsets dim;
And, white and weary-eyed, the old stars, backward glancing,
Reluctant pause upon the ocean's rim.
But she, of dawns and dusks forgotten and forgetful,
Broods in her depths with slumber-weighted eyes;
For all her splendid past unanxious, unregretful,
She waits the call that bids her wake and rise.

No mortal voice she hears. The strong young ships, full-freighted,
With hopes of men, with women's sighs and tears,
Above her blue-black walls and portals golden-gated
Sweep on unnoted through the speeding years
Until at last they come, as still in silence resting
She keeps her vigil underneath the waves,
By tempests tossed and torn, and weary of their questing,
Slow sliding downward past her to their graves.

So side by side they lie in ever gaining number,
The sunken ships, by fate or fortune led
To this, their final port, resistless sent to slumber
Until the sea shall render up her dead
Shall render up her dead to all their olden glories,
Shall render up what now so well she keeps,
The buried lives and loves, the strange, unfinished stories
Of these dim depths where lost Atlantis sleeps!

Guy Wetmore Carryl

Gettysburg

Though the winds be strong that lash along the steeds of the charging sea,
With lunge and urge of assaulting surge yet seeking a further goal,
God in his pleasure hath set a measure, the bound of their boast to be,
Where, pile upon pile, and mile on mile, are the cliffs of calm control.
But the Lord of Hosts who guardeth the coasts yet loveth each sieging swell,
And He who is Brother to surge and smother is Brother to cliff as well:
He giveth the word if the shore be stirred, He biddeth the sea subside,
And this is our trust, that His will is just, however He turns the tide!

As night went gray at the touch of day and the slow dawn mounted higher,
On the Federal right the third day's fight was born in a sheet of fire:
Gun upon gun to the front was run, and each in its turn spoke forth
From fevered mouth to the waiting South the word of the watching North:
And the wraith of Death with withering breath o'er the wide arena played,
As across the large swept on the charge of the old Stonewall brigade;
But the first great wave on a sudden gave, retreating across the slain
Gave and broke, as the rifles spoke from the long blue line of Kane!

Then silence sank on the double rank deployed on the sullen hill,
And, across the plain of the early slain, the hosts of the South were still,
Waiting, each, till further speech from the guns should dart and din
Sign to the brave that the final wave of the tide was rolling in.
Adown the line like a draught of wine the presence of Hancock came,
And eyes grew bright in the steadfast light of his own that blazed to flame;
For the Federals knew, where his banner blew-and they saw their leader ride,
That a righteous God on that sea of sod had decreed a turn of tide!

So came one, when a signal gun awoke on the Southern side,
And Hunt's brigade with a cannonade to the challenge of Lee replied,
Like arrows sent from a bow well bent to the heart of a distant targe,
Virginia's hope rode down the slope, with Pickett leading the charge!
Steady and slow, as soldiers go in some serried dress parade,
With flags a-dance in their cool advance came the gallant gray brigade,
And steady and slow, as if no foe on the frowning heights abode,
To the cannon's breath, to the scythe of Death, Pickett, their leader, rode.

God! what a mile he led them! From the slope they sought to scale,
Sullen and hot, the swinging shot was hurling its awful hail:
Where a long ravine ploughed through the green they halted, anew to form,
And then, with a cheer, to the ridge's sheer they swept like a summer storm.
Hand to hand at the guns they manned, the Federals fought and fell,
Where Armistead his regiment led up the cannister-harrowed swell,
He touched a gun-for a breath he won the crest of the Union's pride-
Then over the hill Jehovah's will decreed the turn of the tide!

Taken in flank each gallant rank of Pickett's battalions gave,
Trampled and tossed, since hope was lost, there was left but life to save;
Beaten back on the travelled track, they faltered, and broke, and fled,
And, swinging his scythe, Death claimed his tithe in the pale and patient dead!
For the arm of the Lord had raised the sword that man may not gainsay,
'Twixt the cause of the Free and the cause of Lee the issue no longer lay;
For the word of the Lord had gone abroad that the strife of the right had won,

And Freedom's foe at the call bowed low and answered 'Thy will be done!'

Pickett, ah, Pickett, the staunchest heart in the Southern host that day,
Hail to the brave in the last great wave of the long and fearful fray,
That broke in foam on the trampled loam of that tempest trampled mount
In the glory born of a hope forlorn they passed to their last account!
Meade, ah, Meade, there are hearts that bleed for your host that fought and fell,
When the final charge broke on the marge of a hillside turned to Hell!
Yet this the speech on the crag-girt beach that the sea proclaims for aye,
And this the word that the cliffs unstirred through the ages still reply:

Though the winds be strong that lash along the steeds of the charging sea,
With lunge and urge of assaulting surge yet seeking a further goal,
God in His pleasure hath set a measure, the bound of their boast to be,
Where, pile upon pile, and mile on mile, are the cliffs of calm control.
But the Lord of Hosts who guardeth the coasts yet loveth each sieging swell,
And He who is Brother to surge and smother is Brother to cliff as well:
He giveth the word if the shore be stirred, He biddeth the sea subside,
And this is our trust, that His will is just, however He turn the tide!

Guy Wetmore Carryl

Gloria Mundi

Magician hands through long, laborious nights
Have made these princely palaces to loom
Whiter than are the city's legion lights,
On threads unseen stretched out across the gloom.
Reared in an hour, for one brief hour to reign,
The proud pavilions watchful hold in fee
A world's achievements, where the stately Seine
Slides slowly past her bridges to the sea.

Mute and memorial, as on either bank
She sees the marvel worked before her eyes,
Beholds as in a vision, rank on rank,
Pagoda, dome, and campanile rise,
Like to a mother scowling on a child
Sceptred and crowned to make a queen of May,
The Seine, that sorrowed not for France defiled,
Past France triumphant frowning goes her way.

Yet, dragged reluctant from these ransomed shores,
Upon her tide, that sullenly and slow
Creeps channelward, the unapparent scores
Of history's spectres disregarded go;
And as the Empress City gains the seat
Of that imperial throne to which at last
By devious ways she comes, beneath her feet
The Seine in silence blots away the past.

Blots out the warning of cathedral bells,
The night of snowy scarfs, of swords, of staves,
The muffled bass of tumbril wheels that tells
Of mortal men that dig immortal graves;
Blots out the faces, calmly unafraid,
Of prince and peasant, courtesan and queen,
When men made martyrs and were martyrs made,
When France meant Hell and God meant Guillotine!

Like pilgrims whom a holy city calls,
The peoples bring their miracles to her;
The world of peace lays down within her walls
Its gifts of gold, and frankincense, and myrrh:
The West, wide-eyed, alert, intrepid, young,
With rush of shuttles and the song of steam;
The East, that, lotus-eating, gropes among
The half-remembered fragments of her dream.

From minarets the muezzins call to prayer,
From violins the mad mazurkas rise,
And western rangers watch in wonder, where
The camel boy his listless lash applies:
And nations warring, or that late have warred,
Their feuds forgot, their battles under ban,
Proclaim above the clamor of the sword

The pæan of the mastery of man.

Man! Born to grovel in a squalid cave,
Whose hand it is that every door unbars,
Whose cables cleave three thousand miles of wave,
Whose lenses tear their secrets from the stars!
Man! Naked, dull, unarmed, barbaric, dumb,
What magic path is this that he had trod?
Through what refining furnace hath he come,
This demi-brute become a demi-god?

As some great river merges every song
Of tributary waters in its own,
To blend in turn its music in the strong
Full measure of the ocean's monotone-
So this triumphant anthem, skyward sent
Man's marvellous finale to presage,
Within its thunderous diapason blent,
The keynote holds of each succeeding age!

For her the whip-lash sings above the slaves
Who bend despairing to the galley's oars;
The hoarse hail rings, across the sunlit waves,
Of vikings bound to unexploited shores:
Here is the chant of ransomed Israel's joy,
The moan of Egypt stricken in her home,
The challenge of the Grecian host to Troy,
The shout of Huns before the gates of Rome:

The oaths of sailors on the galleon's decks,
The welcome of Columbus to the land,
The prayers upon the doomed Armada's wrecks,
The rallying cry of Braddock's final stand;
Trafalgar's cannon, and the bugle's calls
Where France's armies thread the Alpine gorge,
The Campbell's pipes heard near to Lucknow's walls,
The patriot's hymn that hallowed Valley Forge!

All, all are here! The feeble and the strong;
The spoiled beside the victors of the spoil
Of twenty centuries swell the sacred song
Of human triumph won by human toil!
Up and yet upward to the heaven's wide arch
The thunders of the great thanksgiving roll
To mark the way of that majestic march
Of mortal man toward his Maker's goal!

And while the echo of her folly dies,
As in the hills the sound of village bells,
Upward from Paris to the April skies
Her hymn of rehabilitation swells;
From dark to dawn, from weakness back to strength,

The pendulum majestically swings,
And o'er the ashes of her past at length
The phoenix of her future spreads its wings!

Guy Wetmore Carryl

Harlequin

The world lay brown and barren at the closing of the year,
Where the rushes shook and shuddered on the borders of the mere,
And the troubled tide ran shoreward, where the estuaries twined
Through the wide and empty marsh toward the sullen hills behind:
And the smoke-engirdled city sulked beneath the leaden skies,
With the rain-tears slowly sliding from hir million window eyes,
And the fog-ghost limped and lingered past the buildings clad in grime,
Till the Frost King gave the signal for the Christmas pantomime!

Then we heard the winds of winter on their brazen trumpets blow
The summons for the ballet of the nimble-footed snow,
And the flakes, all silver-spangled, through the mazy measures wound,
Till each finished out his figure, and took station on the ground.
And the drifts, in shining armor, and with gem-encrusted shields,
Spread their wide-deployed battalions on the drill-ground of the fields,
Till the hillside shone and shimmered with the armies of the rime,
As the Frost King gave the signal for the Christmas pantomime!

He spread a crystal carpet on the rush-encircled pond,
And looped about with ermine all the hemlock-trees beyond:
He strung his gleaming icicles along the scowling eaves,
And decked the barren branches of the oak with snowy leaves.
And, when the world was silver-girt with garland and festoon,
He drew the cloudy curtain that had lain across the moon,
And his wand awoke the wonders of his dazzling distant clime,
When the Frost King gave the signal for the Christmas pantomime!

Then around the benches, crowded with the audience of earth,
Ran the sound of hands applauding, and of little people's mirth,
And the air was full of savors such as only Christmas knows,
When the ruddy cottage windows cast their roses on the snows:
And the Fire-God cracked the drift-wood 'twixt his fingers and his thumbs,
And the merry pop-corn answered like the roll of little drums,
While the snow-clad belfries wakened, and the midnight heard their chime,
As the Frost King gave the signal for the Christmas pantomime!

With blaze of starry splendor, and with brilliance of the moon,
With fir-trees dressed grotesquely, like the slippered Pantaloon,
With snowflakes light as fairies, and with slender ivy vines
In their spangled winter-dresses, like a host of Columbines;
With sheen of silver scenery, and sleigh-bells' merry din,
The whole world laughed and capered 'neath the wand of Harlequin!
With the cap and bells of Folly he invested Father Time,
When the Frost King gave the signal for the Christmas pantomime!

Guy Wetmore Carryl

Hesperia

Across the stretch of southward seas
The zephyr-swept Hesperides
Lie smiling, ever smiling;
And there the laughter-loving Pan
Leads on his joyous woodland clan
Through halcyon haunts, unknown to man,
With song the hours beguiling.
O fair, far land, thy portals
Swing only to immortals!
Thy scented bowers, thy wondrous flowers,
Thy pleaseant ways of ease,
Thy nights dew-dipped and breathless,
Thy birds, unwearied, deathless
These charms untold I'd fain behold,
Fair, far Hesperides!

The dusk with all her wealth of stars,
The dawn, when clouds like crimson bars
Turn all the east to splendor,
Bring roseate dreamings unto me
Of Nereids flashing from the sea,
Who turn their shining eyes to thee,
Thou land of music tender.
But ah, 't is useless dreaming
Thy woodland pools that, gleaming
Like bits of sky, unruffled lie,
Are not for eyes like these;
Yet, could my longing vision
Behold thy fields Elysian,
What peace divine I'd claim as mine,
Fair, far Hesperides!

Guy Wetmore Carryl

How A Beauty Was Waked And Her Suitor Was Suited

Albeit wholly penniless,
Prince Charming wasn't any less
Conceited than a Croesus
or a modern millionaire:
Though often in necessity,
No one would ever guess it. He
Was candidly insolvent,
and he frankly didn't care!
Of the many debts he made
Not a one was ever paid,
But no one ever pressed him
to refund the borrowed gold:
While he recklessly kept spending,
People gladly kept on lending,
For the fact they knew a title
Was requital
Twenty-fold!
(He lived in sixteen sixty-three,
This smooth unblushing article,
Since when, as far as I can see,
Men haven't changed a particle!)

In Charming's principality
There was a wild locality,
Composed of sombre forest,
and of steep and frowning crags,
Of pheasant and of rabbit, too;
And here it was his habit to
Go hunting with his courtiers
in the keen pursuit of stags.
But the charger that he rode
So mercurially strode
That the prince on one occasion
left the others in the lurch,
And the falling darkness found him,
With no vassals left around him,
Near a building like an abbey,
Or a shabby
Ruined church.
His Highness said: 'I'll ring the bell
And stay till morning in it!' (He
Took Hobson's choice, for no hotel
There was in the vicinity.)

His ringing was so vehement
That any one could see he meant
To suffer no refusal, but,
in spite of all the din,
There was no answer audible,
And so, with courage laudable,
His Royal Highness turned the knob,
and stoutly entered in.

Then he strode across the court,
But he suddenly stopped short
When he passed within the castle
by a massive oaken door:
There were courtiers without number,
But they all were plunged in slumber,
The prince's ear delighting
By uniting
In a snore.
The prince remarked: 'This must be Phil-
adelphia, Pennsylvania!'
(And so was born the jest that's still
The comic journal's mania!)

With torpor reprehensible,
Numb, comatose, insensible,
The flunkeys and the chamberlains
all slumbered like the dead,
And snored so loud and mournfully,
That Charming passed them scornfully
And came to where a princess
lay asleep upon a bed.
She was so extremely fair
That His Highness didn't care
For the risk, and so he kissed her
ere a single word he spoke:-
In a jiffy maids and pages,
Ushers, lackeys, squires, and sages,
As fresh as if they'd been at least
A week awake,
Awoke,
And hastened, bustled, dashed and ran
Up stairways and through galleries:
In brief, they one and all began
Again to earn their salaries!

Aroused from her paralysis,
As if in deep analysis
Of him who had awakened her,
the princess met his eye:
Her glance at first was critical,
And sternly analytical.
And then she dropped her lashes
and she gave a little sigh.
As he watched her, wholly dumb,
She observed: 'You doubtless come
For one of two good reasons,
and I'm going to ask you which.
Do you mean my house to harry,
Or do you propose to marry?'
He answered: 'I may rue it,
But I'll do it,

If you're rich!
The princess murmured with a smile:
'I've millions, at the least, to come!'
The prince cried: 'Please excuse me, while
I go and get the priest to come!'

The Moral: When affairs go ill
The sleeping partner foots the bill.

Guy Wetmore Carryl

How A Cat Was Annoyed And A Poet Was Booted

A poet had a cat.
There is nothing odd in that—
(I might make a little pun about the Mews!)
But what is really more
Remarkable, she wore
A pair of pointed patent-leather shoes.
And I doubt me greatly whether
E'er you heard the like of that:
Pointed shoes of patent-leather
On a cat!

His time he used to pass
Writing sonnets, on the grass—
(I might say something good on pen and sward!)
While the cat sat near at hand,
Trying hard to understand
The poems he occasionally roared.
(I myself possess a feline,
But when poetry I roar
He is sure to make a bee-line
For the door.)

The poet, cent by cent,
All his patrimony spent—
(I might tell how he went from verse to werse!)
Till the cat was sure she could,
By advising, do him good.
So addressed him in a manner that was terse:
'We are bound toward the scuppers,
And the time has come to act,
Or we'll both be on our uppers
For a fact!'

On her boot she fixed her eye,
But the boot made no reply—
(I might say: 'Couldn't speak to save its sole!')
And the foolish bard, instead
Of responding, only read
A verse that wasn't bad upon the whole.
And it pleased the cat so greatly,
Though she knew not what it meant,
That I'll quote approximately
How it went:—

'If I should live to be
The last leaf upon the tree'—
(I might put in: 'I think I'd just as leaf!')
'Let them smile, as I do now,
At the old forsaken bough'—
Well, he'd plagiarized it bodily, in brief!
But that cat of simple breeding
Couldn't read the lines between,

So she took it to a leading
Magazine.

She was jarred and very sore
When they showed her to the door.
(I might hit off the door that was a jar!)
To the spot she swift returned
Where the poet sighed and yearned,
And she told him that he'd gone a little far.
'Your performance with this rhyme has
Made me absolutely sick,'
She remarked. 'I think the time has
Come to kick!'

I could fill up half the page
With descriptions of her rage—
(I might say that she went a bit too fur!)
When he smiled and murmured: 'Shoo!'
'There is one thing I can do!'
She answered with a wrathful kind of purr.
'You may shoo me, and it suit you,
But I feel my conscience bid
Me, as tit for tat, to boot you!'
(Which she did.)

The Moral of the plot
(Though I say it, as should not!)
Is: An editor is difficult to suit.
But again there're other times
When the man who fashions rhymes
Is a rascal, and a bully one to boot!

Guy Wetmore Carryl

How A Girl Was Too Reckless Of Grammar

Matilda Maud Mackenzie frankly hadn't any chin,
Her hands were rough, her feet she turned invariably in;
Her general form was German,
By which I mean that you
Her waist could not determine
Within a feet or two.
And not only did she stammer,
But she used the kind of grammar
That is called, for sake of euphony, askew.

From what I say about her, don't imagine I desire
A prejudice against this worthy creature to inspire.
She was willing, she was active,
She was sober, she was kind,
But she never looked attractive
And she hadn't any mind.
I knew her more than slightly
And treated her politely
When I met her, but of course I wasn't blind!

Matilda Maud Mackenzie had a habit that was droll,
She spent her morning seated on a rock or on a knoll,
And threw with such composure
A smallish rubber ball
At an inoffensive osier
By a little waterfall;
But Matilda's way of throwing
Was like other people's mowing,
And she never hit the willow-tree at all!

One day as Miss Mackenzie with uncommon ardour tried
To hit the mark, the missile flew exceptionally wide.
And, before her eyes astounded,
On a fallen maple's trunk
Ricochetted and rebounded
In the rivulet, and sunk!
Matilda, greatly frightened,
In her grammar unenlightened,
Remarked, 'Well now I ast yer, who'd 'er thunk?'

But what a marvel followed! From the pool at once there rose
A frog, the sphere of rubber balanced deftly on his nose.
He beheld her fright and frenzy
And, her panic to dispel,
On his knee by Miss Mackenzie
He obsequiously fell.
With quite as much decorum
As a speaker in a forum
He started in his history to tell.

'Fair maid,' he said, 'I beg you do not hesitate or wince,
If you'll promise that you'll wed me, I'll at once become a prince;

For a fairy, old and vicious,
An enchantment round me spun!'
Then he looked up, unsuspicious,
And he saw what he had won,
And in terms of sad reproach, he
Made some comments,
sotto voce,

(Which the publishers have bidden me to shun!)

Matilda Maud Mackenzie said, as if she meant to scold:
'I never! Why you forward thing! Now, ain't you awful bold!'
Just a glance he paused to give her,
And his head was seen to clutch,
Then he darted to the river,
And he dived to beat the Dutch!
While the wrathful maiden panted
'I don't think he was enchanted!'
(And he really didn't look it overmuch!)

The Moral

In one's language one conservative should be;
Speech is silver and it never should be free!

Guy Wetmore Carryl

How Beauty Contrived To Get Square With The Beast

Miss Guinevere Platt
Was so beautiful that
She couldn't remember the day
When one of her swains
Hadn't taken the pains
To send her a mammoth bouquet.
And the postman had found,
On the whole of his round,
That no one received such a lot
Of bulky epistles
As, waiting his whistles,
The beautiful Guinevere got!

A significant sign
That her charm was divine
Was seen in society, when
The chaperons sniffed
With their eyebrows alift:
'Whatever's got into the men?'
There was always a man
Who was holding her fan,
And twenty that danced in details,
And a couple of mourners,
Who brooded in corners,
And gnawed their mustaches and nails.

John Jeremy Platt
Wouldn't stay in the flat,
For his beautiful daughter he missed:
When he'd taken his tub,
He would hie to his club,
And dally with poker or whist.
At the end of a year
It was perfectly clear
That he'd never computed the cost,
For he hadn't a penny
To settle the many
Ten thousands of dollars he'd lost!

F. Ferdinand Fife
Was a student of life:
He was coarse, and excessively fat,
With a beard like a goat's,
But he held all the notes
Of ruined John Jeremy Platt!
With an adamant smile
That was brimming with guile,
He said: 'I am took with the face
Of your beautiful daughter,
And wed me she ought ter,
To save you from utter disgrace!'

Miss Guinevere Platt
Didn't hesitate at
Her duty's imperative call.
When they looked at the bride
All the chaperons cried:
'She isn't so bad, after all!'
Of the desolate men
There were something like ten
Who took up political lives,
And the flower of the flock
Went and fell off a dock,
And the rest married hideous wives!

But the beautiful wife
Of F. Ferdinand Fife
Was the wildest that ever was known:
She'd grumble and glare,
Till the man didn't dare
To say that his soul was his own.
She sneered at his ills,
And quadrupled his bills,
And spent nearly twice what he earned;
Her husband deserted,
And frivoled, and flirted,
Till Ferdinand's reason was turned.

He repented too late,
And his terrible fate
Upon him so heavily sat,
That he swore at the day
When he sat down to play
At cards with John Jeremy Platt.
He was dead in a year,
And the fair Guinevere
In society sparkled again,
While the chaperons fluttered
Their fans, as they muttered:
'She's getting exceedingly plain!'
The Moral: Predicaments often are found
That beautiful duty is apt to get round:
But greedy extortioners better beware
For dutiful beauty is apt to get square!

Guy Wetmore Carryl

How Fair Cinderella Disposed Of Her Shoe

The vainest girls in forty states
Were Gwendolyn and Gladys Gates;
They warbled slightly off the air,
Romantic German songs,
And each of them upon her hair
Employed the curling tongs,
And each with ardor most intense
Her buxom figure laced,
Until her wilful want of sense
Procured a woeful waist:
For bound to marry titled mates
Were Gwendolyn and Gladys Gates.

Yet, truth to tell, the swains were few
Of Gwendolyn (and Gladys, too).
So morning, afternoon, and night
Upon their sister they
Were wont to vent their selfish spite,
And in the rudest way:
For though her name was Leonore,
That's neither there nor here,
They called her Cinderella, for
The kitchen was her sphere,
Save when the hair she had to do
Of Gwendolyn (and Gladys, too).

Each night to dances and to fetes
Went Gwendolyn and Gladys Gates,
And Cinderella watched them go
In silks and satins clad:
A prince invited them, and so
They put on all they had!
But one fine night, as all alone
She watched the flames leap higher,
A small and stooping fairy crone
Stept nimbly from the fire.
Said she: 'The pride upon me grates
Of Gwendolyn and Gladys Gates.'

'I'll now,' she added, with a frown,
'Call Gwendolyn and Gladys down!'
And, ere your fingers you could snap,
There stood before the door
No paltry hired horse and trap,
Oh, no! - a coach and four!
And Cinderella, fitted out
Regardless of expense,
Made both her sisters look about
Like thirty-seven cents!
The prince, with one look at her gown,
Turned Gwendolyn and Gladys down!

Wall-flowers, when thus compared with her,
Both Gwendolyn and Gladys were.
The prince but gave them glances hard,
No gracious word he said;
He scratched their names from off his card,
And wrote hers down instead:
And where he would bestow his hand
He showed them in a trice
By handing her the kisses, and
To each of them an ice!
In sudden need of fire and fur
Both Gwendolyn and Gladys were.

At ten o'clock, in discontent,
Both Gwendolyn and Gladys went.
Their sister stayed till after two,
And, with a joy sincere,
The prince obtained her crystal shoe
By way of souvenir.
'Upon the bridal path,' he cried,
'We'll reign together! Since
I love you, you must be my bride!'
(He was no slouch, that prince!)
And into sudden languishment
Both Gwendolyn and Gladys went.

The Moral: All the girls on earth
Exaggerate their proper worth.
They think the very shoes they wear
Are worth the average millionaire;
Whereas few pairs in any town
Can be half-sold for half a crown!

Guy Wetmore Carryl

How Jack Found That Beans May Go Back On A Chap

Without the slightest basis
For hypochondriasis
A widow had forebodings
which a cloud around her flung,
And with expression cynical
For half the day a clinical
Thermometer she held
beneath her tongue.

Whene'er she read the papers
She suffered from the vapors,
At every tale of malady
or accident she'd groan;
In every new and smart disease,
From housemaid's knee to heart disease,
She recognized the symptoms
as her own!

She had a yearning chronic
To try each novel tonic,
Elixir, panacea, lotion,
opiate, and balm;
And from a homeopathist
Would change to an hydropathist,
And back again,
with stupefying calm!

She was nervous, cataleptic,
And anemic, and dyspeptic:
Though not convinced of apoplexy,
yet she had her fears.
She dwelt with force fanatical
Upon a twinge rheumatical,
And said she had a
buzzing in her ears!

Now all of this bemoaning
And this grumbling and this groaning
The mind of Jack, her son and heir,
unconscionably bored.
His heart completely hardening,
He gave his time to gardening,
For raising beans was
something he adored.

Each hour in accents morbid
This limp maternal bore bid
Her callous son affectionate
and lachrymose good-bys.
She never granted Jack a day
Without some long 'Alackaday!'
Accompanied by

rolling of the eyes.

But Jack, no panic showing,
Just watched his beanstalk growing,
And twined with tender fingers
the tendrils up the pole.
At all her words funereal
He smiled a smile ethereal,
Or sighed an absent-minded
'Bless my soul!'

That hollow-hearted creature
Would never change a feature:
No tear bedimmed his eye, however
touching was her talk.
She never fussed or flurried him,
The only thing that worried him
Was when no bean-pods
grew upon the stalk!

But then he wabbled loosely
His head, and wept profusely,
And, taking out his handkerchief
to mop away his tears,

Exclaimed: 'It hasn't got any!'
He found this blow to botany
Was sadder than were all
his mother's fears.

The Moral is that gardeners pine
Whene'er no pods adorn the vine.
Of all sad words experience gleans
The saddest are: 'It might have beans.'
(I did not make this up myself:
'Twas in a book upon my shelf.
It's witty, but I don't deny
It's rather Whittier than I!)

Guy Wetmore Carryl

How Jack Made The Giants Uncommonly Sore

Of all the ill-fated
Boys ever created
Young Jack was the wretchedest lad:
An emphatic, erratic,
Dogmatic fanatic
Was foisted upon him as dad!
From the time he could walk,
And before he could talk,
His wearisome training began,
On a highly barbarian,
Disciplinarian, Nearly Tartarean
Plan!

He taught him some Raleigh,
And some of Macaulay,
Till all of 'Horatius' he knew,
And the drastic, sarcastic,
Fantastic, scholastic
Philippics of 'Junius,' too.
He made him learn lots
Of the poems of Watts,
And frequently said he ignored,
On principle, any son's
Title to benisons
Till he'd learned Tennyson's
'Maud.'

'For these are the giants
Of thought and of science,'
He said in his positive way:
'So weigh them, obey them,
Display them, and lay them
To heart in your infancy's day!'
Jack made no reply,
But he said on the sly
An eloquent word, that had come
From a quite indefensible,
Most reprehensible,
But indispensable
Chum.

By the time he was twenty
Jack had such a plenty
Of books and paternal advice,
Though seedy and needy,
Indeed he was greedy
For vengeance, whatever the price!
In the editor's seat
Of a critical sheet
He found the revenge that he sought;
And, with sterling appliance of
Mind, wrote defiance of

All of the giants of
Thought.

He'd thunder and grumble
At high and at humble
Until he became, in a while,
Mordacious, pugnacious,
Rapacious. Good gracious!
They called him the Yankee Carlyle!
But he never took rest
On his quarrelsome quest
Of the giants, both mighty and small.
He slated, distorted them,
Hanged them and quartered them,
Till he had slaughtered them
All.

And this is The Moral that lies in the verse:
If you have a go farther, you're apt to fare
Worse.
(When you turn it around it is different rather: -
You're not apt to go worse if you have a fair
father!)

Guy Wetmore Carryl

How Little Red Riding Hood Came To Be Eaten

Most worthy of praise
Were the virtuous ways
Of Little Red Riding Hood's Ma,
And no one was ever
More cautious and clever
Than Little Red Riding Hood's Pa.
They never mislead,
For they meant what they said,
And would frequently say what they meant:
And the way she should go
They were careful to show,
And the way that they showed her, she went.
For obedience she was effusively thanked,
And for anything else she was carefully spanked.

It thus isn't strange
That Red Riding Hood's range
Of virtues so steadily grew,
That soon she was prizes
Of different sizes,
And golden encomiums, too!
As a general rule
She was head of her school,
And at six was so notably smart
That they gave her a cheque
For reciting, 'The Wreck
of the Hesperus,' wholly by heart!
And you all will applaud her the more, I am sure,
When I add that this money she gave to the poor.

At eleven this lass
Had a Sunday-school class,
At twelve wrote a volume of verse,
At thirteen was yearning
For glory, and learning
To be a professional nurse.
To a glorious height
The young paragon might
Have grown, if not nipped in the bud,
Bu the following year
Struck her smiling career
With a dull and a sickening thud!
(I have shed a great tear at the thought of her pain,
And must copy my manuscript over again!)

Not dreaming of harm
One day on her arm
A basket she hung. It was filled
With jellies, and ices,
And gruel, and spices,
And chicken-legs, carefully grilled,
And a savory stew,

And a novel or two
She'd persuaded a neighbor to loan,
And a hot-water can,
And a Japanese fan,
And a bottle of eau-de-cologne,
And the rest of the things that your family fill
Your room with, whenever you chance to be ill!

She expected to find
Her decrepit but kind
Old Grandmother waiting her call,
But the visage that met her
Completely upset her:
It wasn't familiar at all!
With a whitening cheek
She started to speak,
But her peril she instantly saw: -
Her Grandma had fled,
And she'd tackled instead
Four merciless Paws and a Maw!
When the neighbors came running, the wolf to subdue,
He was licking his chops, (and Red Riding Hood's, too!)

At this terrible tale
Some readers will pale,
And others with horror grow dumb,
And yet it was better,
I fear, he should get her:
Just think what she might have become!
For an infant so keen
Might in future have been
A woman of awful renown,
Who carried on fights
For her feminine rights
As the Mare of an Arkansas town.
She might have continued the crime of her 'teens,
And come to write verse for the Big Magazines!

The Moral: There's nothing much glummer
Than children whose talents appall:
One much prefers those who are dumber,
But as for the paragons small,
If a swallow cannot make a summer
It can bring on a summary fall!

Guy Wetmore Carryl

How Rudeness And Kindness Were Justly Rewarded

Once on a time, long years ago
(Just when I quite forget),
Two maidens lived beside the Po,
One blonde and one brunette.
The blonde one's character was mild,
From morning until night she smiled,
Whereas the one whose hair was brown
Did little else than pine and frown.
(I think one ought to draw the line
At girls who always frown and pine!)

The blonde one learned to play the harp,
Like all accomplished dames,
And trained her voice to take C sharp
As well as Emma Eames;
Made baskets out of scented grass,
And paper-weights of hammered brass,
And lots of other odds and ends
For gentleman and lady friends.
(I think it takes a deal of sense
To manufacture gifts for gents!)

The dark one wore an air of gloom,
Proclaimed the world a bore,
And took her breakfast in her room
Three mornings out of four.
With crankiness she seemed imbued,
And everything she said was rude:
She sniffed, and sneered, and, what is more,
When very much provoked, she swore!
(I think that I could never care
For any girl who'd learned to swear!)

One day the blonde was striding past
A forest, all alone,
When all at once her eyes she cast
Upon a wrinkled crone,
Who tottered near with shaking knees,
And said: 'A penny, if you please!'
And you will learn with some surprise
This was a fairy in disguise!
(I think it must be hard to know
A fairy who's incognito!)

The maiden filled her trembling palms
With coinage of the realm.
The fairy said: 'Take back your alms!
My heart they overwhelm.
Henceforth at every word shall slip
A pearl or ruby from your lip!'
And, when the girl got home that night, -
She found the fairy's words were right!

(I think there are not many girls
Whose words are worth their weight in pearls!)

It happened that the cross brunette,
Ten minutes later, came
Along the self-same road, and met
That bent and wrinkled dame,
Who asked her humbly for a sou.
The girl replied: 'Get out with you!'
The fairy cried: 'Each word you drop,
A toad from out your mouth shall hop!'
(I think that nothing incommodes
One's speech like uninvited toads!)

And so it was, the cheerful blonde
Lived on in joy and bliss,
And grew pecunious, beyond
The dreams of avarice
And to a nice young man was wed,
And I have often heard it said
No other man who ever walked
Most loved his wife when most she talked!
(I think this very fact, forsooth,
Goes far to prove I tell the truth!)

The cross brunette the fairy's joke
By hook or crook survived,
Put still at every word she spoke
An ugly toad arrived,
Until at last she had to come
To feigning she was wholly dumb,
Whereat the suitors swarmed around,
And soon a wealthy mate she found.
(I think nobody ever knew
The happier husband of the two!)

The Moral of the tale is: Bah!
Nous avons change tout cela.
No clear idea I hope to strike
Of what our nicest girl is like,
But she whose best young man I am
Is not an oyster, nor a clam!

Guy Wetmore Carryl

How Rumplestilz Held Out In Vain For A Bonus

In Germany there lived an earl
Who had a charming niece:
And never gave the timid girl
A single moment's peace!
Whatever low and menial task
His fancy flitted through,
He did not hesitate to ask
That shrinking child to do.
(I see with truly honest shame you
Are blushing, and I do not blame you.
A tale like this the feelings softens,
And brings the tears, as does 'Two Orphans.')

She had to wash the windows, and
She had to scrub the floors,
She had to lend a willing hand
To fifty other chores:
She gave the dog his exercise,
She read the earl the news,
She ironed all his evening ties,
And polished all his shoes,
She cleaned the tins that filled the dairy,
She cut the claws of the canary,
And then, at night, with manner winsome,
When coal was wanted, carried in some!

But though these tasks were quite enough,
He thought them all too few,
And so her uncle, rude and rough,
Invented something new.
He took her to a little room,
Her willingness to tax,
And pointed out a broken loom
And half a ton of flax,
Observing: 'Spin six pairs of trousers!'
His haughty manner seemed to rouse hers.
She met his scornful glances proudly -
And for an answer whistled loudly!

But when the earl went down the stair
She yielded to her fears.
Gave way at last to grim despair,
And melted into tears:
When suddenly, from out the wall,
As if he felt at home,
There pounced a singularly small
And much distorted gnome.
He smiled a smile extremely vapid,
And set to work in fashion rapid;
No time for resting he deducted,
And soon the trousers were constructed.

The girl observed: 'How very nice
To help me out this way!'
The gnome replied: 'A certain price
Of course you'll have to pay.
I'll call to-morrow afternoon,
My due reward to claim,
And then you'll sing another tune
Unless you guess my name!'
He indicated with a gesture
The pile of newly fashioned vesture:
His eyes on hers a moment centered,
And then he went, as he had entered.

As by this tale you have been grieved
And heartily distressed,
Kind sir, you will be much relieved
To know his name she guessed:
But if I do not tell the same,
Pray count it not a crime -
I've tried my best, and for that name
I can't find any rhyme!
Yet spare me from remarks injurious:
I will not leave you foiled and furious.
If something must proclaim the answer,
And I cannot, the title can, sir!

The Moral is: All said and done,
There's nothing new beneath the sun,
And many times before, a title
Was incapacity's requital!

Guy Wetmore Carryl

How The Helpmate Of Blue-Beard Made Free With A Door

A maiden from the Bosphorus,
With eyes as bright as phosphorus,
Once wed the wealthy bailiff
Of the caliph
Of Kelat.
Though diligent and zealous, he
Became a slave to jealousy.
(Considering her beauty,
'T was his duty
To be that!)

When business would necessitate
A journey, he would hesitate,
But, fearing to disgust her,
He would trust her
With his keys,
Remarking to her prayerfully:
'I beg you'll use them carefully.
Don't look what I deposit
In that closet,
If you please.'

It may be mentioned, casually,
That blue as lapis lazuli
He dyed his hair, his lashes,
His mustaches,
And his beard.
And, just because he did it, he
Aroused his wife 's timidity:
Her terror she dissembled,
But she trembled
When he neared.

This feeling insalubrious
Soon made her most lugubrious,
And bitterly she missed her
Elder sister
Marie Anne:
She asked if she might write her to
Come down and spend a night or two,
Her husband answered rightly
And politely:
'Yes, you can!'

Blue-Beard, the Monday following,
His jealous feeling swallowing,
Packed all his clothes together
In a leather-
Bound valise,
And, feigning reprehensibly,
He started out, ostensibly
By traveling to learn a

Bit of Smyrna
And of Greece.

His wife made but a cursory
Inspection of the nursery;
The kitchen and the airy
Little dairy
Were a bore,
As well as big or scanty rooms,
And billiard, bath, and ante-rooms,
But not that interdicted
And restricted
Little door!

For, all her curiosity
Awakened by the closet he
So carefully had hidden,
And forbidden
Her to see,
This damsel disobedient
Did something inexpedient,
And in the keyhole tiny
Turned the shiny
Little key:

Then started hack impulsively,
And shrieked aloud convulsively -
Three heads of girls he'd wedded
And beheaded
Met her eye!
And turning round, much terrified,
Her darkest fears were verified,
For Blue stood behind her,
Come to find her
On the sly!

Perceiving she was fated to
Be soon decapitated, too,
She telegraphed her brothers
And some others
What she feared.
And Sister Anne looked out for them,
In readiness to shout for them
Whenever in the distance
With assistance
They appeared.

But only from her battlement
She saw some dust that cattle meant.
The ordinary story
Is n't gory,
But a jest.

But here 's the truth unqualified.
The husband wasn't mollified
Her head is in his bloody
Little study
With the rest!

The Moral: Wives, we must allow,
Who to their husbands will not bow,
A stern and dreadful lesson learn
When, as you've read, they 're cut in turn.

Guy Wetmore Carryl

June

Lightsome, laughter-loving June,
Days that swoon
In beds of flowers;
Twilights dipped in rose perfume,
Nights of gloom
Washed clear by showers.
Suns that softly sink to rest
In the west,
All purple barred;
And a faint night-wind that sighs
Under skies
Still, silver-starred.
Languorous breaths of meadow land
Overspanned
By clouds like snow;
And a shouting from the brooks,
Where in nooks
Late violets grow.
June, ah, June, to lie and dream
By the stream,
And in the maze
Of thy spells never to heed
How they speed,
Thy witching days;
Watching where the shadows pass,
And the grass
All rustling bends,
While the bees fly east and west,
On a quest
That never ends.
Thus to shun the whirl of life,
Freed from strife
And freed from care-
Hear, as when a lad I heard
How the bird
Sings, high in air.
June, to hear beneath the skies
Lullabies
That night airs blow;
Ah, to find upon thy breast
That pure rest
I used to know!

Guy Wetmore Carryl

Narcissus

Since the great, glad greeting of dawn from the eastern hills
Triumphant ran with a shout to the woods below,
With the song in his ears of the clearly clamoring rills
He has lain, like a man of snow,
Slender and straight as the joyous immortals are made,
Born of woman, but born with the grace of a god.
Unheeded airs, caressingly cool, have played
With his hair, and the nymphs have trod
Close to his side, and have kissed him, waiting to flee-
But Narcissus, what recketh he?

In the pool where the lithe fish flashes and slips
From his covert to snap at the careless, fluttering flies,
Narcissus has seen the curve of his drooping lips,
And, like mirrored miniature heavens, his shining eyes.
And a flush like a dew-dipped rose has dyed the pool,
He has laid his cheek to the ripples cool;
Brow touches brow, lips lips, and his eyes of violet roam
Down through the crystal depths. In the darkening dome
The stars shine forth from their faint, far ways,
Trimming their lamps; and, from the purple haze,
The moon, cloud-veiled, her circle just complete,
Wan as a travail-spent mother, plants her feet
On the carpeted hills, and fearful of change
Seeks her reflected face in the sea's southward range
But Narcissus, what recketh he?

Narcissus, Narcissus, where is thy boyish bloom,
Thy long, slim form that lay beside the pool,
And the lips cold smiling to their smiling image cool?
Narcissus!

Only a strange, indefinite perfume,
And a dim white spot in the night when soft airs blow;
A flower, bending, bending low
Its petals and its yellow heart to where the waters flow;
Its scent the winds have borne
Through the pearl-gray east to the arms of morn,
To faint and to die in the wakening light
But of time's swift flight, the dawn, and the noon, and the night,
The sun's gold glory, the moon's white mystery,
Narcissus, what recketh he?

Guy Wetmore Carryl

Paris

I knew when first I looked into her eyes,
And she in mine, that what has been must be,
And so let others say she told them lies:
She told no lie to me!
She spoke me fair, of lees as well as wine,
Then, with that subtlest charm of all her charms,
Half-dropped her languid lids, and at the sign
I ran into her arms!

Now it is she who flings my window wide
At dawn, and lets the perfumed morning in,
And she who walks so softly at my side,
Through noonday's dust and din.
But, most of all, 't is she, where blue night falls,
Whose firm, imperious fingers tap the pane,
And she whose velvet voice it is that calls,
Nor calls her own in vain!

It is as if the siren understood
How that she is so strong at this still hour,
That I could not repulse her if I would,
Nor would, had I the power:
As if she knew that, should I try to check
The strength of that enrapt, responsive thrill,
Let her but slide her arm about my neck,
And I obey her will!

So, when she speaks, I answer; when she woos,
Her voice, like wine, the slow pulse goads and spurs:
I go to meet her through the dropping dews,
And lean my lips to hers.
All the long hours run laughing into one
The strange, sweet moment when the evening falls
And, like a mother summoning her son,
Resistless Paris calls!

Guy Wetmore Carryl

Phoebus Apollo

Hear us, Phoebus Apollo, who are shorn of contempt and pride,
Humbled and crushed in a world gone wrong since the smoke on thine altars died;
Hear us, Lord of the morning, King of the Eastern Flame,
Dawn on our doubts and darkness and the night of our later shame!
There are strange gods come among us, of passion, and scorn, and greed;
They are throned in our stately cities, our sons at their altars bleed:
The smoke of their thousand battles hath blinded thy children's eyes,
And our hearts are sick for a ruler that answers us not with lies,
Sick for thy light unblemished, great fruit of Latona's pain
Hear us, Phoebus Apollo, and come to thine own again!

Our eyes, of earth grown weary, through the backward ages peer,
Till, wooed by our eager craving, the scent of thy birth grows clear
And across the calm Ægean, gray-green in the early morn,
We hear the cry of the circling swans that salute the god new-born
The challenge of mighty Python, the song of thy shafts that go
Straight to the heart of the monster, sped from the loosened bow.
Again through the vale of Tempe a magical music rings
The songs of the marching muses, the ripple of fingered strings!
But this is our dreaming only; we wait for a stronger strain:
Hear us, Phoebus Apollo, and come to thine own again!

There are some among us, Diviner, who know not thy way or will,
Some of thy rebel children who bow to the strange gods still;
Some that dream of oppression, and many that dream of gold,
Whose ears are deaf to the music that gladdened the world of old.
But we, the few and the faithful, we are weary of wars unjust,
There is left no god of our thousand gods that we love, believe, or trust;
In our courts is justice scoffed at, in our senates gold has sway,
And the deeds of our priests and preachers make mock of the words they say!
Cardinals, kings, and captains, there is left none fit to reign:
Hear us, Phoebus Apollo, and come to thine own again!

We have hearkened to creeds unnumbered, we have given them trial and test,
And the creed of thy Delphic temple is still of them all the best;
Thy clean-limbed, lithe disciples, slender, and strong, and young,
The swing of their long processions, the lilt of the songs they sung,
Thine own majestic presence, pursuing the nymph of dawn,
In thy chariot eastward blazing, by the swans and griffons drawn;
The spell of thy liquid music, once heard in the speeding year:
These are the things, Great Archer, that we yearn to see and hear,
For beside thy creed untarnished all others are stale and vain!
Hear us, Phoebus Apollo, and come to thine own again!

Monarch of light and laughter, honor, and trust, and truth,
God of all inspiration, King of eternal youth,
Whose words are fitted to music as jewels are set in gold,
There is need of thy splendid worship in a world grown grim and old!
We have drunk the wine of the ages, we are come to the dregs and lees,
And the shrines are all unworthy where we bend reluctant knees;
The brand of the beast is on us, we grovel, and grope, and err,
Wake, Great god of the Morning, the moment has come to stir!

The stars of our night of evil on a wan horizon wane:
Hear us, Phoebus Apollo, and come to thine own again!

Guy Wetmore Carryl

Pompeii

The giant slept, and pigmies at his feet,
Like children moulding monuments of snow,
Piled stone on stone, mapped market-place and street,
And saw their temples column-girdled grow:
And, slowly as the gradual glaciers grope
Their way resistless, so Pompeii crept,
Year by long year, across the shelving slope
Toward the sea:-and still the giant slept.

Belted with gardens, where the shivered glass
Of falling fountains broke the pools' repose,
As they had been asleep upon the grass,
A myriad villas stretched themselves and rose:
And down her streets, grown long and longer still,
Grooving the new-laid stones, the chariots swept,
And of a sudden burst upon the hill
Vast amphitheatres. Still the giant slept.

With liquid comment of the wooing doves,
With wanton flowers, sun-conjured from the loam,
Grew the white city of illicit loves,
Hostess of all the infamy of Rome!
A marble harlot, scornful, pale, and proud,
Her Circean court on ruin's brink she kept,
Lulled by the adoration of the crowd
To lethal stupor. Still the giant slept.

Incense-encircled, pacing day by day
Through temple-courts reëchoant with song,
Sin-stunned and impercipient, on her way
She dragged her languid loveliness along.
With lips whereon a dear damnation hung,
With dark, dream-clouded eyes that never wept,
Flawlessly fair, the faulty fair among,
She kissed and cursed:-and still the giant slept.

Here, for a mute reminder of her shame,
Her ruins gape out baldly from their tomb;
A city naked, shorn of all but name,
Blinking and blind from all her years of gloom:
A beldam who was beauty, crying alms
With leprous lips that mouths their prayers in vain;
Her deaf destroyer to her outstretched palms
Respondeth not. The giant sleeps again!

Guy Wetmore Carryl

Red Ridinghood

MOST worthy of praise were the virtuous ways
Of Little Red Riding Hood's ma,
And no one was ever more cautious and clever
Than Little Red Riding Hood's pa.
They never misled, for they meant what they said,
And frequently said what they meant:
They were careful to show her the way she should go,
And the way that they showed her, she went.
For obedience she was effusively thanked,
And for anything else she was carefully spanked.

It thus isn't strange that Red Riding Hood's range
Of virtues so steadily grew,
That soon she won prizes of different sizes,
And golden enconiums, too.
As a general rule she was head of her school,
And at six was so notably smart
That they gave her a check for reciting The Wreck
Of the Hesperus wholly by heart.
And you all will applaud her the more, I am sure,
When I add that the money she gave to the poor.

At eleven this lass had a Sunday-school class,
At twelve wrote a volume of verse,
At fourteen was yearning for glory, and learning
To be a professional nurse.
To a glorious height the young paragon might
Have climbed, if not nipped in the bud,
But the following year struck her smiling career
With a dull and a sickening thud!
(I have shad a great tear at the thought of her pain,
And must copy my manuscript over again!)

Not dreaming of harm, one day on her arm
A basket she hung. It was filled
With drinks made of spices, and jellies, and ices,
And chicken-wings, carefully grilled,
And a savory stew, and a novel or two
She persuaded a neighbor to loan,
And a Japanese fan, and a hot water-can.
And a bottle of eau de cologne,
And the rest of the things that your family fill
Your room with whenever you chance to be ill.

She expected to find her decrepit but kind
Old grandmother waiting her call,
Exceedingly ill. Oh, that face on the pillow
Did not look familiar at all!
With a whitening cheek she started to speak,
But her peril she instantly saw:
Her grandma had fled and she'd tackled instead
Four merciless paws and a maw!

When the neighbors came running the wolf to subdue
He was licking his chops—and Red Riding Hood's, too!

At this horrible tale some readers will pale,
And others with horror grow dumb,
And yet it was better, I fear, he should get her:—
Just think what she might have become!
For an infant so keen might in future have been
A woman of awful renown,
Who carried on fights for her feminine rights,
As the Mare of an Arkansas town,
Or she might have continued the sin of her 'teens
And come to write verse for the Big Magazines!

The Moral

The Moral: There's nothing much glummer
Than children whose talents appal.
One much prefers those that are dumber,
And as for the paragons small—
If a swallow cannot make a summer.
It can bring on a summary fall!

Guy Wetmore Carryl

Shells

Where the long waves put cool, caressing hands
Upon the fevered temples of the shore,
And with their eager lips are telling o'er
Their strange, unspoken secrets to the sands,
Along the shining rim of cape and cove
The shells in fair, unplanned mosaic lie;
And there the children, keen of heart and eye,
Gather their harvest in of treasure-trove.
Yet this is one of ocean's mysteries
That, while the humbler shells the breakers brave,
The fairest are most fragile, and the wave,
Ruthless, has crushed and mutilated these!

Ah, sea of life, we, too, like children, stand
Through youth and age, expectant, at thy rim,
To pray for golden argosies from Him
Who holds thee in the hollow of His hand.
Capricious tides delude us, veer and turn,
And flash our dreams to view, again to hide;
A moment on the breaker's crest they ride,
The while we watch, their destiny to learn.
Poor, fragile dreams! Our humbler hopes befall;
But crushed and shattered, tempest-tossed and torn,
These come to shore, the dreams of youthful morn
Most fair, most frail, and best beloved of all!

Guy Wetmore Carryl

The Abbreviated Fox And His Sceptical Comrades

A certain fox had a Grecian nose
And a beautiful tail. His friends
Were wont to say in a jesting way
A divinity shaped his ends.
The fact is sad, but his foxship had
A fault we should all eschew:
He was so deceived that he quite believed
What he heard from friends was true.

One day he found in a sheltered spot
A trap with stalwart springs
That was cunningly planned to supply the demand
For some of those tippet things.
The fox drew nigh, and resolved to try
The way that the trap was set:
(When the trap was through with this interview
There was one less tippet to get!)

The fox returned to his doting friends
And said, with an awkward smile,
'My tail I know was
comme il faut
,
And served me well for a while.'
When his comrades laughed at his shortage aft
He added, with scornful bow,
'Pray check your mirth, for I hear from Worth
They're wearing them shorter now.'

But one of his friends, a bookish chap,
Replied, with a thoughtful frown,
'You know to-day the publishers say
That the short tale won't go down;
And, upon my soul, I think on the whole,
That the publishers' words are true.
I should hate, good sir, to part my fur
In the middle, as done by you.'

And another added these truthful words
In the midst of the eager hush,
'We can part our hair 'most anywhere
So long as we keep the brush.'

THE MORAL is this: It is never amiss
To treasure the things you've penned:
Preserve your tales, for, when all else fails,
They'll be useful things-in the end.

Guy Wetmore Carryl

The Ambitious Fox And The Unapproachable Grapes

A farmer built around his crop
A wall, and crowned his labors
By placing glass upon the top
To lacerate his neighbors,
Provided they at any time
Should feel disposed the wall to climb.

He also drove some iron pegs
Securely in the coping,
To tear the bare, defenceless legs
Of brats who, upward groping,
Might steal, despite the risk of fall,
The grapes that grew upon the wall.

One day a fox, on thieving bent,
A crafty and an old one,
Most shrewdly tracked the pungent scent
That eloquently told one
That grapes were ripe and grapes were good
And likewise in the neighborhood.

He threw some stones of divers shapes
The luscious fruit to jar off:
It made him ill to see the grapes
So near and yet so far off.
His throws were strong, his aim was fine,
But 'Never touched me!' said the vine.

The farmer shouted, 'Drat the boys!'
And, mounting on a ladder,
He sought the cause of all the noise;
No farmer could be madder,
Which was not hard to understand
Because the glass had cut his hand.

His passion he could not restrain,
But shouted out, 'You're thievish!'
The fox replied, with fine disdain,
'Come, country, don't be peevish.'
(Now 'country' is an epithet
One can't forgive, nor yet forget.)

The farmer rudely answered back
With compliments unvarnished,
And downward hurled the
bric-a-brac

With which the wall was garnished,
In view of which demeanor strange,
The fox retreated out of range.

'I will not try the grapes to-day,'

He said. 'My appetite is
Fastidious, and, anyway,
I fear appendicitis.'
(The fox was one of the
elite

Who call it
site
instead of
seet
.)

The moral is that if your host
Throws glass around his entry
You know it isn't done by most
Who claim to be the gentry,
While if he hits you in the head
You may be sure he's underbred.

Guy Wetmore Carryl

The Arrogant Frog And The Superior Bull

Once, on a time and in a place
Conducive to malaria,
There lived a member of the race
Of
Rana Temporaria
;
Or, more concisely still, a frog
Inhabited a certain bog.

A bull of Brobdingnagian size,
Too proud for condescension,
One morning chanced to cast his eyes
Upon the frog I mention;
And, being to the manner born,
Surveyed him with a lofty scorn.

Perceiving this, the bactrian's frame
With anger was inflated,
Till, growing larger, he became
Egregiously elated;
For inspiration's sudden spell
Had pointed out a way to swell.

'Ha! ha!' he proudly cried, 'a fig
For this, your mammoth torso!
Just watch me while I grow as big
As you-or even more so!'
To which magniloquential gush
His bullship simply answered 'Tush!'

Alas! the frog's success was slight,
Which really was a wonder,
In view of how with main and might
He strove to grow rotunder!
And, standing patiently the while,
The bull displayed a quiet smile.

But ah, the frog tried once too oft
And, doing so, he busted;
Whereat the bull discreetly coughed
And moved away, disgusted,
As well he might, considering
The wretched taste that marked the thing.

THE MORAL: Everybody knows
How ill a wind it is that blows.

Guy Wetmore Carryl

The Confidant Peasant And The Maladroit Bear

A peasant had a docile bear,
A bear of manners pleasant,
And all the love she had to spare
She lavished on the peasant:
She proved her deep affection plainly
(The method was a bit ungainly).

The peasant had to dig and delve,
And, as his class are apt to,
When all the whistles blew at twelve
He ate his lunch, and napped, too,
The bear a careful outlook keeping
The while her master lay a-sleeping.

As thus the peasant slept one day,
The weather being torrid,
A gnat beheld him where he lay
And lit upon his forehead,
And thence, like all such winged creatures,
Proceeded over all his features.

The watchful bear, perceiving that
The gnat lit on her master,
Resolved to light upon the gnat
And plunge him in disaster;
She saw no sense in being lenient
When stones lay round her, most convenient.

And so a weighty rock she aimed
With much enthusiasm:
'Oh, lor'!' the startled gnat exclaimed,
And promptly had a spasm:
A natural proceeding this was,
Considering how close the miss was.

Now by his dumb companion's pluck,
Which caused the gnat to squall so,
The sleeping man was greatly struck
(And by the bowlder, also).
In fact, his friends who idolized him
Remarked they hardly recognized him.

Of course the bear was greatly grieved,
But, being just a dumb thing,
She only thought: 'I was deceived,
But still, I did hit
something!
'
Which showed this masculine achievement
Had somewhat soothed her deep bereavement.

THE MORAL: If you prize your bones
Beware of females throwing stones.

Guy Wetmore Carryl

The Fog

The fog slunk down from Labrador, stealthy, sure, and slow,
Southwardly shifting, far inshore, so never a man might know
How the sea it trod with feet soft-shod, watching the distance dim,
Where the fishing-fleet to the eastward beat, white dots on the ocean's rim.
Feeling the sands with its furtive hands, fingering cape and cove,
Where the sweet salt smells of the nearer swells up the sloping hillside rove;
Where the whimpering sea-gulls swoop and soar, and the great king-herons go,
The fog slunk down from Labrador, stealthy, sure, and slow!

Then a stillness fell on crag and cliff, on beach and breaker fell,
As the sea-breeze brought on its final whiff the note of a distant bell,
One faint, far sound, and the fog unwound its mantle across the lea,
Joined hand in hand with a wind from land, and the twain went out to sea.
And the wind that rose spoke soft, of those who watch on the cliffs at dawn,
And the fog's white lips, of sinking ships where the tortured tempests spawn,
As, each to each, they told once more such things as fishers know,
When the fog slinks down from Labrador, stealthy, sure, and slow!

Oh, the wan, white hours go limping by, when that pall comes in between
The great, blue bell of the cloudless sky and the ocean's romping green!
Nor sane young day, nor swirl of spray, as the cat's-paws lunge and lift;
On sad, slow waves, like the mounds of graves, the fishermen's dories drift.
For the fishing-craft that leapt and laughed are swallowed in ghostly gray:
Only God's eyes may see where lies the lap of the sheltered bay,
So their dories grope, for lost their lore, witlessly to and fro,
When the fog slinks down from Labrador, stealthy, sure, and slow!

Oh, men of the fleet, 't is ye who learn, of the white fog's biting breath,
That life may hang on the way ye turn, or the way ye turn be death!
Though they on the lea look out to sea for the woe or the weal of you,
The ominous East, like a hungry beast, is waiting your tidings, too.
A night and a day, mayhap, ye stray; a day and a night, perchance,
The dory is led toward Marblehead, or pointed away for France;
The shore may save, or the sea may score, in the unknown final throw,
When the fog slinks down from Labrador, stealthy, sure, and slow!

Ah, God of the Sea, what joy there lies in that first faint hint of sun!
When the pallid curtains sulking rise, and the reaches wider run,
When a wind from the west on the sullen breast of the waters shoulders near,
And the blessed blue of the sky looks through, as the fog-wreaths curl and clear.
Ah, God, what joy when the gallant buoy, swung high on a sudden swell,
Puts fear to flight like a dream of night with its calm, courageous bell,
And the dory trips the sea's wide floor with the verve 't was wont to know,
And the fog slinks back to Labrador, stealthy, sure, and slow!

Guy Wetmore Carryl

The Hospitable Caledonian And The Thankless Viper

A Caledonian piper
Who was walking on the wold
Nearly stepped upon a viper
Rendered torpid by the cold;
By the sight of her admonished,
He forbore to plant his boot,
But he showed he was astonished
By the way he muttered 'Hoot!'

Now this simple-minded piper
Such a kindly nature had
That he lifted up the viper
And bestowed her in his plaid.
'Though the Scot is stern, at least he
No unhappy creature spurns,
'Sleekit, cowrin, tim'rous beastie,''
Quoth the piper (quoting Burns).

This was unaffected kindness,
But there was, to state the fact,
Just a slight
soupcon
of blindness
In his charitable act.
If you'd watched the piper, shortly
You'd have seen him leap aloft,
As this snake, of ways uncourtly,
Bit him suddenly and oft.

There was really no excuse for
This, the viper's cruel work,
And the piper found a use for
Words he'd never learned at kirk;
But the biting was so thorough
That although the doctors tried,
Not the best in Edinburgh
Could assist him, and he died.

And THE MORAL is: The piper
Of the matter made a botch;
One can hardly blame the viper
If she took a nip of Scotch,
For she only did what he did,
And
his
nippie wasn't small,
Otherwise, you see, he needed
Not have seen the snake at all.

Guy Wetmore Carryl

The Iconoclastic Rustic And The Apropos Acorn

Reposing 'neath some spreading trees,
A populistic bumpkin
Amused himself by offering these
Reflections on a pumpkin:
'I would not, if the choice were mine,
Grow things like that upon a vine,
For how imposing it would be
If pumpkins grew upon a tree.'

Like other populists, you'll note,
Of views enthusiastic,
He'd learned by heart, and said by rote
A creed iconoclastic;
And in his dim, uncertain sight
Whatever wasn't must be right,
From which it follows he had strong
Convictions that what was, was wrong.

As thus he sat beneath an oak
An acorn fell abruptly
And smote his nose: whereat he spoke
Of acorns most corruptly.
'Great Scott!' he cried. 'The Dickens!' too,
And other authors whom he knew,
And having duly mentioned those,
He expeditiously arose.

Then, though with pain he nearly swooned,
He bathed his organ nasal
With arnica, and soothed the wound
With extract of witch hazel;
And surely we may well excuse
The victim if he changed his views:
'If pumpkins fell from trees like that,'
He murmured, 'Where would I be at?'

Of course it's wholly clear to you
That when these words he uttered
He proved conclusively he knew
Which side his bread was buttered;
And, if this point you have not missed,
You'll learn to love this populist,
The only one of all his kind
With sense enough to change his mind.

THE MORAL: In the early spring
A pumpkin-tree would be a thing
Most gratifying to us all,
But how about the early fall?

Guy Wetmore Carryl

The Impecunious Cricket And The Frugal Ant

There was an ant, a spinster ant,
Whose virtues were so many
That she became intolerant
Of those who hadn't any:
She had a small and frugal mind
And lived a life ascetic,
Nor was her temperament the kind
That's known as sympathetic.

I skip details. Suffice to say
That, knocking at her wicket,
There chanced to come one autumn day
A common garden cricket
So ragged, poor, and needy that,
Without elucidation,
One saw the symptoms of a bat
Of several months' duration.

He paused beside her door-step, and,
With one pathetic gesture,
He called attention with his hand
To both his shoes and vesture.
'I joined,' said he, 'an opera troupe.
They suddenly disbanded,
And left me on the hostel stoop,
Lugubriously stranded.

'I therefore lay aside my pride
And frankly ask for clothing.'
'Begone!' the frugal ant replied.
'I look on you with loathing.
Your muddy shoes have spoiled the lawn,
Your hands have soiled the fence, too.
If you need money, go and pawn
Your watch-if you have sense to.'

THE MORAL is: Albeit lots
Of people follow Dr. Watts,
The sluggard, when his means are scant,
Should seek an uncle, not an ant!

Guy Wetmore Carryl

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Guy Wetmore Carryl

The Impetuous Breeze And The Diplomatic Sun

A Boston man an ulster had,
An ulster with a cape that fluttered:
It smacked his face, and made him mad,
And polyglot remarks he uttered:
'I bought it at a bargain,' said he,
'I'm tired of the thing already.'

The wind that chanced to blow that day
Was easterly, and rather strong, too:
It loved to see the galling way
That clothes vex those whom they belong to:
'Now watch me,' cried this spell of weather,
'I'll rid him of it altogether.'

It whirled the man across the street,
It banged him up against a railing,
It twined the ulster round his feet,
But all of this was unavailing:
For not without resource it found him:
He drew the ulster closer round him.

'My word!' the man was heard to say,
'Although I like not such abuse, it's
Not strange the wind is strong to-day,
It always is in Massachusetts.
Such weather threatens much the health of
Inhabitants this Commonwealth of.'

The sun, emerging from a rift
Between the clouds, observed the victim,
And how the wind beset and biffed,
Belabored, buffeted, and kicked him.
Said he, 'This wind is doubtless new here:
'Tis quite the freshest ever blew here.'

And then he put forth all his strength,
His warmth with might and main exerted,
Till upward in its tube at length
The mercury most nimbly spurted.
Phenomenal the curious sight was,
So swift the rise in Fahrenheit was.

The man supposed himself at first
The prey of some new mode of smelting:
His pulses were about to burst,
His every limb seemed slowly melting,
And, as the heat began to numb him,
He cast the ulster wildly from him.

'Impulsive breeze, the use of force,'
Observed the sun, 'a foolish act is,
Perceiving which, you see, of course.

How highly efficacious tact is.'
The wondering wind replied, 'Good gracious!
You're right about the efficacious.'

THE MORAL deals, as morals do,
With tact, and all its virtues boasted,
But still I can't forget, can you,
That wretched man, first chilled, then roasted?
Bronchitis seized him shortly after,
And that's no cause for vulgar laughter.

Guy Wetmore Carryl

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Guy Wetmore Carryl

The Inhuman Wolf And The Lamb Sans Gene

A gaunt and relentless wolf, possessed
Of a quite insatiable thirst,
Once paused at a stream to drink and rest,
And found that, bound on a similar quest,
A lamb had arrived there first.

The lamb was a lamb of a garrulous mind
And frivolity most extreme:
In the fashion common to all his kind,
He cantered in front and galloped behind.
And troubled the limpid stream.

'My friend,' said the wolf, with a winsome air,
'Your capers I can't admire.'
'Go to!' quoth the lamb. (Though he said not where,
He showed what he meant by his brazen stare
And the way that he gambolled higher.)

'My capers,' he cried, 'are the kind that are
Invariably served with lamb.
Remember, this is a public bar,
And I'll do as I please. If your drink I mar,
I don't give a tinker's --.'

He paused and glanced at the rivulet,
And that pause than speech was worse,
For his roving eye a saw-mill met,
And, near it, the word which should be set
At the end of the previous verse.

Said the wolf: 'You are tough and may bring remorse,
But of such is the world well rid.
I've swallowed your capers, I've swallowed your sauce,
And it's plain to be seen that my only course
Is swallowing you.' He did.

THE MORAL: The wisest lambs they are
Who, when they're assailed by thirst,
Keep well away from a public bar;
For of all black sheep, or near, or far,
The public bar-lamb's worst!

Guy Wetmore Carryl

The Microscopic Trout And The Machiavellian Fisherman

A fisher was casting his flies in a brook,
According to laws of such sciences,
With a patented reel and a patented hook
And a number of other appliances;
And the thirty-fifth cast, which he vowed was the last
(It was figured as close as a decimal),
Brought suddenly out of the water a trout
Of measurements infinitesimal.

This fish had a way that would win him a place
In the best and most polished society,
And he looked at the fisherman full in the face
With a visible air of anxiety:
He murmured 'Alas!' from his place in the grass,
And then, when he'd twisted and wriggled, he
Remarked in a pet that his heart was upset
And digestion all higgledy-piggledy.

'I request,' he observed, 'to be instantly flung
Once again in the pool I've been living in.'
The fisherman said, 'You will tire out your tongue.
Do you see any signs of my giving in?
Put you back in the pool? Why, you fatuous fool,
I have eaten much smaller and thinner fish.
You're not salmon or sole, but I think, on the whole,
You're a fairly respectable dinner-fish.'

The fisherman's cook tried her hand on the trout
And with various herbs she embellished him;
He was lovely to see, and there isn't a doubt
That the fisherman's family relished him,
And, to prove that they did, both his wife and his kid
Devoured the trout with much eagerness,
Avowing no dish could compare with that fish,
Notwithstanding his singular meagreness.

And THE MORAL, you'll find, is although it is kind
To grant favors that people are wishing for,
Still a dinner you'll lack if you chance to throw back
In the pool little trout that you're fishing for;
If their pleading you spurn you will certainly learn
That herbs will deliciously vary 'em:
It is needless to state that a trout on a plate
Beats several in the aquarium.

Guy Wetmore Carryl

The Pampered Lapdog And The Misguided Ass

A woolly little terrier pup
Gave vent to yelps distressing,
Whereat his mistress took him up
And soothed him with caressing,
And yet he was not in the least
What one would call a handsome beast.

He might have been a Javanese,
He might have been a Jap dog,
And also neither one of these,
But just a common lapdog,
The kind that people send, you know,
Done up in cotton, to the Show.

At all events, whate'er his race,
The pretty girl who owned him
Caressed his unattractive face
And petted and cologned him,
While, watching her with mournful eye,
A patient ass stood silent by.

'If thus,' he mused, 'the feminine
And fascinating gender
Is led to love, I, too, can win
Her protestations tender.'
And then the poor, misguided chap
Sat down upon the lady's lap.

Then, as her head with terror swam,
'This method seems to suit you,'
Observed the ass, 'so here I am.'
Said she, 'Get up, you brute you!'
And promptly screamed aloud for aid:
No ass was ever more dismayed.

They took the ass into the yard
And there, with whip and truncheon,
They beat him, and they beat him hard,
From breakfast-time till luncheon.
He only gave a tearful gulp,
Though almost pounded to a pulp.

THE MORAL is (or seems, at least,
To be): In etiquette you
Will find that while enough's a feast
A surplus will upset you.

Toujours, toujours la politesse
, if
The quantity be not excessive.

Guy Wetmore Carryl

The Passing of Pan

Laughter, velvet-lipped, runs ringing
All along the woodland ways,
While a strange, bewitching singing
Fills the glad Arcadian days;
Ripple-rocked, the slender naiads
Rush-fringed shores expectant scan
For attendant hamadryads,
Heralding the path of Pan.

Through the swaying bushes sliding,
Dark-eyed nymphs before him trip,
And the gods, with stately striding,
Follows, laughter on his lip;
While the wild bird-hearts that love him
In the haunts untrod by man,
Riot rapturously above him,
Heralding the path of Pan.

From the yellow beds of mallows
Gleams the glint of golden hair,
Nereids from the shorewise shallows
Fling a greeting on the air;
Slim white limbs, divinely fashioned,
Of the fair immortal clan
Sway to harmonies impassioned,
Heralding the path of Pan.

Round his brow a wreath he tosses,
Twined with Asphodel and rose,
As triumphant o'er the mosses,
Song-saluted on he goes;
Frail wood-maidens who adore him,
When he rests his temples fan
When he rises, run before him,
Heralding the path of Pan!

Guy Wetmore Carryl

The Patrician Peacocks And The Overweening Jay

Once a flock of stately peacocks
Promenaded on a green,
There were twenty-two or three cocks,
Each as proud as seventeen,
And a glance, however hasty,
Showed their plumage to be tasty;
Wheresoever one was placed, he
Was a credit to the scene.

Now their owner had a daughter
Who, when people came to call,
Used to say, 'You'd reelly oughter
See them peacocks on the mall.'
Now this wasn't to her credit,
And her callers came to dread it,
For the way the lady said it
Wasn't
recherche
at all.

But a jay that overheard it
From his perch upon a fir
Didn't take in how absurd it
Was to every one but her;
When they answered, 'You don't tell us!'
And to see the birds seemed zealous
He became extremely jealous,
Wishing, too, to make a stir.

As the peacocks fed together
He would join them at their lunch,
Culling here and there a feather
Till he'd gathered quite a bunch;
Then this bird, of ways perfidious,
Stuck them on him most fastidious
Till he looked uncommon hideous,
Like a Judy or a Punch.

But the peacocks, when they saw him,
One and all began to haul,
And to harry and to claw him
Till the creature couldn't crawl;
While their owner's vulgar daughter,
When her startled callers sought her,
And to see the struggle brought her,
Only said, 'They're on the maul.'

It was really quite revolting
When the tumult died away,
One would think he had been moulting
So dishevelled was the jay;
He was more than merely slighted,

He was more than disunited,
He'd been simply dynamited
In the fervor of the fray.

And THE MORAL of the verses
Is: That short men can't be tall.
Nothing sillier or worse is
Than a jay upon a mall.
And the jay opiniative
Who, because he's imitative,
Thinks he's highly decorative
Is the biggest jay of all.

Guy Wetmore Carryl

The Persevering Tortoise And The Pretentious Hare

Once a turtle, finding plenty
In seclusion to bewitch,
Lived a
dolce far niente

Kind of life within a ditch;
Rivers had no charm for him,
As he told his wife and daughter,
'Though my friends are in the swim,
Mud is thicker far than water.'

One fine day, as was his habit,
He was dozing in the sun,
When a young and flippant rabbit
Happened by the ditch to run:
'Come and race me,' he exclaimed,
'Fat inhabitant of puddles.
Sluggard! You should be ashamed.
Such a life the brain befuddles.'

This, of course, was banter merely,
But it stirred the torpid blood
Of the turtle, and severely
Forth he issued from the mud.
'Done!' he cried. The race began,
But the hare resumed his banter,
Seeing how his rival ran
In a most unlovely canter.

Shouting, 'Terrapin, you're bested!
You'd be wiser, dear old chap,
If you sat you down and rested
When you reach the second lap.'
Quoth the turtle, 'I refuse.
As for you, with all your talking,
Sit on any lap you choose.

I
shall simply go on walking.'

Now this sporting proposition
Was, upon its face, absurd;
Yet the hare, with expedition,
Took the tortoise at his word,
Ran until the final lap,
Then, supposing he'd outclassed him,
Laid him down and took a nap
And the patient turtle passed him!

Plodding on, he shortly made the
Line that marked the victor's goal;
Paused, and found he'd won, and laid the

Flattering unction to his soul.
Then in fashion grandiose,
Like an after-dinner speaker,
Touched his flipper to his nose,
And remarked, 'Ahem! Eureka!'

And THE MORAL (lest you miss one)
Is: There's often time to spare,
And that races are (like this one)
Won not always by a hair.

Guy Wetmore Carryl

The Precipitate Cock And The Unappreciated Pearl

A rooster once pursued a worm
That lingered not to brave him,
To see his wretched victim squirm
A pleasant thrill it gave him;
He summoned all his kith and kin,
They hastened up by legions,
With quaint, expressive gurgles in
Their oesophageal regions.

Just then a kind of glimmering
Attracting his attention,
The worm became too small a thing
For more than passing mention:
The throng of hungry hens and rude
He skilfully evaded.
Said he, 'I' faith, if this be food,
I saw the prize ere they did.'

It was a large and costly pearl,
Belonging in a necklace,
And dropped by some neglectful girl:
Some people are so reckless!
The cock assumed an air forlorn,
And cried, 'It's really cruel.
I thought it was a grain of corn:
It's nothing but a jewel.'

He turned again to where his clan
In one astounding tangle
With eager haste together ran
To slay the helpless angle,
And sighed, 'He was of massive size.
I should have used discretion.
Too late! Around the toothsome prize
A bargain-sale's in session.'

The worm's remarks upon his plight
Have never been recorded,
But any one may know how slight
Diversion it afforded;
For worms and human beings are
Unanimous that, when pecked,
To be the prey of men they far
Prefer to being hen-pecked.

THE MORAL: When your dinner comes
Don't leave it for your neighbors,
Because you hear the sound of drums
And see the gleam of sabres;
Or, like the cock, you'll find too late
That ornaments external
Do not for certain indicate

A bona fide kernel.

Guy Wetmore Carryl

The Rude Rat And The Unostentatious Oyster

Upon the shore, a mile or more
From traffic and confusion,
An oyster dwelt, because he felt
A longing for seclusion;
Said he: 'I love the stillness of
This spot. It's like a cloister.'
(These words I quote because, you note,
They rhyme so well with oyster.)

A prying rat, believing that
She needed change of diet,
In search of such disturbed this much-
To-be-desired quiet.
To say the least, this tactless beast
Was apt to rudely roister:
She tapped his shell, and called him-well,
A name that hurt the oyster.

'I see,' she cried, 'you're open wide,
And, searching for a reason,
September's here, and so it's clear
That oysters are in season.'
She smiled a smile that showed this style
Of badinage rejoiced her,
Advanced a pace with easy grace,
And
sniffed
the silent oyster.

The latter's pride was sorely tried,
He thought of what he
could
say,
Reflected what the common lot
Of vulgar molluscs
would
say;
Then caught his breath, grew pale as death,
And, as his brow turned moister,
Began to close, and nipped her nose!
Superb, dramatic oyster!

We note with joy that oi polloi,
Whom maidens bite the thumb at,
Are apt to try some weak reply
To things they should be dumb at.
THE MORAL, then, for crafty men
Is: When a maid has voiced her
Contemptuous heart, don't think you're smart,
But shut up-like the oyster.

Guy Wetmore Carryl

The Singular Sangfroid Of Baby Bunting

Batholomew Benjamin Bunting
Had only three passions in life,
And one of the trio was hunting,
The others his babe and his wife.
And always, so rigid his habits,
He frolicked at home until two,
And then started hunting for rabbits,
And hunted till fall of the dew.

Belinda Bellonia Bunting,
Thus widowed for half of the day,
Her duty maternal confronting,
With baby would patiently play.
When thus was her energy wasted,
A patented food she'd dispense.
(She had bought it the day that they pasted
The posters all over her fence.)

But Bonaparte Buckingham Bunting,
The infant thus blindly adored,
Replied to her worship by grunting,
Which showed he was brutally bored.
'T was little he cared for the troubles
Of life. Like a crab on the sands,
From his sweet little mouth he blew bubbles,
And threatened the air with his hands.

Bartholomew Benjamin Bunting
One night, as his wife let him in,
Produced as the fruit of his hunting
A cottontail's velvety skin,
Which, seeing young Bonaparte wriggle,
He gave him without a demur,
And the babe with an aqueous giggle
He swallowed the whole of the fur!

Belinda Bellonia Bunting
Behaved like a consummate loon:
Her offspring in frenzy confronting
She screamed herself mottled maroon:
She felt of his vertebrae spinal,
Expecting he'd surely succomb,
And gave him one vigorous, final,
Hard prod in the pit of his tum.

But Bonaparte Buckingham Bunting,
At first but a trifle perplexed,
By a change in his manner of grunting
Soon showed he was horribly vexed.
He displayed not a sign of repentance
But spoke, in a dignified tone,
The only consecutive sentence

He uttered. 'T was: 'Lemme alone.'

The Moral: The parent that uses
Precaution his folly regrets:
An infant gets all that he chooses,
An infant chews all that he gets.
And colics? He constantly has 'em
So long as his food is the best,
But he'll swallow with never a spasm
What ostriches couldn't digest.

Guy Wetmore Carryl

The Sycophantic Fox And The Gullible Raven

A raven sat upon a tree,
And not a word he spoke, for
His beak contained a piece of Brie.
Or, maybe it was Roquefort.
We'll make it any kind you please -
At all events it was a cheese.

Beneath the tree's umbrageous limb
A hungry fox sat smiling;
He saw the raven watching him,
And spoke in words beguiling:
'J'admire,' said he, 'ton beau plumage!'
(The which was simply persiflage.)

Two things there are, no doubt you know,
To which a fox is used:
A rooster that is bound to crow,
A crow that's bound to roost;
And whichsoever he espies
He tells the most unblushing lies.

'Sweet fowl,' he said, 'I understand
You're more than merely natty;
I hear you sing to beat the band
And Adelina Patti.
Pray render with your liquid tongue
A bit from Gotterdammerung.'

This subtle speech was aimed to please
The crow, and it succeeded;
He thought no bird in all the trees
Could sing as well as he did.
In flattery completely doused,
He gave the 'Jewel Song' from Faust.

But gravitation's law, of course,
As Isaac Newton showed it,
Exerted on the cheese its force,
And elsewhere soon bestowed it.
In fact, there is no need to tell
What happened when to earth it fell.

I blush to add that when the bird
Took in the situation
He said one brief, emphatic word,
Unfit for publication.
The fox was greatly startled, but
He only sighed and answered, 'Tut.'

The Moral is: A fox is bound
To be a shameless sinner.
And also: When the cheese comes round

You know it's after dinner.
But (what is only known to few)
The fox is after dinner, too.

Guy Wetmore Carryl

The Unusual Goose And The Imbecilic Woodcutter

A woodcutter bought him a gander,
Or at least that was what he supposed,
As a matter of fact, 'twas a slander
As a later occurrence disclosed;
For they locked the bird up in the garret
To fatten, the while it grew old,
And it laid there a twenty-two carat
Fine egg of the purest of gold!

There was much unaffected rejoicing
In the home of the woodcutter then,
And his wife, her exuberance voicing,
Proclaimed him most lucky of men.
''Tis an omen of fortune, this gold egg,'
She said, 'and of practical use,
For this fowl doesn't lay any old egg,
She's a highly superior goose.'

Twas this creature's habitual custom,
This laying of superfine eggs,
And they made it their practice to dust 'em
And pack them by dozens in kegs:
But the woodcutter's mind being vapid
And his foolishness more than profuse,
In order to get them more rapid
He slaughtered the innocent goose.

He made her a gruel of acid
Which she very obligingly ate,
And at once with a touchingly placid
Demeanor succumbed to her fate.
With affection that passed the platonic
They buried her under the moss,
And her epitaph wasn't ironic
In stating, 'We mourn for our loss.'

And THE MORAL: It isn't much use,
As the woodcutter found to be true,
To lay for an innocent goose
Just because she is laying for you.

Guy Wetmore Carryl

The Urban Rat And The Suburban Rat

A metropolitan rat invited
His country cousin in town to dine:
The country cousin replied, 'Delighted.'
And signed himself, 'Sincerely thine.'
The town rat treated the country cousin
To half a dozen
Kinds of wine.

He served him terrapin, kidneys devilled,
And roasted partridge, and candied fruit;
In Little Neck Clams at first they revelled,
And then in Pommery,
sec
and
brut
;
The country cousin exclaimed: 'Such feeding
Proclaims your breeding
Beyond dispute!'

But just as, another bottle broaching,
They came to chicken
en casserole

A ravenous cat was heard approaching,
And, passing his guest a finger-bowl,
The town rat murmured, 'The feast is ended.'
And then descended
The nearest hole.

His cousin followed him, helter-skelter,
And, pausing beneath the pantry floor,
He glanced around at their dusty shelter
And muttered, 'This is a beastly bore.
My place as an epicure resigning,
I'll try this dining
In town no more.

'You must dine some night at my rustic cottage;
I'll warn you now that it's simple fare:
A radish or two, a bowl of pottage,
And the wine that's known as
ordinaire
,
But for holes I haven't to make a bee-line,
No prowling feline
Molests me there.

'You smile at the lot of a mere commuter,
You think that my life is hard, mayhap,
But I'm sure than you I am far acuter:
I ain't afraid of no cat nor trap.'

The city rat could but meekly stammer,
'Don't use such grammar,
My worthy chap.'

He dined next night with his poor relation,
And caught dyspepsia, and lost his train,
He waited an hour in the lonely station,
And said some things that were quite profane.
'I'll never,' he cried, in tones complaining,
'Try entertaining
That rat again.'

It's easy to make a memorandum
About THE MORAL these verses teach:

De gustibus non est dispuiandum;

The meaning of which Etruscan speech
Is wheresoever you're hunger quelling
Pray keep your dwelling
In easy reach.

Guy Wetmore Carryl

The Vainglorious Oak And The Modest Bulrush

A bulrush stood on a river's rim,
And an oak that grew near by
Looked down with cold
hauteur
on him,
And addressed him this way: 'Hi!'
The rush was a proud patrician, and
He retorted, 'Don't you know,
What the veriest boor should understand,
That 'Hi' is low?'

This cutting rebuke the oak ignored.
He returned, 'My slender friend,
I will frankly state that I'm somewhat bored
With the way you bow and bend.'
'But you quite forget,' the rush replied,
'It's an art these bows to do,
An art I wouldn't attempt if I'd
Such boughs as you.'

'Of course,' said the oak, 'in my sapling days
My habit it was to bow,
But the wildest storm that the winds could raise
Would never disturb me now.
I challenge the breeze to make me bend,
And the blast to make me sway.'
The shrewd little bulrush answered, 'Friend,
Don't get so gay.'

And the words had barely left his mouth
When he saw the oak turn pale,
For, racing along south-east-by-south,
Came ripping a raging gale.
And the rush bent low as the storm went past,
But stiffly stood the oak,
Though not for long, for he found the blast
No idle joke.

Imagine the lightning's gleaming bars,
Imagine the thunder's roar,
For that is exactly what eight stars
Are set in a row here for!
The oak lay prone when the storm was done,
While the rush, still quite erect,
Remarked aside, 'What under the sun
Could one expect?'

And THE MORAL, I'd have you understand,
Would have made La Fontaine blush,
For it's this: Some storms come early, and
Avoid the rush!

Guy Wetmore Carryl

When The Great Gray Ships Come In

To eastward ringing, to westward winging, o'er mapless miles of sea,
On winds and tides the gospel rides that the furthermost isles are free;
And the furthermost isles make answer, harbor, and height, and hill,
Breaker and beach cry, each to each, ''Tis the Mother who calls! Be still!'
Mother! new-found, beloved, and strong to hold from harm,
Stretching to these across the seas the shield of her sovereign arm,
Who summoned the guns of her sailor sons, who bade her navies roam,
Who calls again to the leagues of main, and who calls them this time home!

And the great gray ships are silent, and the weary watchers rest;
The black cloud dies in the August skies, and deep in the golden west
Invisible hands are limning a glory of crimson bars,
And far above is the wonder of a myriad wakened stars!
Peace! As the tidings silence the strenuous cannonade,
Peace at last! is the bugle-blast the length of the long blockade;
And eyes of vigil weary are lit with the glad release,
From ship to ship and from lip to lip it is 'Peace! Thank God for peace!'

Ah, in the sweet hereafter Columbia still shall show
The sons of these who swept the seas how she bade them rise and go;
How, when the stirring summons smote on her children's ear,
South and North at the call stood forth, and the whole land answered 'Here!'
For the soul of the soldier's story and the heart of the sailor's song
Are all of those who meet their foes as right should meet with wrong,
Who fight their guns till the foeman runs, and then, on the decks they trod,
Brave faces raise, and give the praise to the grace of their country's God!

Yes, it is good to battle, and good to be strong and free,
To carry the hearts of a people to the uttermost ends of sea,
To see the day steal up the bay, where the enemy lies in wait,
To run your ship to the harbor's lip and sink her across the strait:—
But better the golden evening when the ships round heads for home,
And the long gray miles slip swiftly past in a swirl of seething foam,
And the people wait at the haven's gate to greet the men who win!
Thank God for peace! Thank God for peace, when the great gray ships come in!

Guy Wetmore Carryl