Classic Poetry Series

Lewis Carroll

- poems -

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Lewis Carroll (27 January 1832 – 14 January 1898)

Charles Lutwidge Dodgson better known by the pseudonym Lewis Carroll, was an English author, mathematician, logician, Anglican deacon and photographer. His most famous writings are Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and its sequel Through the Looking-Glass, as well as the poems "The Hunting of the Snark" and "Jabberwocky", all examples of the genre of literary nonsense. He is noted for his facility at word play, logic, and fantasy, and there are societies dedicated to the enjoyment and promotion of his works and the investigation of his life in many parts of the world, including the United Kingdom, Japan, the United States, and New Zealand.

Antecedents

Dodgson's family was predominantly northern English, with Irish connections. Conservative and High Church Anglican, most of Dodgson's ancestors were army officers or Church of England clergymen. His great-grandfather, also Charles Dodgson, had risen through the ranks of the church to become Bishop of Elphin. His grandfather, another Charles, had been an army captain, killed in action in Ireland in 1803, when his two sons were hardly more than babies. His mother's name was Frances Jane Lutwidge.

The elder of these sons – yet another Charles Dodgson – was Carroll's father. He reverted to the other family tradition and took holy orders. He went to Westminster School, and thence to Christ Church, Oxford. He was mathematically gifted and won a double first degree, which could have been the prelude to a brilliant academic career. Instead he married his first cousin in 1827 and became a country parson.

Dodgson was born in the little parsonage of Daresbury in Cheshire near the towns of Warrington and Runcorn, the eldest boy but already the third child of the four-and-a-half-year-old marriage. Eight more children were to follow. When Charles was 11, his father was given the living of Croft-on-Tees in North Yorkshire, and the whole family moved to the spacious Rectory. This remained their home for the next twenty-five years.

Young Charles' father was an active and highly conservative clergyman of the Anglican church who later became Archdeacon of Richmond and involved himself, sometimes influentially, in the intense religious disputes that were dividing the Anglican church. He was High Church, inclining to Anglo-Catholicism, an admirer of Newman and the Tractarian movement, and did his best to instill such views in his children. Young Charles was to develop an ambiguous relationship with his father's values and with the Anglican church as a whole.

Education

Home Life

During his early youth, Dodgson was educated at home. His "reading lists" preserved in the family archives testify to a precocious intellect: at the age of seven the child was reading The Pilgrim's Progress. He also suffered from a stammer – a condition shared by his siblings – that often influenced his social life throughout his years. At age twelve he was sent to Richmond Grammar School (now part of Richmond School) at nearby Richmond.

Rugby

In 1846, young Dodgson moved on to Rugby School, where he was evidently less happy, for as he wrote some years after leaving the place:

I cannot say ... that any earthly considerations would induce me to go through my three years again ... I can honestly say that if I could have been ... secure from annoyance at night, the hardships of the daily life would have been comparative trifles to bear.

Scholastically, though, he excelled with apparent ease. "I have not had a more promising boy at his age since I came to Rugby", observed R.B. Mayor, the Mathematics master.

Oxford

He left Rugby at the end of 1849 and matriculated at Oxford in May 1850 as a member of his father's old college, Christ Church. After waiting for rooms in college to become available, he went into residence in January 1851. He had been at Oxford only two days when he received a summons home. His mother had died of "inflammation of the brain" – perhaps meningitis or a stroke – at the age of forty-seven.

His early academic career veered between high promise and irresistible distraction. He did not always work hard, but was exceptionally gifted and achievement came easily to him. In 1852 he obtained first-class honours in Mathematics Moderations, and was shortly thereafter nominated to a Studentship by his father's old friend, Canon Edward Pusey. In 1854 he obtained first-class honours in the Final Honours School of Mathematics, graduating Bachelor of Arts. He remained at Christ Church studying and teaching, but the next year he failed an important scholarship through his self-confessed inability to apply himself to study. Even so, his talent as a mathematician won him the Christ Church Mathematical Lectureship in 1855, which he continued to hold for the next twenty-six years. Despite early unhappiness, Dodgson was to remain at Christ Church, in various capacities, until his death.

Character and Appearance

Health Challenges

The young adult Charles Dodgson was about six feet tall, slender, and had curling brown hair and blue or grey eyes (depending on the account). He was described in later life as somewhat asymmetrical, and as carrying himself rather stiffly and awkwardly, though this may be on account of a knee injury sustained in middle age. As a very young child, he suffered a fever that left him deaf in one ear. At the age of seventeen, he suffered a severe attack of whooping cough, which was probably responsible for his chronically weak chest in later life. Another defect he carried into adulthood was what he referred to as his "hesitation", a stammer he acquired in early childhood and which plagued him throughout his life.

The stammer has always been a potent part of the conceptions of Dodgson; it is part of the belief that he stammered only in adult company and was free and fluent with children, but there is no evidence to support this idea. Many

children of his acquaintance remembered the stammer while many adults failed to notice it. Dodgson himself seems to have been far more acutely aware of it than most people he met; it is said he caricatured himself as the Dodo in Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, referring to his difficulty in pronouncing his last name, but this is one of the many "facts" often-repeated, for which no firsthand evidence remains. He did indeed refer to himself as the dodo, but that this was a reference to his stammer is simply speculation.

Although Dodgson's stammer troubled him, it was never so debilitating that it prevented him from applying his other personal qualities to do well in society. At a time when people commonly devised their own amusements and when singing and recitation were required social skills, the young Dodgson was well-equipped to be an engaging entertainer. He reportedly could sing tolerably well and was not afraid to do so before an audience. He was adept at mimicry and storytelling, and was reputedly quite good at charades.

Social Connections

In the interim between his early published writing and the success of the Alice books, Dodgson began to move in the Pre-Raphaelite social circle. He first met John Ruskin in 1857 and became friendly with him. He developed a close relationship with Dante Gabriel Rossetti and his family, and also knew William Holman Hunt, John Everett Millais, and Arthur Hughes, among other artists. He also knew the fairy-tale author George MacDonald well – it was the enthusiastic reception of Alice by the young MacDonald children that convinced him to submit the work for publication.

Politics, Religion and Philosophy

In broad terms, Dodgson has traditionally been regarded as politically, religiously, and personally conservative. Martin Gardner labels Dodgson as a Tory who was "awed by lords and inclined to be snobbish towards inferiors." The Revd W. Tuckwell in his Reminiscences of Oxford (1900) regarded him as "austere, shy, precise, absorbed in mathematical reverie, watchfully tenacious of his dignity, stiffly conservative in political, theological, social theory, his life mapped out in squares like Alice's landscape." However, Dodgson also expressed interest in philosophies and religions that seem at odds with this assessment. For example, he was a founding member of the Society for Psychical Research. It has been argued by the proponents of the 'Carroll Myth' that these factors require a reconsideration of Gardner's diagnosis, and that perhaps, Dodgson's true outlook was more complex than previously believed (see 'the Carroll Myth' below).

Dodgson wrote some studies of various philosophical arguments. In 1895, he developed a philosophical regressus-argument on deductive reasoning in his article "What the Tortoise Said to Achilles", which appeared in one of the early volumes of the philosophical journal Mind. The article was reprinted in the same journal a hundred years later, in 1995, with a subsequent article by Simon Blackburn titled Practical Tortoise Raising.

Artistic Activities

Literature

From a young age, Dodgson wrote poetry and short stories, both contributing heavily to the family magazine Mischmasch and later sending them to various magazines, enjoying moderate success. Between 1854 and 1856, his work appeared in the national publications, The Comic Times and The Train, as well as smaller magazines like the Whitby Gazette and the Oxford Critic. Most of this output was humorous, sometimes satirical, but his standards and ambitions were exacting. "I do not think I have yet written anything worthy of real publication (in which I do not include the Whitby Gazette or the Oxonian Advertiser), but I do not despair of doing so some day," he wrote in July 1855. Sometime after 1850, he did write puppet plays for his siblings' entertainment, of which one has survived, La Guida di Bragia.

In 1856 he published his first piece of work under the name that would make him famous. A romantic poem called "Solitude" appeared in The Train under the authorship of "Lewis Carroll." This pseudonym was a play on his real name; Lewis was the anglicised form of Ludovicus, which was the Latin for Lutwidge, and Carroll an Irish surname similar to the Latin name Carolus, from which the name Charles comes.

Alice

In the same year, 1856, a new Dean, Henry Liddell, arrived at Christ Church, bringing with him his young family, all of whom would figure largely in Dodgson's life and, over the following years, greatly influence his writing career. Dodgson became close friends with Liddell's wife, Lorina, and their children, particularly the three sisters: Lorina, Edith and Alice Liddell. He was for many years widely assumed to have derived his own "Alice" from Alice Liddell. This was given some apparent substance by the fact the acrostic poem at the end of Through the Looking Glass spells out her name, and that there are many superficial references to her hidden in the text of both books. It has been pointed out that Dodgson himself repeatedly denied in later life that his "little heroine" was based on any real child, and frequently dedicated his works to girls of his acquaintance, adding their names in acrostic poems at the beginning of the text. Gertrude Chataway's name appears in this form at the beginning of The Hunting of the Snark, and no one has ever suggested this means any of the characters in the narrative are based on her.

Though information is scarce (Dodgson's diaries for the years 1858–1862 are missing), it does seem clear that his friendship with the Liddell family was an important part of his life in the late 1850s, and he grew into the habit of taking the children (first the boy, Harry, and later the three girls) on rowing trips accompanied by an adult friend to nearby Nuneham Courtenay or Godstow.

It was on one such expedition, on 4 July 1862, that Dodgson invented the outline of the story that eventually became his first and largest commercial success. Having told the story and been begged by Alice Liddell to write it down, Dodgson eventually (after much delay) presented her with a handwritten, illustrated manuscript entitled Alice's Adventures Under Ground in November 1864.

Before this, the family of friend and mentor George MacDonald read Dodgson's incomplete manuscript, and the enthusiasm of the MacDonald children encouraged Dodgson to seek publication. In 1863, he had taken the unfinished manuscript to Macmillan the publisher, who liked it immediately. After the possible alternative titles Alice Among the Fairies and Alice's Golden Hour were rejected, the work was finally published as Alice's Adventures in Wonderland in 1865 under the Lewis Carroll pen-name, which Dodgson had first used some nine years earlier. The illustrations this time were by Sir John Tenniel; Dodgson evidently thought that a published book would need the skills of a professional artist.

The overwhelming commercial success of the first Alice book changed Dodgson's life in many ways. The fame of his alter ego "Lewis Carroll" soon spread around the world. He was inundated with fan mail and with sometimes unwanted attention. Indeed, according to one popular story, Queen Victoria herself enjoyed Alice In Wonderland so much that she suggested he dedicate his next book to her, and was accordingly presented with his next work, a scholarly mathematical volume entitled An Elementary Treatise on Determinants. Dodgson himself vehemently denied this story, commenting "...It is utterly false in every particular: nothing even resembling it has occurred"; and it is unlikely for other reasons: as T.B. Strong comments in a Times article, "It would have been clean contrary to all his practice to identify [the] author of Alice with the author of his mathematical works". He also began earning quite substantial sums of money but continued with his seemingly disliked post at Christ Church.

Late in 1871, a sequel – Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found

There – was published. (The title page of the first edition erroneously gives "1872" as the date of publication.) Its somewhat darker mood possibly reflects the changes in Dodgson's life. His father had recently died (1868), plunging him into a depression that lasted some years.

The Hunting of the Snark

In 1876, Dodgson produced his last great work, The Hunting of the Snark, a fantastical "nonsense" poem, exploring the adventures of a bizarre crew of tradesmen, and one beaver, who set off to find the eponymous creature. The painter Dante Gabriel Rossetti reputedly became convinced the poem was about him.

Photography

In 1856, Dodgson took up the new art form of photography, first under the influence of his uncle Skeffington Lutwidge, and later his Oxford friend Reginald Southey. He soon excelled at the art and became a well-known gentleman-photographer, and he seems even to have toyed with the idea of making a living out of it in his very early years.

A recent study by Roger Taylor and Edward Wakeling exhaustively lists every surviving print, and Taylor calculates that just over fifty percent of his surviving work depicts young girls, though this may be a highly distorted figure as approximately 60% of his original photographic portfolio is now missing, so any firm conclusions are difficult. Dodgson also made many studies of men, women, male children and landscapes; his subjects also include skeletons, dolls, dogs, statues and paintings, and trees. His studies of nude children were long presumed lost, but six have since surfaced, five of which have been published and are available online. His pictures of children were taken with a parent in attendance and many of the pictures were taken in the Liddell garden, because natural sunlight was required for good exposures.

He also found photography to be a useful entrée into higher social circles. During the most productive part of his career, he made portraits of notable sitters such as John Everett Millais, Ellen Terry, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Julia Margaret Cameron, Michael Faraday and Alfred, Lord Tennyson.

Dodgson abruptly ceased photography in 1880. Over 24 years, he had completely mastered the medium, set up his own studio on the roof of Tom Quad, and created around 3,000 images. Fewer than 1,000 have survived time and deliberate destruction. He reported that he stopped taking photographs because keeping his studio working was difficult (he used the wet collodion process) and commercial photographers (who started using the dry plate process in the 1870s) took pictures more quickly.

With the advent of Modernism, tastes changed, and his photography was forgotten from around 1920 until the 1960s.

Inventions

To promote letter writing, Dodgson invented The Wonderland Postage-Stamp Case in 1889. This was a cloth-backed folder with twelve slots, two marked for inserting the then most commonly used penny stamp, and one each for the other current denominations to one shilling. The folder was then put into a slip case decorated with a picture of Alice on the front and the Cheshire Cat on the back. All could be conveniently carried in a pocket or purse. When issued it also included a copy of Carroll's pamphletted lecture, Eight or Nine Wise Words About Letter-Writing.

Another invention is a writing tablet called the nyctograph for use at night that allowed for note-taking in the dark; thus eliminating the trouble of getting out of bed and striking a light when one wakes with an idea. The device consisted of a gridded card with sixteen squares and system of symbols representing an alphabet of Dodgson's design, using letter shapes similar to the Graffiti writing system on a Palm device.

Among the games he devised outside of logic there are a number of word games, including an early version of what today is known as Scrabble. He also appears to have invented, or at least certainly popularised, the Word Ladder (or "doublet" as it was known at first); a form of brain-teaser that is still popular today: the game of changing one word into another by altering one letter at a time, each successive change always resulting in a genuine word. For instance, CAT is transformed into DOG by the following steps: CAT, COT, DOT, DOG.

Other items include a rule for finding the day of the week for any date; a means for justifying right margins on a typewriter; a steering device for a velociam (a type of tricycle); new systems of parliamentary representation; more nearly fair elimination rules for tennis tournaments; a new sort of postal money order; rules for reckoning postage; rules for a win in betting; rules for dividing a number by various divisors; a cardboard scale for the college common room he worked in later in life, which, held next to a glass, ensured the right amount of liqueur for the price paid; a double-sided adhesive strip for things like the fastening of envelopes or mounting things in books; a device for helping a bedridden invalid to read from a book placed sideways; and at least two ciphers for cryptography.

Mathematical Work

Within the academic discipline of mathematics, Dodgson worked primarily in the fields of geometry, matrix algebra, mathematical logic and recreational mathematics, producing nearly a dozen books which he signed with his real name. Dodgson also developed new ideas in the study of elections (e.g., Dodgson's method) and committees; some of this work was not published until well after his death. He worked as a mathematics tutor at Oxford, an occupation that gave him some financial security.

The Later Years

Over the remaining twenty years of his life, throughout his growing wealth and fame, his existence remained little changed. He continued to teach at Christ Church until 1881, and remained in residence there until his death. His last novel, the two-volume Sylvie and Bruno, was published in 1889 and 1893 respectively. It achieved nowhere near the success of the Alice books. Its intricacy was apparently not appreciated by contemporary readers. The reviews and its sales, only 13,000 copies, were disappointing.

The only occasion on which (as far as is known) he travelled abroad was a trip to Russia in 1867, which he recounts in his "Russian Journal" which was first commercially published in 1935.

He died on 14 January 1898 at his sisters' home, "The Chestnuts" in Guildford, of pneumonia following influenza. He was 2 weeks away from turning 66 years old. He is buried in Guildford at the Mount Cemetery.

Controversies and Mysteries

The 'Carroll Myth'

Since 1999 a group of scholars, notably Karoline Leach and Hugues Lebailly plus Sherry L. Ackerman, John Tufail, Douglas Nickel and others, argue that what Leach terms the 'Carroll Myth' has wildly distorted biographical perception of his life and his work. Leach's book, In the Shadow of the Dreamchild, raised a considerable amount of controversy. In brief the claim is that:

In general terms Dodgson's life has been simplified and 'infantilised' by a combination of inaccurate biography and the longstanding unavailability of key evidence, which allowed legends to proliferate unchecked.

By the time the evidence did become available the 'mythic' image of the man had become so embedded in scholastic and popular thinking it remained

unquestioned, despite the fact the evidence failed to support it.

If the evidence is examined dispassionately it shows many of the most famous legends about the man (e.g. his 'paedophilia', and his exclusive adoration of small girls) are untrue, or at least grossly simplified.

In more detail, Lebailly has endeavoured to set Dodgson's child-photography within the "Victorian Child Cult", which perceived child-nudity as essentially an expression of innocence. Lebailly claims that studies of child nudes were mainstream and fashionable in Dodgson's time and that most photographers, including Oscar Gustave Rejlander and Julia Margaret Cameron, made them as a matter of course. Lebailly continues that child nudes even appeared on Victorian Christmas cards, implying a very different social and aesthetic assessment of such material. Lebailly concludes that it has been an error of Dodgson's biographers to view his child-photography with 20th or 21st century eyes, and to have presented it as some form of personal idiosyncrasy, when it was in fact a response to a prevalent aesthetic and philosophical movement of the time.

Leach's reappraisal of Dodgson focused in particular on his controversial sexuality. She argues that the allegations of paedophilia rose initially from a misunderstanding of Victorian morals, as well as the mistaken idea, fostered by Dodgson's various biographers, that he had no interest in adult women. She termed the traditional image of Dodgson "the Carroll Myth". She drew attention to the large amounts of evidence in his diaries and letters that he was also keenly interested in adult women, married and single, and enjoyed several scandalous (by the social standards of his time) relationships with them. She also pointed to the fact that many of those he described as "child-friends" were girls in their late teens and even twenties. She argues that suggestions of paedophilia evolved only many years after his death, when his well-meaning family had suppressed all evidence of his relationships with women in an effort to preserve his reputation, thus giving a false impression of a man interested only in little girls. Similarly, Leach traces the claim that many of Carroll's female friendships ended when the girls reached the age of 14 to a 1932 biography by Langford Reed.

The concept of the Carroll Myth has produced polarised reactions from Carroll scholars. In 2004 Contrariwise, the Association for new Lewis Carroll studies. was established, and those such as Carolyn Sigler and Cristopher Hollingsworth have joined the ranks of those calling for a major reassessment. But the concept of the Myth has been opposed by some leading Carroll scholars, in particular Morton N. Cohen and Martin Gardner (their comments, and those of more positive reviewers, can be found on Karoline Leach's own page). Biographer Jenny Woolf, while agreeing that Carroll's image has been comprehensively misrepresented in the past, believes that this can be attributed partly to Carroll's own behaviour and in particular his tendency to self-caricature in later life.

Priesthood

Dodgson had been groomed for the ordained ministry in the Anglican Church from a very early age and was expected, as a condition of his residency at Christ Church, to take holy orders within four years of obtaining his master's degree. He delayed the process for some time but eventually took deacon's orders on 22 December 1861. But when the time came a year later to progress to priestly orders, Dodgson appealed to the dean for permission not to proceed. This was against college rules, and initially Dean Liddell told him he would have to consult the college ruling body, which would almost undoubtedly have resulted in his being expelled. For unknown reasons, Dean Liddell changed his mind overnight and permitted Dodgson to remain at the college, in defiance of the rules. Uniquely amongst Senior Students of his time Dodgson never became a priest.

There is currently no conclusive evidence about why Dodgson rejected the priesthood. Some have suggested his stammer made him reluctant to take the step, because he was afraid of having to preach. Wilson quotes letters by Dodgson describing difficulty in reading lessons and prayers rather than

preaching in his own words. But Dodgson did indeed preach in later life, even though not in priest's orders, so it seems unlikely his impediment was a major factor affecting his choice. Wilson also points out that the then Bishop of Oxford, Samuel Wilberforce, who ordained Dodgson, had strong views against members of the clergy going to the theatre, one of Dodgson's great interests. Others have suggested that he was having serious doubts about the Anglican church. He was interested in minority forms of Christianity (he was an admirer of F.D. Maurice) and "alternative" religions (theosophy). Dodgson became deeply troubled by an unexplained sense of sin and guilt at this time (the early 1860s), and frequently expressed the view in his diaries that he was a "vile and worthless" sinner, unworthy of the priesthood, and this sense of sin and unworthiness may well have affected his decision to abandon the priesthood.

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The Missing Diaries

At least four complete volumes and around seven pages of text are missing from Dodgson's 13 diaries. The loss of the volumes remains unexplained; the pages have been deliberately removed by an unknown hand. Most scholars assume the diary material was removed by family members in the interests of preserving the family name, but this has not been proven. Except for one page, the period of his diaries from which material is missing is between 1853 and 1863 (when Dodgson was 21–31 years old). This was a period when Dodgson began suffering great mental and spiritual anguish and confessing to an overwhelming sense of his own sin. This was also the period of time when he composed his extensive love poetry, leading to speculation that the poems may have been autobiographical.

Many theories have been put forward to explain the missing material. A popular explanation for one particular missing page (27 June 1863) is that it might have been torn out to conceal a proposal of marriage on that day by Dodgson to the 11-year-old Alice Liddell; there has never been any evidence to suggest this was so, and a paper discovered by Karoline Leach in the Dodgson family archive in 1996 offers some evidence to the contrary.

This paper, known as the "cut pages in diary document", was compiled by various members of Carroll's family after his death. Part of it may have been written at the time the pages were destroyed, though this is unclear. The document offers a brief summary of two diary pages that are now missing, including the one for 27 June 1863. The summary for this page states that Mrs. Liddell told Dodgson there was gossip circulating about him and the Liddell family's governess, as well as about his relationship with "Ina", presumably Alice's older sister, Lorina Liddell. The "break" with the Liddell family that occurred soon after was presumably in response to this gossip. An alternative interpretation has been made regarding Carroll's rumoured involvement with "Ina": Lorina was also the name of Alice Liddell's mother. What is deemed most crucial and surprising is that the document seems to imply Dodgson's break with the family was not connected with Alice at all. Until a primary source is discovered, the events of 27 June 1863 remain inconclusive.

Migraine and Epilepsy

In his diary for 1880, Dodgson recorded experiencing his first episode of migraine with aura, describing very accurately the process of 'moving fortifications' that are a manifestation of the aura stage of the syndrome. Unfortunately there is no clear evidence to show whether this was his first experience of migraine per se, or if he may have previously suffered the far more common form of migraine without aura, although the latter seems most likely, given the fact that migraine most commonly develops in the teens or early adulthood. Another form of migraine aura, Alice in Wonderland Syndrome, has been named after Dodgson's little heroine, because its manifestation can resemble the sudden size-changes in the book. Also known as micropsia and macropsia, it is a brain condition affecting the way objects

are perceived by the mind. For example, an afflicted person may look at a larger object, like a basketball, and perceive it as if it were the size of a golf ball. Some authors have suggested that Dodgson may have suffered from this type of aura, and used it as an inspiration in his work, but there is no evidence that he did.

Dodgson also suffered two attacks in which he lost consciousness. He was diagnosed by three different doctors; a Dr. Morshead, Dr. Brooks, and Dr. Stedman, believed the attack and a consequent attack to be an "epileptiform" seizure (initially thought to be fainting, but Brooks changed his mind). Some have concluded from this he was a lifetime sufferer of this condition, but there is no evidence of this in his diaries beyond the diagnosis of the two attacks already mentioned. Some authors, in particular Sadi Ranson, have suggested Carroll may have suffered from temporal lobe epilepsy in which consciousness is not always completely lost, but altered, and in which the symptoms mimic many of the same experiences as Alice in Wonderland. Carroll had at least one incidence in which he suffered full loss of consciousness and awoke with a bloody nose, which he recorded in his diary and noted that the episode left him not feeling himself for "quite sometime afterward". This attack was diagnosed as possibly "epileptiform" and Carroll himself later wrote of his "seizures" in the same diary.

Most of the standard diagnostic tests of today were not available in the nineteenth century. Recently, Dr Yvonne Hart, consultant neurologist at the Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford, considered Dodgson's symptoms. Her conclusion, quoted in Jenny Woolf's The Mystery of Lewis Carroll, is that Dodgson very likely had migraine, and may have had epilepsy, but she emphasises that she would have considerable doubt about making a diagnosis of epilepsy without further information.

Suggestions of Paedophilia

Stuart Dodgson Collingwood (Dodgson's nephew and biographer) wrote:

And now as to the secondary causes which attracted him to children. First, I think children appealed to him because he was pre-eminently a teacher, and he saw in their unspoiled minds the best material for him to work upon. In later years one of his favourite recreations was to lecture at schools on logic; he used to give personal attention to each of his pupils, and one can well imagine with what eager anticipation the children would have looked forward to the visits of a schoolmaster who knew how to make even the dullest subjects interesting and amusing.

Despite comments like this, Dodgson's friendships with young girls and psychological readings of his work – especially his photographs of nude or semi-nude girls – have all led to speculation that he was a paedophile. This possibility has underpinned numerous modern interpretations of his life and work, particularly Dennis Potter's play Alice and his screenplay for the motion picture, Dreamchild, and even more importantly Robert Wilson's Alice, and a number of recent biographies, including Michael Bakewell's Lewis Carroll: A Biography (1996), Donald Thomas's Lewis Carroll: A Portrait with Background (1995), and Morton N. Cohen's Lewis Carroll: A Biography (1995). All of these works more or less unequivocally assume that Dodgson was a paedophile, albeit a repressed and celibate one. Cohen claims Dodgson's "sexual energies sought unconventional outlets", and further writes:

We cannot know to what extent sexual urges lay behind Charles's preference for drawing and photographing children in the nude. He contended the preference was entirely aesthetic. But given his emotional attachment to children as well as his aesthetic appreciation of their forms, his assertion that his interest was strictly artistic is naïve. He probably felt more than he dared acknowledge, even to himself.

Cohen notes that Dodgson "apparently convinced many of his friends that his attachment to the nude female child form was free of any eroticism", but adds that "later generations look beneath the surface".

Cohen and other biographers argue that Dodgson may have wanted to marry the 11-year-old Alice Liddell, and that this was the cause of the unexplained "break" with the family in June 1863. But there has never been significant evidence to support the idea, and the 1996 discovery of the "cut pages in diary document" (see above) seems to make it highly probable that the 1863 "break" had nothing to do with Alice, but was perhaps connected with rumours involving her older sister Lorina (born 11 May 1849, so she would have been 14 at the time), her governess, or her mother who was also nicknamed "Ina".

Some writers, e.g., Derek Hudson and Roger Lancelyn Green, stop short of identifying Dodgson as a paedophile, but concur that he had a passion for small female children and next to no interest in the adult world.

The basis for Dodgson's perceived 'obsession' with female children has been challenged in the last ten years by several writers and scholars (see the 'Carroll Myth' above).

Eserleri:

The Principles of Parliamentary Representation (1884)

Literary Works

La Guida di Bragia, a Ballad Opera for the Marionette Theatre (around 1850)
A Tangled Tale
Alice's Adventures in Wonderland (1865)
Facts
Rhyme? And Reason? (also published as Phantasmagoria)
Pillow Problems
Sylvie and Bruno
Sylvie and Bruno Concluded
The Hunting of the Snark (1876)
Three Sunsets and Other Poems
Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There (includes "Jabberwocky" and "The Walrus and the Carpenter") (1871)
What the Tortoise Said to Achilles

Mathematical Works

A Syllabus of Plane Algebraic Geometry (1860)
The Fifth Book of Euclid Treated Algebraically (1858 and 1868)
An Elementary Treatise on Determinants, With Their Application to Simultaneous Linear Equations and Algebraic Equations
Euclid and his Modern Rivals (1879), both literary and mathematical in style
Symbolic Logic Part I
Symbolic Logic Part II (published posthumously)
The Alphabet Cipher (1868)
The Game of Logic
Some Popular Fallacies about Vivisection
Curiosa Mathematica I (1888)
Curiosa Mathematica II (1892)
The Theory of Committees and Elections, collected, edited, analysed, and published in 1958, by Duncan Black

A Boat beneath a Sunny Sky

A BOAT beneath a sunny sky,
  Lingering onward dreamily
  In an evening of July --
  Children three that nestle near,
  Eager eye and willing ear,
  Pleased a simple tale to hear --
  Long has paled that sunny sky:
  Echoes fade and memories die:
  Autumn frosts have slain July.
 Still she haunts me, phantomwise,
 Alice moving under skies
 Never seen by waking eyes.
 Children yet, the tale to hear,
 Eager eye and willing ear,
 Lovingly shall nestle near.
 In a Wonderland they lie,
 Dreaming as the days go by,
 Dreaming as the summers die:
 Ever drifting down the stream --
 Lingering in the golden dream --
 Life, what is it but a dream?

THE END

Lewis Carroll

A Game of Fives

Five little girls, of Five, Four, Three, Two, One:
Rolling on the hearthrug, full of tricks and fun.

Five rosy girls, in years from Ten to Six:
Sitting down to lessons - no more time for tricks.

Five growing girls, from Fifteen to Eleven:
Music, Drawing, Languages, and food enough for seven!

Five winsome girls, from Twenty to Sixteen:
Each young man that calls, I say "Now tell me which you MEAN!"

Five dashing girls, the youngest Twenty-one:
But, if nobody proposes, what is there to be done?

Five showy girls - but Thirty is an age
When girls may be ENGAGING, but they somehow don't ENGAGE.

Five dressy girls, of Thirty-one or more:
So gracious to the shy young men they snubbed so much before!

Five PASSE girls - Their age? Well, never mind!
We jog along together, like the rest of human kind:
But the quondam "careless bachelor" begins to think he knows
The answer to that ancient problem "how the money goes"!

Lewis Carroll

A Nursery Darling

A Mother's breast:
Safe refuge from her childish fears,
From childish troubles, childish tears,
Mists that enshroud her dawning years!
see how in sleep she seems to sing
A voiceless psalm--an offering
Raised, to the glory of her King
In Love: for Love is Rest.

A Darling's kiss:
Dearest of all the signs that fleet
From lips that lovingly repeat
Again, again, the message sweet!
Full to the brim with girlish glee,
A child, a very child is she,
Whose dream of heaven is still to be
At Home: for Home is Bliss.

Lewis Carroll

A Sea Dirge

There are certain things - as, a spider, a ghost,
The income-tax, gout, an umbrella for three -
That I hate, but the thing that I hate the most
Is a thing they call the Sea.

Pour some salt water over the floor -
Ugly I'm sure you'll allow it to be:
Suppose it extended a mile or more,
THAT'S very like the Sea.

Beat a dog till it howls outright -
Cruel, but all very well for a spree:
Suppose that he did so day and night,
THAT would be like the Sea.

I had a vision of nursery-maids;
Tens of thousands passed by me -
All leading children with wooden spades,
And this was by the Sea.

Who invented those spades of wood?
Who was it cut them out of the tree?
None, I think, but an idiot could -
Or one that loved the Sea.

It is pleasant and dreamy, no doubt, to float
With 'thoughts as boundless, and souls as free':
But, suppose you are very unwell in the boat,
How do you like the Sea?

There is an insect that people avoid
(Whence is derived the verb 'to flee').
Where have you been by it most annoyed?
In lodgings by the Sea.

If you like your coffee with sand for dregs,
A decided hint of salt in your tea,
And a fishy taste in the very eggs -
By all means choose the Sea.

And if, with these dainties to drink and eat,
You prefer not a vestige of grass or tree,
And a chronic state of wet in your feet,
Then - I recommend the Sea.

For I have friends who dwell by the coast -
Pleasant friends they are to me!
It is when I am with them I wonder most
That anyone likes the Sea.

They take me a walk: though tired and stiff,
To climb the heights I madly agree;

And, after a tumble or so from the cliff,
They kindly suggest the Sea.

I try the rocks, and I think it cool
That they laugh with such an excess of glee,
As I heavily slip into every pool
That skirts the cold cold Sea.

Lewis Carroll

A Strange Wild Song

He thought he saw an Elephant
That practised on a fife:
He looked again, and found it was
A letter from his wife.
"At length I realize," he said,
"The bitterness of life!"

He thought he saw a Buffalo
Upon the chimney-piece:
He looked again, and found it was
His Sister's Husband's Niece.
"Unless you leave this house," he said,
"I'll send for the police!"

he thought he saw a Rattlesnake
That questioned him in Greek:
He looked again, and found it was
The Middle of Next Week.
"The one thing I regret," he said,
"Is that it cannot speak!"

He thought he saw a Banker's Clerk
Descending from the bus:
He looked again, and found it was
A Hippopotamus.
"If this should stay to dine," he said,
"There won't be much for us!"

He thought he saw a Kangaroo
That worked a Coffee-mill:
He looked again, and found it was
A Vegetable-Pill.
"Were I to swallow this," he said,
"I should be very ill!"

He thought he saw a Coach-and-Four
That stood beside his bed:
He looked again, and found it was
A Bear without a Head.
"Poor thing," he said, "poor silly thing!
It's waiting to be fed!"

Lewis Carroll

A Valentine

Sent to a friend who had complained that I was glad enough to see him when he came, but didn't seem to miss him if he stayed away.

And cannot pleasures, while they last,
Be actual unless, when past,
They leave us shuddering and aghast,
With anguish smarting?
And cannot friends be firm and fast,
And yet bear parting?

And must I then, at Friendship's call,
Calmly resign the little all
(Trifling, I grant, it is and small)
I have of gladness,
And lend my being to the thrall
Of gloom and sadness?

And think you that I should be dumb,
And full DOLORUM OMNIUM,
Excepting when YOU choose to come
And share my dinner?
At other times be sour and glum
And daily thinner?

Must he then only live to weep,
Who'd prove his friendship true and deep
By day a lonely shadow creep,
At night-time languish,
Oft raising in his broken sleep
The moan of anguish?

The lover, if for certain days
His fair one be denied his gaze,
Sinks not in grief and wild amaze,
But, wiser wooer,
He spends the time in writing lays,
And posts them to her.

And if the verse flow free and fast,
Till even the poet is aghast,
A touching Valentine at last
The post shall carry,
When thirteen days are gone and past
Of February.

Farewell, dear friend, and when we meet,
In desert waste or crowded street,
Perhaps before this week shall fleet,
Perhaps to-morrow.
I trust to find YOUR heart the seat
Of wasting sorrow.

Lewis Carroll

Acrostic

Little maidens, when you look
On this little story-book,
Reading with attentive eye
Its enticing history,
Never think that hours of play
Are your only HOLIDAY,
And that in a HOUSE of joy
Lessons serve but to annoy:
If in any HOUSE you find
Children of a gentle mind,
Each the others pleasing ever--
Each the others vexing never--
Daily work and pastime daily
In their order taking gaily--
Then be very sure that they
Have a life of HOLIDAY.

Lewis Carroll

Alice And The White Knight

Alice was walking beside the White Knight in Looking Glass Land.

'You are sad.' the Knight said in an anxious tone: 'let me sing you a song to comfort you.'

'Is it very long?' Alice asked, for she had heard a good deal of poetry that day.

'It's long.' said the Knight, 'but it's very, very beautiful. Everybody that hears me sing it -
either it brings tears to their eyes, or else -'

'Or else what?' said Alice, for the Knight had made a sudden pause.

'Or else it doesn't, you know. The name of the song is called 'Haddocks' Eyes.''

'Oh, that's the name of the song, is it?' Alice said, trying to feel interested.

'No, you don't understand,' the Knight said, looking a little vexed. 'That's what the name
is called. The name really is 'The Aged, Aged Man.''

'Then I ought to have said 'That's what the song is called'?' Alice corrected herself.

'No you oughtn't: that's another thing. The song is called 'Ways and Means' but that's only
what it's called, you know!'

'Well, what is the song then?' said Alice, who was by this time completely bewildered.

'I was coming to that,' the Knight said. 'The song really is 'A-sitting On a Gate': and the tune's my own invention.'

So saying, he stopped his horse and let the reins fall on its neck: then slowly beating time
with one hand, and with a faint smile lighting up his gentle, foolish face, he began:

I'll tell thee everything I can;
There's little to relate.
I saw an aged, aged man,
A-sitting on a gate.
'Who are you, aged man?' I said,
' And how is it you live?'
And his answer trickled through my head
like water through a sieve.

He said 'I look for butterflies
That sleep among the wheat:
I make them into mutton pies,
And sell them in the street.
I sell them unto men,' he said,
'Who sail on stormy seas;
And that's the way I get my bread -

A trifle if you please.'

But I was thinking of a plan
To dye one's whiskers green,
And always use so large a fan
That they could not be seen.
So, having no reply to give
To what the old man said,
I cried, 'Come tell me how you live!'
And thumped him on the head.

His accents mild took up the tale:
He said, 'I go my ways,
And when I find a mountain-rill,
I set it in a blaze;
And thence they make a stuff they call
Rowland's Macassar Oil -
Yet twopence-halfpenny is all
They give me for my toil.'

But I was thinking of a way
To feed one's self on batter,
And so go on from day to day
Getting a little fatter.
I shook him well from side to side
Until his face was blue:
'Come tell me how you live,' I cried,
'And what it is you do!'

He said 'I hunt for haddocks' eyes
Among the heather bright,
And work them into waistcoat buttons
In the silent night.
And these I do not sell for gold
Or coin of silvery shine,
But for a copper halfpenny,
And that will purchase nine.

'I sometimes dig for buttered rolls,
Or set limed twigs for crabs;
I sometimes search for grassy knolls
For wheels of hansom-cabs.
And that's the way' (he gave a wink)
'By which I get my wealth -
And very gladly will I drink
Your Honour's noble health.'

I heard him then, for I had just
Completed my design
To keep the Menai Bridge from rust
By boiling it in wine.

I thanked him much for telling me
The way he got his wealth,
But chiefly for the wish that he
Might drink my noble health.

And now if e'er by chance I put
My fingers into glue,
Or madly squeeze a right-hand foot
Into a left-hand shoe,
Or if I drop upon my toe
A very heavy weight,
I weep, for it reminds me so
Of that old man I used to know -
Whose look was mild, whose speech was slow
Whose hair was whiter than the snow,
Whose face was very like a crow,
With eyes, like cinders, all aglow,
Who seemed distracted with his woe,
Who rocked his body to and fro,
And muttered mumblingly and low,
As if his mouth were full of dough,
Who snorted like a buffalo -
That summer evening long ago
A-sitting on a gate.

As the Knight sang the last words of the ballad, he gathered up the reins, and turned his horse's head along the road by which they had come.

Lewis Carroll

All In The Golden Afternoon

All in the golden afternoon
Full leisurely we glide;
For both our oars, with little skill,
By little arms are plied,
While little hands make vain pretense
Our wanderings to guide.

Ah, cruel Three! In such an hour,
Beneath such dreamy weather,
To beg a tale of breath too weak
To stir the tiniest feather!
Yet what can one poor voice avail
Against three tongues together?

Imperious Prima flashes forth
Her edict to "begin it"--
In gentler tones Secunda hopes
"There will be nonsense in it"--
While Tertia interrupts the tale
Not more than once a minute.

Anon, to sudden silence won,
In fancy they pursue
The dream-child moving through a land
Of wonders wild and new,
In friendly chat with bird or beast--
And half believe it true.

And ever, as the story drained
The wells of fancy dry,
And faintly strove that weary one
To put the subject by,
"The rest next time"--"It is next time!"
The happy voices cry.

Thus grew the tale of Wonderland:
Thus slowly, one by one,
Its quaint events were hammered out--
And now the tale is done,
And home we steer, a merry crew,
Beneath the setting sun.

Alice! a childish story take,
And with a gentle hand
Lay it where Childhood's dreams are twined
In Memory's mystic band,
Like pilgrim's withered wreath of flowers
Plucked in a far-off land.

Submitted by foolish Paeter

Lewis Carroll

Another Acrostic (In the style of Father William)

"Are you deaf, Father William!" the young man said,
"Did you hear what I told you just now?
"Excuse me for shouting! Don't waggle your head
"Like a blundering, sleepy old cow!
"A little maid dwelling in Wallington Town,
"Is my friend, so I beg to remark:
"Do you think she'd be pleased if a book were sent down
"Entitled 'The Hunt of the Snark?'"

"Pack it up in brown paper!" the old man cried,
"And seal it with olive-and-dove.
"I command you to do it!" he added with pride,
"Nor forget, my good fellow to send her beside
"Easter Greetings, and give her my love."

Lewis Carroll

Atalanta In Camden -Town

AY, 'twas here, on this spot,
In that summer of yore,
Atalanta did not
Vote my presence a bore,
Nor reply to my tenderest talk "She had
heard all that nonsense before."

She'd the brooch I had bought
And the necklace and sash on,
And her heart, as I thought,
Was alive to my passion;
And she'd done up her hair in the style that
the Empress had brought into fashion.

I had been to the play
With my pearl of a Peri -
But, for all I could say,
She declared she was weary,
That "the place was so crowded and hot, and
she couldn't abide that Dundreary."

Then I thought "Lucky boy!
'Tis for YOU that she whimpers!"
And I noted with joy
Those sensational simpers:
And I said "This is scrumptious!" - a
phrase I had learned from the Devonshire shrimpers.

And I vowed "'Twill be said
I'm a fortunate fellow,
When the breakfast is spread,
When the topers are mellow,
When the foam of the bride-cake is white,
and the fierce orange-blossoms are yellow!"

O that languishing yawn!
O those eloquent eyes!
I was drunk with the dawn
Of a splendid surmise -
I was stung by a look, I was slain by a tear,
by a tempest of sighs.

Then I whispered "I see
The sweet secret thou keepest.
And the yearning for ME
That thou wistfully weepest!
And the question is 'License or Banns?',
though undoubtedly Banns are the cheapest."

"Be my Hero," said I,
"And let ME be Leander!"
But I lost her reply -

Something ending with "gander" -
For the omnibus rattled so loud that no
mortal could quite understand her.

Lewis Carroll

Bessie's Song To Her Doll

Matilda Jane, you never look
At any toy or picture-book.
I show you pretty things in vain
You must be blind, Matilda Jane!

I ask you riddles, tell you tales,
But all our conversation fails.
You never answer me again
I fear you're dumb, Matilda Jane!

Matilda darling, when I call,
You never seem to hear at all.
I shout with all my might and main
But you're so deaf, Matilda Jane!

Matilda Jane, you needn't mind,
For, though you're deaf and dumb and blind,
There's some one loves you, it is plain
And that is me, Matilda Jane!

Lewis Carroll

Brother And Sister

"SISTER, sister, go to bed!
Go and rest your weary head."
Thus the prudent brother said.

"Do you want a battered hide,
Or scratches to your face applied?"
Thus his sister calm replied.

"Sister, do not raise my wrath.
I'd make you into mutton broth
As easily as kill a moth"

The sister raised her beaming eye
And looked on him indignantly
And sternly answered, "Only try!"

Off to the cook he quickly ran.
"Dear Cook, please lend a frying-pan
To me as quickly as you can."

And wherefore should I lend it you?"
"The reason, Cook, is plain to view.
I wish to make an Irish stew."

"What meat is in that stew to go?"
"My sister'll be the contents!"
"Oh"
"You'll lend the pan to me, Cook?"
"No!"

Moral: Never stew your sister.

Lewis Carroll

Dedication

Inscribed to a Dear Child:
In Memory of Golden Summer Hours
And Whispers of a Summer Sea

Girt with a boyish garb for boyish task,
Eager she wields her spade: yet loves as well
Rest on a friendly knee, intent to ask
The tale he loves to tell.
Rude spirits of the seething outer strife,
Unmeet to read her pure and simple spright,
Deem if you list, such hours a waste of life,
Empty of all delight!

Chat on, sweet Maid, and rescue from annoy
Hearts that by wiser talk are unbeguiled.
Ah, happy he who owns that tenderest joy,
The heart-love of a child!

Lewis Carroll

Dreamland

When midnight mists are creeping,
And all the land is sleeping,
Around me tread the mighty dead,
And slowly pass away.
Lo, warriors, saints, and sages,
From out the vanished ages,
With solemn pace and reverend face
Appear and pass away.
The blaze of noonday splendour,
The twilight soft and tender,
May charm the eye: yet they shall die,
Shall die and pass away.
But here, in Dreamland's centre,
No spoiler's hand may enter,
These visions fair, this radiance rare,
Shall never pass away.
I see the shadows falling,
The forms of old recalling;
Around me tread the mighty dead,
And slowly pass away.

Lewis Carroll

Echoes

Lady Clara Vere de Vere
Was eight years old, she said:
Every ringlet, lightly shaken, ran itself in golden thread.

She took her little porringer:
Of me she shall not win renown:
For the baseness of its nature shall have strength to drag her
down.

"Sisters and brothers, little Maid?
There stands the Inspector at thy door:
Like a dog, he hunts for boys who know not two and two are four."

"Kind words are more than coronets,"
She said, and wondering looked at me:
"It is the dead unhappy night, and I must hurry home to tea."

Lewis Carroll

Epilogue to Through the Looking Glass

A boat, beneath a sunny sky
Lingering onward dreamily
In an evening of July --

Children three that nestle near,
Eager eye and willing ear
Pleased a simple tale to hear --

Long has paled that sunny sky:
Echoes fade and memories die:
Autumn frosts have slain July.

Still she haunts me, phantomwise
Alice moving under skies
Never seen by waking eyes.

Children yet, the tale to hear,
Eager eye and willing ear,
Lovingly shall nestle near.

In a Wonderland they lie,
Dreaming as the days go by,
Dreaming as the summers die:

Ever drifting down the stream --
Lingering in the golden gleam --
Life what is it but a dream?

Lewis Carroll

Fame's Penny-Trumpet

Blow, blow your trumpets till they crack,
Ye little men of little souls!
And bid them huddle at your back -
Gold-sucking leeches, shoals on shoals!

Fill all the air with hungry wails -
"Reward us, ere we think or write!
Without your Gold mere Knowledge fails
To sate the swinish appetite!"

And, where great Plato paced serene,
Or Newton paused with wistful eye,
Rush to the chace with hoofs unclean
And Babel-clamour of the sty

Be yours the pay: be theirs the praise:
We will not rob them of their due,
Nor vex the ghosts of other days
By naming them along with you.

They sought and found undying fame:
They toiled not for reward nor thanks:
Their cheeks are hot with honest shame
For you, the modern mountebanks!

Who preach of Justice - plead with tears
That Love and Mercy should abound -
While marking with complacent ears
The moaning of some tortured hound:

Who prate of Wisdom - nay, forbear,
Lest Wisdom turn on you in wrath,
Trampling, with heel that will not spare,
The vermin that beset her path!

Go, throng each other's drawing-rooms,
Ye idols of a petty clique:
Strut your brief hour in borrowed plumes,
And make your penny-trumpets squeak.

Deck your dull talk with pilfered shreds
Of learning from a nobler time,
And oil each other's little heads
With mutual Flattery's golden slime:

And when the topmost height ye gain,
And stand in Glory's ether clear,
And grasp the prize of all your pain -
So many hundred pounds a year -

Then let Fame's banner be unfurled!
Sing Paeans for a victory won!

Ye tapers, that would light the world,
And cast a shadow on the Sun -

Who still shall pour His rays sublime,
One crystal flood, from East to West,
When YE have burned your little time
And feebly flickered into rest!

Lewis Carroll

Father William

'You are old, father William,' the young man said,
'And your hair has become very white;
And yet you incessantly stand on your head -
Do you think, at your age, it is right?'

'In my youth,' father William replied to his son,
'I feared it would injure the brain;
But now that I'm perfectly sure I have none,
Why, I do it again and again.'

'You are old,' said the youth, 'as I mentioned before,
And have grown most uncommonly fat;
Yet you turned a back-somersault in at the door -
Pray, what is the reason of that?'

'In my youth,' said the sage, as he shook his grey locks,
'I kept all my limbs very supple
By the use of this ointment - one shilling the box -
Allow me to sell you a couple.'

'You are old,' said the youth, 'and your jaws are too weak
For anything tougher than suet;
Yet you finished the goose, with the bones and the beak -
Pray, how did you manage to do it?'

'In my youth,' said his father, 'I took to the law,
And argued each case with my wife;
And the muscular strength, which it gave to my jaw,
Has lasted the rest of my life.'

'You are old,' said the youth; one would hardly suppose
That your eye was as steady as ever;
Yet you balanced an eel on the end of your nose -
What made you so awfully clever?'

'I have answered three questions, and that is enough,'
Said his father; 'don't give yourself airs!
Do you think I can listen all day to such stuff?
Be off, or I'll kick you down stairs!'

'That is not said right,' said the Caterpillar.
'Not quite right, I'm afraid,' said Alice timidly;
'some of the words have got altered.'
'It is wrong from beginning to end,'
said the Caterpillar decidedly, and
there was silence for some minutes.

Lewis Carroll

Fit the Eighth (Hunting of the Snark)

The Vanishing

They sought it with thimbles, they sought it with care;
They pursued it with forks and hope;
They threatened its life with a railway-share;
They charmed it with smiles and soap.
They shuddered to think that the chase might fail,
And the Beaver, excited at last,
Went bounding along on the tip of its tail,
For the daylight was nearly past.

"There is Thingumbob shouting!" the Bellman said.
"He is shouting like mad, only hark!
He is waving his hands, he is wagging his head,
He has certainly found a Snark!"

They gazed in delight, while the Butcher exclaimed
"He was always a desperate wag!"
They beheld him--their Baker--their hero unnamed--
On the top of a neighbouring crag,

Erect and sublime, for one moment of time,
In the next, that wild figure they saw
(As if stung by a spasm) plunge into a chasm,
While they waited and listened in awe.

"It's a Snark!" was the sound that first came to their ears,
And seemed almost too good to be true.
Then followed a torrent of laughter and cheers:
Then the ominous words "It's a Boo--"

Then, silence. Some fancied they heard in the air
A weary and wandering sigh
That sounded like "--jum!" but the others declare
It was only a breeze that went by.

They hunted till darkness came on, but they found
Not a button, or feather, or mark,
By which they could tell that they stood on the ground
Where the Baker had met with the Snark.

In the midst of the word he was trying to say
In the midst of his laughter and glee,
He had softly and suddenly vanished away--
For the Snark was a Boojum, you see.

Lewis Carroll

Fit the Fifth (Hunting of the Snark)

The Beaver's Lesson

They sought it with thimbles, they sought it with care;
They pursued it with forks and hope;
They threatened its life with a railway-share;
They charmed it with smiles and soap.

Then the Butcher contrived an ingenious plan
For making a separate sally;
And fixed on a spot unfrequented by man,
A dismal and desolate valley.

But the very same plan to the Beaver occurred:
It had chosen the very same place:
Yet neither betrayed, by a sign or a word,
The disgust that appeared in his face.

Each thought he was thinking of nothing but "Snark"
And the glorious work of the day;
And each tried to pretend that he did not remark
That the other was going that way.

But the valley grew narrow and narrower still,
And the evening got darker and colder,
Till (merely from nervousness, not from goodwill)
They marched along shoulder to shoulder.

Then a scream, shrill and high, rent the shuddering sky,
And they knew that some danger was near:
The Beaver turned pale to the tip of its tail,
And even the Butcher felt queer.

He thought of his childhood, left far far behind--
That blissful and innocent state--
The sound so exactly recalled to his mind
A pencil that squeaks on a slate!

"'Tis the voice of the Jubjub!" he suddenly cried.
(This man, that they used to call "Dunce.")
"As the Bellman would tell you," he added with pride,
"I have uttered that sentiment once.

"'Tis the note of the Jubjub! Keep count, I entreat;
You will find I have told it you twice.
'Tis the song of the Jubjub! The proof is complete,
If only I've stated it thrice."

The Beaver had counted with scrupulous care,
Attending to every word:
But it fairly lost heart, and outgrabe in despair,

When the third repetition occurred.

It felt that, in spite of all possible pains,
It had somehow contrived to lose count,
And the only thing now was to rack its poor brains
By reckoning up the amount.

"Two added to one--if that could but be done,"
It said, "with one's fingers and thumbs!"
Recollecting with tears how, in earlier years,
It had taken no pains with its sums.

"The thing can be done," said the Butcher, "I think.
The thing must be done, I am sure.
The thing shall be done! Bring me paper and ink,
The best there is time to procure."

The Beaver brought paper,portfolio, pens,
And ink in unfailing supplies:
While strange creepy creatures came out of their dens,
And watched them with wondering eyes.

So engrossed was the Butcher, he heeded them not,
As he wrote with a pen in each hand,
And explained all the while in a popular style
Which the Beaver could well understand.

"Taking Three as the subject to reason about--
A convenient number to state--
We add Seven, and Ten, and then multiply out
By One Thousand diminished by Eight.

"The result we proceed to divide, as you see,
By Nine Hundred and Ninety Two:
Then subtract Seventeen, and the answer must be
Exactly and perfectly true.

"The method employed I would gladly explain,
While I have it so clear in my head,
If I had but the time and you had but the brain--
But much yet remains to be said.

"In one moment I've seen what has hitherto been
Enveloped in absolute mystery,
And without extra charge I will give you at large
A Lesson in Natural History."

In his genial way he proceeded to say
(Forgetting all laws of propriety,
And that giving instruction, without introduction,
Would have caused quite a thrill in Society),

"As to temper the Jubjub's a desperate bird,
Since it lives in perpetual passion:
Its taste in costume is entirely absurd--
It is ages ahead of the fashion:

"But it knows any friend it has met once before:
It never will look at a bride:
And in charity-meetings it stands at the door,
And collects--though it does not subscribe.

" Its flavor when cooked is more exquisite far
Than mutton, or oysters, or eggs:
(Some think it keeps best in an ivory jar,
And some, in mahogany kegs)

"You boil it in sawdust: you salt it in glue:
You condense it with locusts and tape:
Still keeping one principal object in view--
To preserve its symmetrical shape."

The Butcher would gladly have talked till next day,
But he felt that the lesson must end,
And he wept with delight in attempting to say
He considered the Beaver his friend.

While the Beaver confessed, with affectionate looks
More eloquent even than tears,
It had learned in ten minutes far more than all books
Would have taught it in seventy years.

They returned hand-in-hand, and the Bellman, unmanned
(For a moment) with noble emotion,
Said "This amply repays all the wearisome days
We have spent on the billowy ocean!"

Such friends, as the Beaver and Butcher became,
Have seldom if ever been known;
In winter or summer, 'twas always the same--
You could never meet either alone.

And when quarrels arose--as one frequently finds
Quarrels will, spite of every endeavor--
The song of the Jubjub recurred to their minds,
And cemented their friendship for ever!

Lewis Carroll

Fit the First: (Hunting of the Snark)

The Landing

"Just the place for a Snark!" the Bellman cried,
As he landed his crew with care;
Supporting each man on the top of the tide
By a finger entwined in his hair.
"Just the place for a Snark! I have said it twice:
That alone should encourage the crew.
Just the place for a Snark! I have said it thrice:
What I tell you three times is true."

The crew was complete: it included a Boots--
A maker of Bonnets and Hoods--
A Barrister, brought to arrange their disputes--
And a Broker, to value their goods.

A Billiard-marker, whose skill was immense,
Might perhaps have won more than his share--
But a Banker, engaged at enormous expense,
Had the whole of their cash in his care.

There was also a Beaver, that paced on the deck,
Or would sit making lace in the bow:
And had often (the Bellman said) saved them from wreck
Though none of the sailors knew how.

There was one who was famed for the number of things
He forgot when he entered the ship:
His umbrella, his watch, all his jewels and rings,
And the clothes he had bought for the trip.

He had forty-two boxes, all carefully packed,
With his name painted clearly on each:
But, since he omitted to mention the fact,
They were all left behind on the beach.

The loss of his clothes hardly mattered, because
He had seven coats on when he came,
With three pair of boots--but the worst of is was,
He had wholly forgotten his name.

He would answer to "Hi!" or to any loud cry,
Such as "Fry me!" or "Fritter my wig!"
To "What-you-may-call-um!" or "What-was-his-name!"
But especially "Thing-um-a-jig!"

While, for those who preferred a more forcible word,
He had different names from these:
His intimate friends called him "Candle-ends",
And his enemies "Toasted-cheese"

"His form is ungainly--his intellect small--"

(So the Bellman would often remark)--
"But his courage is perfect! And that, after all,
Is the thing that one needs with a Snark."

He would joke with hyaenas, returning their stare
With an impudent wag of the head:
And he once went a walk, paw-in-paw, with a bear,
"Just to keep up its spirits," he said.

He came as a Baker: but owned, when too late--
And it drove the poor Bellman half-mad--
He could only bake Bridecake--for which, I may state,
No materials were to be had.

The last of the crew needs especial remark,
Though he looked an incredible dunce:
He had just one idea--but, that one being "Snark",
The good Bellman engaged him at once.

He came as a Butcher: but gravely declared,
When the ship had been sailing a week,
He could only kill Beavers. The Bellman looked scared,
And was almost too frightened to speak:

But at length he explained, in a tremulous tone,
There was only one Beaver on board;
And that was a tame one he had of his own,
Whose death would be deeply deplored.

The Beaver, who happened to hear the remark,
Protested, with tears in its eyes,
That not even the rapture of hunting the Snark
Could atone for that dismal surprise!

It strongly advised that the Butcher should be
Conveyed in a separate ship:
But the Bellman declared that would never agree
With the plans he had made for the trip:

Navigation was always a difficult art,
Though with only one ship and one bell:
And he feared he must really decline, for his part,
Undertaking another as well.

The Beaver's best course was, no doubt, to procure
A second-hand dagger-proof coat--
So the baker advised it--and next, to insure
Its life in some Office of note:

This the Baker suggested, and offered for hire
(On moderate terms), or for sale,
Two excellent Policies, one Against Fire

And one Against Damage From Hail.

Yet still, ever after that sorrowful day,
Whenever the Butcher was by,
The Beaver kept looking the opposite way,
And appeared unaccountably shy.

Lewis Carroll

Fit the Fourth (Hunting of the Snark)

The Hunting

The Bellman looked uffish, and wrinkled his brow.
"If only you'd spoken before!
It's excessively awkward to mention it now,
With the Snark, so to speak, at the door!
"We should all of us grieve, as you well may believe,
If you never were met with again--
But surely, my man, when the voyage began,
You might have suggested it then?

"It's excessively awkward to mention it now--
As I think I've already remarked."
And the man they called "Hi!" replied, with a sigh,
"I informed you the day we embarked.

"You may charge me with murder--or want of sense--
(We are all of us weak at times):
But the slightest approach to a false pretence
Was never among my crimes!

"I said it in Hebrew--I said it in Dutch--
I said it in German and Greek:
But I wholly forgot (and it vexes me much)
That English is what you speak!"

"'Tis a pitiful tale," said the Bellman, whose face
Had grown longer at every word:
"But, now that you've stated the whole of your case,
More debate would be simply absurd.

"The rest of my speech" (he exclaimed to his men)
"You shall hear when I've leisure to speak it.
But the Snark is at hand, let me tell you again!
'Tis your glorious duty to seek it!

"To seek it with thimbles, to seek it with care;
To pursue it with forks and hope;
To threaten its life with a railway-share;
To charm it with smiles and soap!

"For the Snark's a peculiar creature, that wo'n't
Be caught in a commonplace way.
Do all that you know, and try all that you don't:
Not a chance must be wasted to-day!

"For England expects--I forbear to proceed:
'Tis a maxim tremendous, but trite:
And you'd best be unpacking the things that you need
To rig yourselves out for the fight."

Then the Banker endorsed a blank cheque (which he crossed),
And changed his loose silver for notes:
The Baker with care combed his whiskers and hair.
And shook the dust out of his coats:

The Boots and the Broker were sharpening a spade--
Each working the grindstone in turn:
But the Beaver went on making lace, and displayed
No interest in the concern:

Though the Barrister tried to appeal to its pride
And vainly proceeded to cite
A number of cases, in which making laces
Had proved an infringement of right.

The maker of Bonnets ferociously planned
A novel arrangement of bows:
While the Billiard-marker with quivering hand
Was chalking the tip of his nose.

But the Butcher turned nervous, and dressed himself fine,
With yellow kid gloves and a ruff--
Said he felt it exactly like going to dine,
Which the Bellman declared was all "stuff".

"Introduce me, now there's a good fellow," he said,
"If we happen to meet it together!"
And the Bellman, sagaciously nodding his head,
Said "That must depend on the weather."

The Beaver went simply galumphing about,
At seeing the Butcher so shy:
And even the Baker, though stupid and stout,
Made an effort to wink with one eye.

"Be a man!" said the Bellman in wrath, as he heard
The Butcher beginning to sob.
"Should we meet with a Jubjub, that desperate bird,
We shall need all our strength for the job!"

Lewis Carroll

Fit the Second (Hunting of the Snark)

The Bellman's Speech

The Bellman himself they all praised to the skies--
Such a carriage, such ease and such grace!
Such solemnity, too! One could see he was wise,
The moment one looked in his face!
He had bought a large map representing the sea,
Without the least vestige of land:
And the crew were much pleased when they found it to be
A map they could all understand.

"What's the good of Mercator's North Poles and Equators,
Tropics, Zones, and Meridian Lines?"
So the Bellman would cry: and the crew would reply
"They are merely conventional signs!

"Other maps are such shapes, with their islands and capes!
But we've got our brave Captain to thank"
(So the crew would protest) "that he's bought us the best--
A perfect and absolute blank!"

This was charming, no doubt: but they shortly found out
That the Captain they trusted so well
Had only one notion for crossing the ocean
And that was to tingle his bell.

He was thoughtful and grave--but the orders he gave
Were enough to bewilder a crew.
When he cried "Steer to starboard, but keep her head larboard!"
What on earth was the helmsman to do?

Then the bowsprit got mixed with the rudder sometimes:
A thing, as the Bellman remarked,
That frequently happens in tropical climes,
When a vessel is, so to speak, "snarked".

But the principal failing occurred in the sailing,
And the Bellman, perplexed and distressed,
Said he had hoped, at least, when the wind blew due East,
That the ship would not travel due West!

But the danger was past--they had landed at last,
With their boxes, portmanteaus, and bags:
Yet at first sight the crew were not pleased with the view
Which consisted of chasms and crags.

The Bellman perceived that their spirits were low,
And repeated in musical tone
Some jokes he had kept for a season of woe--
But the crew would do nothing but groan.

He served out some grog with a liberal hand,

And bade them sit down on the beach:
And they could not but own that their Captain looked grand,
As he stood and delivered his speech.

"Friends, Romans, and countrymen, lend me your ears!"
(They were all of them fond of quotations:
So they drank to his health, and they gave him three cheers,
While he served out additional rations).

"We have sailed many months, we have sailed many weeks,
(Four weeks to the month you may mark),
But never as yet ('tis your Captain who speaks)
Have we caught the least glimpse of a Snark!

"We have sailed many weeks, we have sailed many days,
(Seven days to the week I allow),
But a Snark, on the which we might lovingly gaze,
We have never beheld till now!

"Come, listen, my men, while I tell you again
The five unmistakable marks
By which you may know, wheresoever you go,
The warranted genuine Snarks.

"Let us take them in order. The first is the taste,
Which is meagre and hollow, but crisp:
Like a coat that is rather too tight in the waist,
With a flavour of Will-o'-the-Wisp.

"Its habit of getting up late you'll agree
That it carries too far, when I say
That it frequently breakfasts at five-o'clock tea,
And dines on the following day.

"The third is its slowness in taking a jest.
Should you happen to venture on one,
It will sigh like a thing that is deeply distressed:
And it always looks grave at a pun.

"The fourth is its fondness for bathing-machines,
Which it constantly carries about,
And believes that they add to the beauty of scenes--
A sentiment open to doubt.

"The fifth is ambition. It next will be right
To describe each particular batch:
Distinguishing those that have feathers, and bite,
From those that have whiskers, and scratch.

"For, although common Snarks do no manner of harm,
Yet I feel it my duty to say
Some are Boojums--" The Bellman broke off in alarm,

For the Baker had fainted away.

Lewis Carroll

Fit the Seventh (Hunting of the Snark)

The Banker's Fate

They sought it with thimbles, they sought it with care;
They pursued it with forks and hope;
They threatened its life with a railway-share;
They charmed it with smiles and soap.
And the Banker, inspired with a courage so new
It was matter for general remark,
Rushed madly ahead and was lost to their view
In his zeal to discover the Snark.

But while he was seeking with thimbles and care,
A Bandersnatch swiftly drew nigh
And grabbed at the Banker, who shrieked in despair,
For he knew it was useless to fly.

He offered large discount--he offered a cheque
(Drawn "to bearer") for seven-pounds-ten:
But the Bandersnatch merely extended its neck
And grabbed at the Banker again.

Without rest or pause--while those frumious jaws
Went savagely snapping around--
He skipped and he hopped, and he floundered and flopped,
Till fainting he fell to the ground.

The Bandersnatch fled as the others appeared
Led on by that fear-stricken yell:
And the Bellman remarked "It is just as I feared!"
And solemnly tolled on his bell.

He was black in the face, and they scarcely could trace
The least likeness to what he had been:
While so great was the fright that his waistcoat turned white--
A wonderful thing to be seen!

To the horror of all who were present that day,
He uprose in full evening dress,
And with senseless grimaces endeavoured to say
What his tongue could no longer express.

Down he sank in a chair--ran his hands through his hair--
And chanted in mimsiest tones
Words whose utter inanity proved his insanity,
While he rattled a couple of bones.

"Leave him here to his fate--it is getting so late!"
The Bellman exclaimed in a fright.
"We have lost half a day. Any further delay,
And we sha'n't catch a Snark before night!"

Lewis Carroll

Fit the Sixth (Hunting of the Snark)

The Barrister's Dream

They sought it with thimbles, they sought it with care;
They pursued it with forks and hope;
They threatened its life with a railway-share;
They charmed it with smiles and soap.
But the Barrister, weary of proving in vain
That the Beaver's lace-making was wrong,
Fell asleep, and in dreams saw the creature quite plain
That his fancy had dwelt on so long.

He dreamed that he stood in a shadowy Court,
Where the Snark, with a glass in its eye,
Dressed in gown, bands, and wig, was defending a pig
On the charge of deserting its sty.

The Witnesses proved, without error or flaw,
That the sty was deserted when found:
And the Judge kept explaining the state of the law
In a soft under-current of sound.

The indictment had never been clearly expressed,
And it seemed that the Snark had begun,
And had spoken three hours, before any one guessed
What the pig was supposed to have done.

The Jury had each formed a different view
(Long before the indictment was read),
And they all spoke at once, so that none of them knew
One word that the others had said.

"You must know--" said the Judge: but the Snark exclaimed "Fudge!"
That statute is obsolete quite!
Let me tell you, my friends, the whole question depends
On an ancient manorial right.

"In the matter of Treason the pig would appear
To have aided, but scarcely abetted:
While the charge of Insolvency fails, it is clear,
If you grant the plea 'never indebted'.

"The fact of Desertion I will not dispute:
But its guilt, as I trust, is removed
(So far as relates to the costs of this suit)
By the Alibi which has been proved.

"My poor client's fate now depends on your votes."
Here the speaker sat down in his place,
And directed the Judge to refer to his notes
And briefly to sum up the case.

But the Judge said he never had summed up before;

So the Snark undertook it instead,
And summed it so well that it came to far more
Than the Witnesses ever had said!

When the verdict was called for, the Jury declined,
As the word was so puzzling to spell;
But they ventured to hope that the Snark wouldn't mind
Undertaking that duty as well.

So the Snark found the verdict, although, as it owned,
It was spent with the toils of the day:
When it said the word "GUILTY!" the Jury all groaned
And some of them fainted away.

Then the Snark pronounced sentence, the Judge being quite
Too nervous to utter a word:
When it rose to its feet, there was silence like night,
And the fall of a pin might be heard.

"Transportation for life" was the sentence it gave,
"And then to be fined forty pound."
The Jury all cheered, though the Judge said he feared
That the phrase was not legally sound.

But their wild exultation was suddenly checked
When the jailer informed them, with tears,
Such a sentence would not have the slightest effect,
As the pig had been dead for some years.

The Judge left the Court, looking deeply disgusted
But the Snark, though a little aghast,
As the lawyer to whom the defence was intrusted,
Went bellowing on to the last.

Thus the Barrister dreamed, while the bellowing seemed
To grow every moment more clear:
Till he woke to the knell of a furious bell,
Which the Bellman rang close at his ear.

Lewis Carroll

Fit the Third (Hunting of the Snark)

The Baker's Tale

They roused him with muffins--they roused him with ice--
They roused him with mustard and cress--
They roused him with jam and judicious advice--
They set him conundrums to guess.
When at length he sat up and was able to speak,
His sad story he offered to tell;
And the Bellman cried "Silence! Not even a shriek!"
And excitedly tingled his bell.

There was silence supreme! Not a shriek, not a scream,
Scarcely even a howl or a groan,
As the man they called "Ho!" told his story of woe
In an antediluvian tone.

"My father and mother were honest, though poor--"
"Skip all that!" cried the Bellman in haste.
"If it once becomes dark, there's no chance of a Snark--
We have hardly a minute to waste!"

"I skip forty years," said the Baker in tears,
"And proceed without further remark
To the day when you took me aboard of your ship
To help you in hunting the Snark.

"A dear uncle of mine (after whom I was named)
Remarked, when I bade him farewell--"
"Oh, skip your dear uncle!" the Bellman exclaimed,
As he angrily tingled his bell.

"He remarked to me then," said that mildest of men,
"'If your Snark be a Snark, that is right:
Fetch it home by all means--you may serve it with greens
And it's handy for striking a light.

"'You may seek it with thimbles--and seek it with care--
You may hunt it with forks and hope;
You may threaten its life with a railway-share;
You may charm it with smiles and soap--'"

("That's exactly the method," the Bellman bold
In a hasty parenthesis cried,
"That's exactly the way I have always been told
That the capture of Snarks should be tried!")

"'But oh, beamish nephew, beware of the day,
If your Snark be a Boojum! For then
You will softly and suddenly vanish away,
And never be met with again!"

"It is this, it is this that oppresses my soul,

When I think of my uncle's last words:
And my heart is like nothing so much as a bowl
Brimming over with quivering curds!

"It is this, it is this--" "We have had that before!"
The Bellman indignantly said.
And the Baker replied "Let me say it once more.
It is this, it is this that I dread!

"I engage with the Snark--every night after dark--
In a dreamy delirious fight:
I serve it with greens in those shadowy scenes,
And I use it for striking a light:

"But if ever I meet with a Boojum, that day,
In a moment (of this I am sure),
I shall softly and suddenly vanish away--
And the notion I cannot endure!"

Lewis Carroll

Four Riddles

I

There was an ancient City, stricken down
With a strange frenzy, and for many a day
They paced from morn to eve the crowded town,
And danced the night away.

I asked the cause: the aged man grew sad:
They pointed to a building gray and tall,
And hoarsely answered "Step inside, my lad,
And then you'll see it all."

Yet what are all such gaieties to me
Whose thoughts are full of indices and surds?

x*x + 7x + 53 = 11/3

But something whispered "It will soon be done:
Bands cannot always play, nor ladies smile:
Endure with patience the distasteful fun
For just a little while!"

A change came o'er my Vision - it was night:
We clove a pathway through a frantic throng:
The steeds, wild-plunging, filled us with affright:
The chariots whirled along.

Within a marble hall a river ran -
A living tide, half muslin and half cloth:
And here one mourned a broken wreath or fan,
Yet swallowed down her wrath;

And here one offered to a thirsty fair
(His words half-drowned amid those thunders tuneful)
Some frozen viand (there were many there),
A tooth-ache in each spoonful.

There comes a happy pause, for human strength
Will not endure to dance without cessation;
And every one must reach the point at length
Of absolute prostration.

At such a moment ladies learn to give,
To partners who would urge them over-much,
A flat and yet decided negative -
Photographers love such.

There comes a welcome summons - hope revives,
And fading eyes grow bright, and pulses quicken:
Incessant pop the corks, and busy knives
Dispense the tongue and chicken.

Flushed with new life, the crowd flows back again:
And all is tangled talk and mazy motion -
Much like a waving field of golden grain,
Or a tempestuous ocean.

And thus they give the time, that Nature meant
For peaceful sleep and meditative snores,
To ceaseless din and mindless merriment
And waste of shoes and floors.

And One (we name him not) that flies the flowers,
That dreads the dances, and that shuns the salads,
They doom to pass in solitude the hours,
Writing acrostic-ballads.

How late it grows! The hour is surely past
That should have warned us with its double knock?
The twilight wanes, and morning comes at last -
"Oh, Uncle, what's o'clock?"

The Uncle gravely nods, and wisely winks.
It MAY mean much, but how is one to know?
He opens his mouth - yet out of it, methinks,
No words of wisdom flow.

II

Empress of Art, for thee I twine
This wreath with all too slender skill.
Forgive my Muse each halting line,
And for the deed accept the will!

O day of tears! Whence comes this spectre grim,
Parting, like Death's cold river, souls that love?
Is not he bound to thee, as thou to him,
By vows, unwhispered here, yet heard above?

And still it lives, that keen and heavenward flame,
Lives in his eye, and trembles in his tone:
And these wild words of fury but proclaim
A heart that beats for thee, for thee alone!

But all is lost: that mighty mind o'erthrown,
Like sweet bells jangled, piteous sight to see!
"Doubt that the stars are fire," so runs his moan,
"Doubt Truth herself, but not my love for thee!"

A sadder vision yet: thine aged sire
Shaming his hoary locks with treacherous wile!

And dost thou now doubt Truth to be a liar?
And wilt thou die, that hast forgot to smile?

Nay, get thee hence! Leave all thy winsome ways
And the faint fragrance of thy scattered flowers:
In holy silence wait the appointed days,
And weep away the leaden-footed hours.

III.

The air is bright with hues of light
And rich with laughter and with singing:
Young hearts beat high in ecstasy,
And banners wave, and bells are ringing:
But silence falls with fading day,
And there's an end to mirth and play.
Ah, well-a-day

Rest your old bones, ye wrinkled crones!
The kettle sings, the firelight dances.
Deep be it quaffed, the magic draught
That fills the soul with golden fancies!
For Youth and Pleasance will not stay,
And ye are withered, worn, and gray.
Ah, well-a-day!

O fair cold face! O form of grace,
For human passion madly yearning!
O weary air of dumb despair,
From marble won, to marble turning!
"Leave us not thus!" we fondly pray.
"We cannot let thee pass away!"
Ah, well-a-day!

IV.

My First is singular at best:
More plural is my Second:
My Third is far the pluralest -
So plural-plural, I protest
It scarcely can be reckoned!

My First is followed by a bird:
My Second by believers
In magic art: my simple Third
Follows, too often, hopes absurd
And plausible deceivers.

My First to get at wisdom tries -
A failure melancholy!

My Second men revered as wise:
My Third from heights of wisdom flies
To depths of frantic folly.

My First is ageing day by day:
My Second's age is ended:
My Third enjoys an age, they say,
That never seems to fade away,
Through centuries extended.

My Whole? I need a poet's pen
To paint her myriad phases:
The monarch, and the slave, of men -
A mountain-summit, and a den
Of dark and deadly mazes -

A flashing light - a fleeting shade -
Beginning, end, and middle
Of all that human art hath made
Or wit devised! Go, seek HER aid,
If you would read my riddle!

Lewis Carroll

Hiawatha's Photographing

From his shoulder Hiawatha
Took the camera of rosewood,
Made of sliding, folding rosewood;
Neatly put it all together.
In its case it lay compactly,
Folded into nearly nothing;

But he opened out the hinges,
Pushed and pulled the joints and hinges,
Till it looked all squares and oblongs,
Like a complicated figure
In the Second Book of Euclid.

This he perched upon a tripod -
Crouched beneath its dusky cover -
Stretched his hand, enforcing silence -
Said, "Be motionless, I beg you!"
Mystic, awful was the process.

All the family in order
Sat before him for their pictures:
Each in turn, as he was taken,
Volunteered his own suggestions,
His ingenious suggestions.

First the Governor, the Father:
He suggested velvet curtains
Looped about a massy pillar;
And the corner of a table,
Of a rosewood dining-table.
He would hold a scroll of something,
Hold it firmly in his left-hand;
He would keep his right-hand buried
(Like Napoleon) in his waistcoat;
He would contemplate the distance
With a look of pensive meaning,
As of ducks that die ill tempests.

Grand, heroic was the notion:
Yet the picture failed entirely:
Failed, because he moved a little,
Moved, because he couldn't help it.

Next, his better half took courage;
SHE would have her picture taken.
She came dressed beyond description,
Dressed in jewels and in satin
Far too gorgeous for an empress.
Gracefully she sat down sideways,
With a simper scarcely human,
Holding in her hand a bouquet
Rather larger than a cabbage.

All the while that she was sitting,
Still the lady chattered, chattered,
Like a monkey in the forest.
"Am I sitting still?" she asked him.
"Is my face enough in profile?
Shall I hold the bouquet higher?
Will it came into the picture?"
And the picture failed completely.

Next the Son, the Stunning-Cantab:
He suggested curves of beauty,
Curves pervading all his figure,
Which the eye might follow onward,
Till they centered in the breast-pin,
Centered in the golden breast-pin.
He had learnt it all from Ruskin
(Author of 'The Stones of Venice,'
'Seven Lamps of Architecture,'
'Modern Painters,' and some others);
And perhaps he had not fully
Understood his author's meaning;
But, whatever was the reason,
All was fruitless, as the picture
Ended in an utter failure.

Next to him the eldest daughter:
She suggested very little,
Only asked if he would take her
With her look of 'passive beauty.'

Her idea of passive beauty
Was a squinting of the left-eye,
Was a drooping of the right-eye,
Was a smile that went up sideways
To the corner of the nostrils.

Hiawatha, when she asked him,
Took no notice of the question,
Looked as if he hadn't heard it;
But, when pointedly appealed to,
Smiled in his peculiar manner,
Coughed and said it 'didn't matter,'
Bit his lip and changed the subject.

Nor in this was he mistaken,
As the picture failed completely.

So in turn the other sisters.

Last, the youngest son was taken:
Very rough and thick his hair was,
Very round and red his face was,

Very dusty was his jacket,
Very fidgety his manner.
And his overbearing sisters
Called him names he disapproved of:
Called him Johnny, 'Daddy's Darling,'
Called him Jacky, 'Scrubby School-boy.'
And, so awful was the picture,
In comparison the others
Seemed, to one's bewildered fancy,
To have partially succeeded.

Finally my Hiawatha
Tumbled all the tribe together,
('Grouped' is not the right expression),
And, as happy chance would have it
Did at last obtain a picture
Where the faces all succeeded:
Each came out a perfect likeness.

Then they joined and all abused it,
Unrestrainedly abused it,
As the worst and ugliest picture
They could possibly have dreamed of.
'Giving one such strange expressions -
Sullen, stupid, pert expressions.
Really any one would take us
(Any one that did not know us)
For the most unpleasant people!'
(Hiawatha seemed to think so,
Seemed to think it not unlikely).
All together rang their voices,
Angry, loud, discordant voices,
As of dogs that howl in concert,
As of cats that wail in chorus.

But my Hiawatha's patience,
His politeness and his patience,
Unaccountably had vanished,
And he left that happy party.
Neither did he leave them slowly,
With the calm deliberation,
The intense deliberation
Of a photographic artist:
But he left them in a hurry,
Left them in a mighty hurry,
Stating that he would not stand it,
Stating in emphatic language
What he'd be before he'd stand it.
Hurriedly he packed his boxes:
Hurriedly the porter trundled
On a barrow all his boxes:
Hurriedly he took his ticket:

Hurriedly the train received him:
Thus departed Hiawatha.

Lewis Carroll

I'll Tell Thee Everything I Can

I'll tell thee everything I can;
There's little to relate,
I saw an aged, aged man,
A-sitting on a gate.
'Who are you, aged man?' I said.
'And how is it you live?'
And his answer trickled through my head
Like water through a sieve.

He said, 'I look for butterflies
That sleep among the wheat;
I make them into mutton-pies,
And sell them in the street.
I sell them unto men,' he said,
'Who sail on stormy seas;
And that's the way I get my bread
A trifle, if you please.'

But I was thinking of a plan
To dye one's whiskers green,
And always use so large a fan
That they could not be seen.
So, having no reply to give
To what the old man said,
I cried, 'Come, tell me how you live!'
And thumped him on the head.

His accents mild took up the tale;
He said, 'I go my ways,
And when I find a mountain-rill,
I set it in a blaze;
And thence they make a stuff they call
Rowland's Macassar Oil
Yet twopence-halfpenny is all
They give me for my toil.'

But I was thinking of a way
To feed one's self on batter,
And so go on from day to day
Getting a little fatter.
I shook him well from side to side,
Until his face was blue,
'Come, tell me how you live,' I cried,
'And what it is you do!'

He said, 'I hunt for haddocks' eyes
Among the heather bright,
And work them into waistcoat-buttons
In the silent night.
And these I do not sell for gold
Or coin of silvery shine,
But for a copper halfpenny,

And that will purchase nine.

'I sometimes dig for buttered rolls,
Or set limed twigs for crabs;
I sometimes search the grassy knolls
For wheels of hansom-cabs.
And that's the way' (he gave a wink)
'By which I get my wealth
And very gladly will I drink
Your honor's noble health.'

I heard him then, for I had just
Completed my design
To keep the Menai bridge from rust
By boiling it in wine.
I thanked him much for telling me
The way he got his wealth,
But chiefly for his wish that he
Might drink my noble health.

And now, if e'er by chance I put
My fingers into glue,
Or madly squeeze a right-hand foot
Into a left-hand shoe,
Or if I drop upon my toe
A very heavy weight,
I weep, for it reminds me so
Of that old man I used to know
Whose look was mild, whose speech was slow,
Whose hair was whiter than the snow,
Whose face was very like a crow,
With eyes, like cinders, all aglow,
Who seemed distracted with his woe,
Who rocked his body to and fro,
And muttered mumblingly and low,
As if his mouth were full of dough,
Who snorted like a buffalo
That summer evening long ago,
A-sitting on a gate.

Lewis Carroll

Jabberwocky

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.

'Beware the Jabberwock, my son!
The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun
The frumious Bandersnatch!'

He took his vorpal sword in hand:
Long time the manxome foe he sought --
So rested he by the Tumtum tree,
And stood a while in thought.

And, as in uffish thought he stood,
The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,
Came whiffling through the tulgey wood,
And burbled as it came!

One two! One two! And through and through
The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!
He left it dead, and with its head
He went galumphing back.

'And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?
Come to my arms, my beamish boy!
Oh frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!'
He chortled in his joy.

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.

Lewis Carroll

Lays of Sorrow

The day was wet, the rain fell souse
Like jars of strawberry jam, [1] a
sound was heard in the old henhouse,
A beating of a hammer.
Of stalwart form, and visage warm,
Two youths were seen within it,
Splitting up an old tree into perches for their poultry
At a hundred strokes [2] a minute.
The work is done, the hen has taken
Possession of her nest and eggs,
Without a thought of eggs and bacon, [3]
(Or I am very much mistaken happy)
She turns over each shell,
To be sure that all's well,
Looks into the straw
To see there's no flaw,
Goes once round the house, [4]
Half afraid of a mouse,
Then sinks calmly to rest
On the top of her nest,
First doubling up each of her legs.
Time rolled away, and so did every shell,
"Small by degrees and beautifully less,"
As the large mother with a powerful spell [5]
Forced each in turn its contents to express, [6]
But ah! "imperfect is expression,"
Some poet said, I don't care who,
If you want to know you must go elsewhere,
One fact I can tell, if you're willing to hear,
He never attended a Parliament Session,
For I'm certain that if he had ever been there,
Full quickly would he have changed his ideas,
With the hissings, the hootings, the groans and the cheers.
And as to his name it is pretty clear
That it wasn't me and it wasn't you!

And so it fell upon a day,
(That is, it never rose again)
A chick was found upon the hay,
Its little life had ebbed away.
No longer frolicsome and gay,
No longer could it run or play.
"And must we, chicken, must we part?"
Its master [7] cried with bursting heart,
And voice of agony and pain.
So one, whose ticket's marked "Return", [8]
When to the lonely roadside station
He flies in fear and perturbation,
Thinks of his home--the hissing urn--
Then runs with flying hat and hair,
And, entering, finds to his despair
He's missed the very last train. [9]

Too long it were to tell of each conjecture
Of chicken suicide, and poultry victim,
The deadly frown, the stern and dreary lecture,
The timid guess, "perhaps some needle pricked him!"
The din of voice, the words both loud and many,
The sob, the tear, the sigh that none could smother,
Till all agreed "a shilling to a penny
It killed itself, and we acquit the mother!"
Scarce was the verdict spoken,
When that still calm was broken,
A childish form hath burst into the throng;
With tears and looks of sadness,
That bring no news of gladness,
But tell too surely something hath gone wrong!
"The sight I have come upon
The stoutest heart [10] would sicken,
That nasty hen has been and gone
And killed another chicken!"

Lewis Carroll

Life is but a Dream

A boat, beneath a sunny sky
Lingering onward dreamily
In an evening of July

Children three that nestle near,
Eager eye and willing ear,
Pleased a simple tale to hear

Long has paled that sunny sky;
Echoes fade and memories die;
Autumn frosts have slain July.

Still she haunts me, phantomwise,
Alice moving under skies
Never seen by waking eyes.

Children yet, the tale to hear,
Eager eye and willing ear,
Lovingly shall nestle near.

In a Wonderland they lie,
Dreaming as the days go by,
Dreaming as the summers die;

Ever drifting down the stream
Lingering in the golden gleam
Life, what is it but a dream?

Lewis Carroll

Little Birds

Little Birds are dining
Warily and well,
Hid in mossy cell:
Hid, I say, by waiters
Gorgeous in their gaiters -
I've a Tale to tell.

Little Birds are feeding
Justices with jam,
Rich in frizzled ham:
Rich, I say, in oysters
Haunting shady cloisters -
That is what I am.

Little Birds are teaching
Tigresses to smile,
Innocent of guile:
Smile, I say, not smirkle -
Mouth a semicircle,
That's the proper style!

Little Birds are sleeping
All among the pins,
Where the loser wins:
Where, I say, he sneezes
When and how he pleases -
So the Tale begins.

Little Birds are writing
Interesting books,
To be read by cooks:
Read, I say, not roasted -
Letterpress, when toasted,
Loses its good looks.

Little Birds are playing
Bagpipes on the shore,
Where the tourists snore:
"Thanks!" they cry. "'Tis thrilling!
Take, oh take this shilling!
Let us have no more!"

Little Birds are bathing
Crocodiles in cream,
Like a happy dream:
Like, but not so lasting -
Crocodiles, when fasting,
Are not all they seem!

Little Birds are choking
Baronets with bun,
Taught to fire a gun:

Taught, I say, to splinter
Salmon in the winter -
Merely for the fun.

Little Birds are hiding
Crimes in carpet-bags,
Blessed by happy stags:
Blessed, I say, though beaten -
Since our friends are eaten
When the memory flags.

Little Birds are tasting
Gratitude and gold,
Pale with sudden cold:
Pale, I say, and wrinkled -
When the bells have tinkled,
And the Tale is told.

Lewis Carroll

Madrigal

(To Miss May Forshall.)

HE shouts amain, he shouts again,
(Her brother, fierce, as bluff King Hal),
"I tell you flat, I shall do that!"
She softly whispers " 'May' for 'shall'!"
He wistful sighed one eventide
(Her friend, that made this Madrigal),
"And shall I kiss you, pretty Miss!"
Smiling she answered " 'May' for 'shall'!"

With eager eyes my reader cries,
"Your friend must be indeed a val-
-uable child, so sweet, so mild!
What do you call her?" "May For shall."

Lewis Carroll

Melancholetta

With saddest music all day long
She soothed her secret sorrow:
At night she sighed "I fear 'twas wrong
Such cheerful words to borrow.
Dearest, a sweeter, sadder song
I'll sing to thee to-morrow."

I thanked her, but I could not say
That I was glad to hear it:
I left the house at break of day,
And did not venture near it
Till time, I hoped, had worn away
Her grief, for nought could cheer it!

My dismal sister! Couldst thou know
The wretched home thou keepest!
Thy brother, drowned in daily woe,
Is thankful when thou sleepest;
For if I laugh, however low,
When thou'rt awake, thou weepest!

I took my sister t'other day
(Excuse the slang expression)
To Sadler's Wells to see the play
In hopes the new impression
Might in her thoughts, from grave to gay
Effect some slight digression.

I asked three gay young dogs from town
To join us in our folly,
Whose mirth, I thought, might serve to drown
My sister's melancholy:
The lively Jones, the sportive Brown,
And Robinson the jolly.

The maid announced the meal in tones
That I myself had taught her,
Meant to allay my sister's moans
Like oil on troubled water:
I rushed to Jones, the lively Jones,
And begged him to escort her.

Vainly he strove, with ready wit,
To joke about the weather -
To ventilate the last 'ON DIT' -
To quote the price of leather -
She groaned "Here I and Sorrow sit:
Let us lament together!"

I urged "You're wasting time, you know:
Delay will spoil the venison."
"My heart is wasted with my woe!

There is no rest - in Venice, on
The Bridge of Sighs!" she quoted low
From Byron and from Tennyson.

I need not tell of soup and fish
In solemn silence swallowed,
The sobs that ushered in each dish,
And its departure followed,
Nor yet my suicidal wish
To BE the cheese I hollowed.

Some desperate attempts were made
To start a conversation;
"Madam," the sportive Brown essayed,
"Which kind of recreation,
Hunting or fishing, have you made
Your special occupation?"

Her lips curved downwards instantly,
As if of india-rubber.
"Hounds IN FULL CRY I like," said she:
(Oh how I longed to snub her!)
"Of fish, a whale's the one for me,
IT IS SO FULL OF BLUBBER!"

The night's performance was "King John."
"It's dull," she wept, "and so-so!"
Awhile I let her tears flow on,
She said they soothed her woe so!
At length the curtain rose upon
'Bombastes Furioso.'

In vain we roared; in vain we tried
To rouse her into laughter:
Her pensive glances wandered wide
From orchestra to rafter -
"TIER UPON TIER!" she said, and sighed;
And silence followed after.

Lewis Carroll

My Fairy

I have a fairy by my side
Which says I must not sleep,
When once in pain I loudly cried
It said "You must not weep"
If, full of mirth, I smile and grin,
It says "You must not laugh"
When once I wished to drink some gin
It said "You must not quaff".

When once a meal I wished to taste
It said "You must not bite"
When to the wars I went in haste
It said "You must not fight".

"What may I do?" at length I cried,
Tired of the painful task.
The fairy quietly replied,
And said "You must not ask".

Moral: "You mustn't."

Lewis Carroll

My Fancy

I painted her a gushing thing,
With years about a score;
I little thought to find they were
A least a dozen more;
My fancy gave her eyes of blue,
A curly auburn head:
I came to find the blue a green,
The auburn turned to red.

She boxed my ears this morning,
They tingled very much;
I own that I could wish her
A somewhat lighter touch;
And if you ask me how
Her charms might be improved,
I would not have them added to,
But just a few removed!

She has the bear's ethereal grace,
The bland hyaena's laugh,
The footstep of the elephant,
The neck of a giraffe;
I love her still, believe me,
Though my heart its passion hides;
"She's all my fancy painted her,"
But oh! how much besides!

Lewis Carroll

Phantasmagoria Canto I (The Trystyng)

ONE winter night, at half-past nine,
Cold, tired, and cross, and muddy,
I had come home, too late to dine,
And supper, with cigars and wine,
Was waiting in the study.

There was a strangeness in the room,
And Something white and wavy
Was standing near me in the gloom -
I took it for the carpet-broom
Left by that careless slavey.

But presently the Thing began
To shiver and to sneeze:
On which I said "Come, come, my man!
That's a most inconsiderate plan.
Less noise there, if you please!"

"I've caught a cold," the Thing replies,
"Out there upon the landing."
I turned to look in some surprise,
And there, before my very eyes,
A little Ghost was standing!

He trembled when he caught my eye,
And got behind a chair.
"How came you here," I said, "and why?
I never saw a thing so shy.
Come out! Don't shiver there!"

He said "I'd gladly tell you how,
And also tell you why;
But" (here he gave a little bow)
"You're in so bad a temper now,
You'd think it all a lie.

"And as to being in a fright,
Allow me to remark
That Ghosts have just as good a right
In every way, to fear the light,
As Men to fear the dark."

"No plea," said I, "can well excuse
Such cowardice in you:
For Ghosts can visit when they choose,
Whereas we Humans ca'n't refuse
To grant the interview."

He said "A flutter of alarm
Is not unnatural, is it?
I really feared you meant some harm:
But, now I see that you are calm,

Let me explain my visit.

"Houses are classed, I beg to state,
According to the number
Of Ghosts that they accommodate:
(The Tenant merely counts as WEIGHT,
With Coals and other lumber).

"This is a 'one-ghost' house, and you
When you arrived last summer,
May have remarked a Spectre who
Was doing all that Ghosts can do
To welcome the new-comer.

"In Villas this is always done -
However cheaply rented:
For, though of course there's less of fun
When there is only room for one,
Ghosts have to be contented.

"That Spectre left you on the Third -
Since then you've not been haunted:
For, as he never sent us word,
'Twas quite by accident we heard
That any one was wanted.

"A Spectre has first choice, by right,
In filling up a vacancy;
Then Phantom, Goblin, Elf, and Sprite -
If all these fail them, they invite
The nicest Ghoul that they can see.

"The Spectres said the place was low,
And that you kept bad wine:
So, as a Phantom had to go,
And I was first, of course, you know,
I couldn't well decline."

"No doubt," said I, "they settled who
Was fittest to be sent
Yet still to choose a brat like you,
To haunt a man of forty-two,
Was no great compliment!"

"I'm not so young, Sir," he replied,
"As you might think. The fact is,
In caverns by the water-side,
And other places that I've tried,
I've had a lot of practice:

"But I have never taken yet
A strict domestic part,

And in my flurry I forget
The Five Good Rules of Etiquette
We have to know by heart."

My sympathies were warming fast
Towards the little fellow:
He was so utterly aghast
At having found a Man at last,
And looked so scared and yellow.

"At least," I said, "I'm glad to find
A Ghost is not a DUMB thing!
But pray sit down: you'll feel inclined
(If, like myself, you have not dined)
To take a snack of something:

"Though, certainly, you don't appear
A thing to offer FOOD to!
And then I shall be glad to hear -
If you will say them loud and clear -
The Rules that you allude to."

"Thanks! You shall hear them by and by.
This IS a piece of luck!"
"What may I offer you?" said I.
"Well, since you ARE so kind, I'll try
A little bit of duck.

"ONE slice! And may I ask you for
Another drop of gravy?"
I sat and looked at him in awe,
For certainly I never saw
A thing so white and wavy.

And still he seemed to grow more white,
More vapoury, and wavier -
Seen in the dim and flickering light,
As he proceeded to recite
His "Maxims of Behaviour."

Lewis Carroll

Phantasmagoria CANTO II (Hys Fyve Rules)

"MY First - but don't suppose," he said,
"I'm setting you a riddle -
Is - if your Victim be in bed,
Don't touch the curtains at his head,
But take them in the middle,

"And wave them slowly in and out,
While drawing them asunder;
And in a minute's time, no doubt,
He'll raise his head and look about
With eyes of wrath and wonder.

"And here you must on no pretence
Make the first observation.
Wait for the Victim to commence:
No Ghost of any common sense
Begins a conversation.

"If he should say 'HOW CAME YOU HERE?'
(The way that YOU began, Sir,)
In such a case your course is clear -
'ON THE BAT'S BACK, MY LITTLE DEAR!'
Is the appropriate answer.

"If after this he says no more,
You'd best perhaps curtail your
Exertions - go and shake the door,
And then, if he begins to snore,
You'll know the thing's a failure.

"By day, if he should be alone -
At home or on a walk -
You merely give a hollow groan,
To indicate the kind of tone
In which you mean to talk.

"But if you find him with his friends,
The thing is rather harder.
In such a case success depends
On picking up some candle-ends,
Or butter, in the larder.

"With this you make a kind of slide
(It answers best with suet),
On which you must contrive to glide,
And swing yourself from side to side -
One soon learns how to do it.

"The Second tells us what is right
In ceremonious calls:-
'FIRST BURN A BLUE OR CRIMSON LIGHT'
(A thing I quite forgot to-night),

'THEN SCRATCH THE DOOR OR WALLS.'"

I said "You'll visit HERE no more,
If you attempt the Guy.
I'll have no bonfires on MY floor -
And, as for scratching at the door,
I'd like to see you try!"

"The Third was written to protect
The interests of the Victim,
And tells us, as I recollect,
TO TREAT HIM WITH A GRAVE RESPECT,
AND NOT TO CONTRADICT HIM."

"That's plain," said I, "as Tare and Tret,
To any comprehension:
I only wish SOME Ghosts I've met
Would not so CONSTANTLY forget
The maxim that you mention!"

"Perhaps," he said, "YOU first transgressed
The laws of hospitality:
All Ghosts instinctively detest
The Man that fails to treat his guest
With proper cordiality.

"If you address a Ghost as 'Thing!'
Or strike him with a hatchet,
He is permitted by the King
To drop all FORMAL parleying -
And then you're SURE to catch it!

"The Fourth prohibits trespassing
Where other Ghosts are quartered:
And those convicted of the thing
(Unless when pardoned by the King)
Must instantly be slaughtered.

"That simply means 'be cut up small':
Ghosts soon unite anew.
The process scarcely hurts at all -
Not more than when YOU're what you call
'Cut up' by a Review.

"The Fifth is one you may prefer
That I should quote entire:-
THE KING MUST BE ADDRESSED AS 'SIR.'
THIS, FROM A SIMPLE COURTIER,
IS ALL THE LAWS REQUIRE:

"BUT, SHOULD YOU WISH TO DO THE THING
WITH OUT-AND-OUT POLITENESS,

ACCOST HIM AS 'MY GOBLIN KING!
AND ALWAYS USE, IN ANSWERING,
THE PHRASE 'YOUR ROYAL WHITENESS!'

"I'm getting rather hoarse, I fear,
After so much reciting :
So, if you don't object, my dear,
We'll try a glass of bitter beer -
I think it looks inviting."

Lewis Carroll

Phantasmagoria CANTO III (Scarmoges)

"AND did you really walk," said I,
"On such a wretched night?
I always fancied Ghosts could fly -
If not exactly in the sky,
Yet at a fairish height."

"It's very well," said he, "for Kings
To soar above the earth:
But Phantoms often find that wings -
Like many other pleasant things -
Cost more than they are worth.

"Spectres of course are rich, and so
Can buy them from the Elves:
But WE prefer to keep below -
They're stupid company, you know,
For any but themselves:

"For, though they claim to be exempt
From pride, they treat a Phantom
As something quite beneath contempt -
Just as no Turkey ever dreamt
Of noticing a Bantam."

"They seem too proud," said I, "to go
To houses such as mine.
Pray, how did they contrive to know
So quickly that 'the place was low,'
And that I 'kept bad wine'?"

"Inspector Kobold came to you - "
The little Ghost began.
Here I broke in - "Inspector who?
Inspecting Ghosts is something new!
Explain yourself, my man!"

"His name is Kobold," said my guest:
"One of the Spectre order:
You'll very often see him dressed
In a yellow gown, a crimson vest,
And a night-cap with a border.

"He tried the Brocken business first,
But caught a sort of chill ;
So came to England to be nursed,
And here it took the form of THIRST,
Which he complains of still.

"Port-wine, he says, when rich and sound,
Warms his old bones like nectar:
And as the inns, where it is found,
Are his especial hunting-ground,

We call him the INN-SPECTRE."

I bore it - bore it like a man -
This agonizing witticism!
And nothing could be sweeter than
My temper, till the Ghost began
Some most provoking criticism.

"Cooks need not be indulged in waste;
Yet still you'd better teach them
Dishes should have SOME SORT of taste.
Pray, why are all the cruets placed
Where nobody can reach them?

"That man of yours will never earn
His living as a waiter!
Is that queer THING supposed to burn?
(It's far too dismal a concern
To call a Moderator).

"The duck was tender, but the peas
Were very much too old:
And just remember, if you please,
The NEXT time you have toasted cheese,
Don't let them send it cold.

"You'd find the bread improved, I think,
By getting better flour:
And have you anything to drink
That looks a LITTLE less like ink,
And isn't QUITE so sour?"

Then, peering round with curious eyes,
He muttered "Goodness gracious!"
And so went on to criticise -
"Your room's an inconvenient size:
It's neither snug nor spacious.

"That narrow window, I expect,
Serves but to let the dusk in - "
"But please," said I, "to recollect
'Twas fashioned by an architect
Who pinned his faith on Ruskin!"

"I don't care who he was, Sir, or
On whom he pinned his faith!
Constructed by whatever law,
So poor a job I never saw,
As I'm a living Wraith!

"What a re-markable cigar!
How much are they a dozen?"

I growled "No matter what they are!
You're getting as familiar
As if you were my cousin!

"Now that's a thing I WILL NOT STAND,
And so I tell you flat."
"Aha," said he, "we're getting grand!"
(Taking a bottle in his hand)
"I'll soon arrange for THAT!"

And here he took a careful aim,
And gaily cried "Here goes!"
I tried to dodge it as it came,
But somehow caught it, all the same,
Exactly on my nose.

And I remember nothing more
That I can clearly fix,
Till I was sitting on the floor,
Repeating "Two and five are four,
But FIVE AND TWO are six."

What really passed I never learned,
Nor guessed: I only know
That, when at last my sense returned,
The lamp, neglected, dimly burned -
The fire was getting low -

Through driving mists I seemed to see
A Thing that smirked and smiled:
And found that he was giving me
A lesson in Biography,
As if I were a child.

Lewis Carroll

Phantasmagoria CANTO IV (Hys Nouryture)

"OH, when I was a little Ghost,
A merry time had we!
Each seated on his favourite post,
We chumped and chawed the buttered toast
They gave us for our tea."

"That story is in print!" I cried.
"Don't say it's not, because
It's known as well as Bradshaw's Guide!"
(The Ghost uneasily replied
He hardly thought it was).

"It's not in Nursery Rhymes? And yet
I almost think it is -
'Three little Ghosteses' were set
'On posteses,' you know, and ate
Their 'buttered toasteses.'

"I have the book; so if you doubt it - "
I turned to search the shelf.
"Don't stir!" he cried. "We'll do without it:
I now remember all about it;
I wrote the thing myself.

"It came out in a 'Monthly,' or
At least my agent said it did:
Some literary swell, who saw
It, thought it seemed adapted for
The Magazine he edited.

"My father was a Brownie, Sir;
My mother was a Fairy.
The notion had occurred to her,
The children would be happier,
If they were taught to vary.

"The notion soon became a craze;
And, when it once began, she
Brought us all out in different ways -
One was a Pixy, two were Fays,
Another was a Banshee;

"The Fetch and Kelpie went to school
And gave a lot of trouble;
Next came a Poltergeist and Ghoul,
And then two Trolls (which broke the rule),
A Goblin, and a Double -

"(If that's a snuff-box on the shelf,"
He added with a yawn,
"I'll take a pinch) - next came an Elf,
And then a Phantom (that's myself),

And last, a Leprechaun.

"One day, some Spectres chanced to call,
Dressed in the usual white:
I stood and watched them in the hall,
And couldn't make them out at all,
They seemed so strange a sight.

"I wondered what on earth they were,
That looked all head and sack;
But Mother told me not to stare,
And then she twitched me by the hair,
And punched me in the back.

"Since then I've often wished that I
Had been a Spectre born.
But what's the use?" (He heaved a sigh.)
"THEY are the ghost-nobility,
And look on US with scorn.

"My phantom-life was soon begun:
When I was barely six,
I went out with an older one -
And just at first I thought it fun,
And learned a lot of tricks.

"I've haunted dungeons, castles, towers -
Wherever I was sent:
I've often sat and howled for hours,
Drenched to the skin with driving showers,
Upon a battlement.

"It's quite old-fashioned now to groan
When you begin to speak:
This is the newest thing in tone - "
And here (it chilled me to the bone)
He gave an AWFUL squeak.

"Perhaps," he added, "to YOUR ear
That sounds an easy thing?
Try it yourself, my little dear!
It took ME something like a year,
With constant practising.

"And when you've learned to squeak, my man,
And caught the double sob,
You're pretty much where you began:
Just try and gibber if you can!
That's something LIKE a job!

"I'VE tried it, and can only say
I'm sure you couldn't do it, e-

ven if you practised night and day,
Unless you have a turn that way,
And natural ingenuity.

"Shakspeare I think it is who treats
Of Ghosts, in days of old,
Who 'gibbered in the Roman streets,'
Dressed, if you recollect, in sheets -
They must have found it cold.

"I've often spent ten pounds on stuff,
In dressing as a Double;
But, though it answers as a puff,
It never has effect enough
To make it worth the trouble.

"Long bills soon quenched the little thirst
I had for being funny.
The setting-up is always worst:
Such heaps of things you want at first,
One must be made of money!

"For instance, take a Haunted Tower,
With skull, cross-bones, and sheet;
Blue lights to burn (say) two an hour,
Condensing lens of extra power,
And set of chains complete:

"What with the things you have to hire -
The fitting on the robe -
And testing all the coloured fire -
The outfit of itself would tire
The patience of a Job!

"And then they're so fastidious,
The Haunted-House Committee:
I've often known them make a fuss
Because a Ghost was French, or Russ,
Or even from the City!

"Some dialects are objected to -
For one, the IRISH brogue is:
And then, for all you have to do,
One pound a week they offer you,
And find yourself in Bogies!

Lewis Carroll

Phantasmagoria CANTO V (Byckerment)

"DON'T they consult the 'Victims,' though?"
I said. "They should, by rights,
Give them a chance - because, you know,
The tastes of people differ so,
Especially in Sprites."

The Phantom shook his head and smiled.
"Consult them? Not a bit!
'Twould be a job to drive one wild,
To satisfy one single child -
There'd be no end to it!"

"Of course you can't leave CHILDREN free,"
Said I, "to pick and choose:
But, in the case of men like me,
I think 'Mine Host' might fairly be
Allowed to state his views."

He said "It really wouldn't pay -
Folk are so full of fancies.
We visit for a single day,
And whether then we go, or stay,
Depends on circumstances.

"And, though we don't consult 'Mine Host'
Before the thing's arranged,
Still, if he often quits his post,
Or is not a well-mannered Ghost,
Then you can have him changed.

"But if the host's a man like you -
I mean a man of sense;
And if the house is not too new - "
"Why, what has THAT," said I, "to do
With Ghost's convenience?"

"A new house does not suit, you know -
It's such a job to trim it:
But, after twenty years or so,
The wainscotings begin to go,
So twenty is the limit."

"To trim" was not a phrase I could
Remember having heard:
"Perhaps," I said, "you'll be so good
As tell me what is understood
Exactly by that word?"

"It means the loosening all the doors,"
The Ghost replied, and laughed:
"It means the drilling holes by scores
In all the skirting-boards and floors,

To make a thorough draught.

"You'll sometimes find that one or two
Are all you really need
To let the wind come whistling through -
But HERE there'll be a lot to do!"
I faintly gasped "Indeed!

"If I 'd been rather later, I'll
Be bound," I added, trying
(Most unsuccessfully) to smile,
"You'd have been busy all this while,
Trimming and beautifying?"

"Why, no," said he; "perhaps I should
Have stayed another minute -
But still no Ghost, that's any good,
Without an introduction would
Have ventured to begin it.

"The proper thing, as you were late,
Was certainly to go:
But, with the roads in such a state,
I got the Knight-Mayor's leave to wait
For half an hour or so."

"Who's the Knight-Mayor?" I cried. Instead
Of answering my question,
"Well, if you don't know THAT," he said,
"Either you never go to bed,
Or you've a grand digestion!

"He goes about and sits on folk
That eat too much at night:
His duties are to pinch, and poke,
And squeeze them till they nearly choke."
(I said "It serves them right!")

"And folk who sup on things like these - "
He muttered, "eggs and bacon -
Lobster - and duck - and toasted cheese -
If they don't get an awful squeeze,
I'm very much mistaken!

"He is immensely fat, and so
Well suits the occupation:
In point of fact, if you must know,
We used to call him years ago,
THE MAYOR AND CORPORATION!

"The day he was elected Mayor
I KNOW that every Sprite meant

To vote for ME, but did not dare -
He was so frantic with despair
And furious with excitement.

"When it was over, for a whim,
He ran to tell the King;
And being the reverse of slim,
A two-mile trot was not for him
A very easy thing.

"So, to reward him for his run
(As it was baking hot,
And he was over twenty stone),
The King proceeded, half in fun,
To knight him on the spot."

"'Twas a great liberty to take!"
(I fired up like a rocket).
"He did it just for punning's sake:
'The man,' says Johnson, 'that would make
A pun, would pick a pocket!'"

"A man," said he, "is not a King."
I argued for a while,
And did my best to prove the thing -
The Phantom merely listening
With a contemptuous smile.

At last, when, breath and patience spent,
I had recourse to smoking -
"Your AIM," he said, "is excellent:
But - when you call it ARGUMENT -
Of course you're only joking?"

Stung by his cold and snaky eye,
I roused myself at length
To say "At least I do defy
The veriest sceptic to deny
That union is strength!"

"That's true enough," said he, "yet stay - "
I listened in all meekness -
"UNION is strength, I'm bound to say;
In fact, the thing's as clear as day;
But ONIONS are a weakness."

Lewis Carroll

Phantasmagoria CANTO VI (Dyscomfyture)

As one who strives a hill to climb,
Who never climbed before:
Who finds it, in a little time,
Grow every moment less sublime,
And votes the thing a bore:

Yet, having once begun to try,
Dares not desert his quest,
But, climbing, ever keeps his eye
On one small hut against the sky
Wherein he hopes to rest:

Who climbs till nerve and force are spent,
With many a puff and pant:
Who still, as rises the ascent,
In language grows more violent,
Although in breath more scant:

Who, climbing, gains at length the place
That crowns the upward track.
And, entering with unsteady pace,
Receives a buffet in the face
That lands him on his back:

And feels himself, like one in sleep,
Glide swiftly down again,
A helpless weight, from steep to steep,
Till, with a headlong giddy sweep,
He drops upon the plain -

So I, that had resolved to bring
Conviction to a ghost,
And found it quite a different thing
From any human arguing,
Yet dared not quit my post

But, keeping still the end in view
To which I hoped to come,
I strove to prove the matter true
By putting everything I knew
Into an axiom:

Commencing every single phrase
With 'therefore' or 'because,'
I blindly reeled, a hundred ways,
About the syllogistic maze,
Unconscious where I was.

Quoth he "That's regular clap-trap:
Don't bluster any more.
Now DO be cool and take a nap!
Such a ridiculous old chap

Was never seen before!

"You're like a man I used to meet,
Who got one day so furious
In arguing, the simple heat
Scorched both his slippers off his feet!"
I said "THAT'S VERY CURIOUS!"

"Well, it IS curious, I agree,
And sounds perhaps like fibs:
But still it's true as true can be -
As sure as your name's Tibbs," said he.
I said "My name's NOT Tibbs."

"NOT Tibbs!" he cried - his tone became
A shade or two less hearty -
"Why, no," said I. "My proper name
Is Tibbets - " "Tibbets?" "Aye, the same."
"Why, then YOU'RE NOT THE PARTY!"

With that he struck the board a blow
That shivered half the glasses.
"Why couldn't you have told me so
Three quarters of an hour ago,
You prince of all the asses?

"To walk four miles through mud and rain,
To spend the night in smoking,
And then to find that it's in vain -
And I've to do it all again -
It's really TOO provoking!

"Don't talk!" he cried, as I began
To mutter some excuse.
"Who can have patience with a man
That's got no more discretion than
An idiotic goose?

"To keep me waiting here, instead
Of telling me at once
That this was not the house!" he said.
"There, that'll do - be off to bed!
Don't gape like that, you dunce!"

"It's very fine to throw the blame
On ME in such a fashion!
Why didn't you enquire my name
The very minute that you came?"
I answered in a passion.

"Of course it worries you a bit
To come so far on foot -

But how was I to blame for it?"
"Well, well!" said he. "I must admit
That isn't badly put.

"And certainly you've given me
The best of wine and victual -
Excuse my violence," said he,
"But accidents like this, you see,
They put one out a little.

"'Twas MY fault after all, I find -
Shake hands, old Turnip-top!"
The name was hardly to my mind,
But, as no doubt he meant it kind,
I let the matter drop.

"Good-night, old Turnip-top, good-night!
When I am gone, perhaps
They'll send you some inferior Sprite,
Who'll keep you in a constant fright
And spoil your soundest naps.

"Tell him you'll stand no sort of trick;
Then, if he leers and chuckles,
You just be handy with a stick
(Mind that it's pretty hard and thick)
And rap him on the knuckles!

"Then carelessly remark 'Old coon!
Perhaps you're not aware
That, if you don't behave, you'll soon
Be chuckling to another tune -
And so you'd best take care!'

"That's the right way to cure a Sprite
Of such like goings-on -
But gracious me! It's getting light!
Good-night, old Turnip-top, good-night!"
A nod, and he was gone.

Lewis Carroll

Phantasmagoria CANTO VII (Sad Souvenaunce)

"WHAT'S this?" I pondered. "Have I slept?
Or can I have been drinking?"
But soon a gentler feeling crept
Upon me, and I sat and wept
An hour or so, like winking.

"No need for Bones to hurry so!"
I sobbed. "In fact, I doubt
If it was worth his while to go -
And who is Tibbs, I'd like to know,
To make such work about?

"If Tibbs is anything like me,
It's POSSIBLE," I said,
"He won't be over-pleased to be
Dropped in upon at half-past three,
After he's snug in bed.

"And if Bones plagues him anyhow -
Squeaking and all the rest of it,
As he was doing here just now -
I prophesy there'll be a row,
And Tibbs will have the best of it!"

Then, as my tears could never bring
The friendly Phantom back,
It seemed to me the proper thing
To mix another glass, and sing
The following Coronach.

'AND ART THOU GONE, BELOVED GHOST?
BEST OF FAMILIARS!
NAY THEN, FAREWELL, MY DUCKLING ROAST,
FAREWELL, FAREWELL, MY TEA AND TOAST,
MY MEERSCHAUM AND CIGARS!

THE HUES OF LIFE ARE DULL AND GRAY,
THE SWEETS OF LIFE INSIPID,
WHEN thou, MY CHARMER, ART AWAY -
OLD BRICK, OR RATHER, LET ME SAY,
OLD PARALLELEPIPED!'

Instead of singing Verse the Third,
I ceased - abruptly, rather:
But, after such a splendid word
I felt that it would be absurd
To try it any farther.

So with a yawn I went my way
To seek the welcome downy,
And slept, and dreamed till break of day
Of Poltergeist and Fetch and Fay

And Leprechaun and Brownie!

For year I've not been visited
By any kind of Sprite;
Yet still they echo in my head,
Those parting words, so kindly said,
"Old Turnip-top, good-night!"

Lewis Carroll

Photography Extraordinary

The Milk-and-Water School
Alas! she would not hear my prayer!
Yet it were rash to tear my hair;
Disfigured, I should be less fair.

She was unwise, I may say blind;
Once she was lovingly inclined;
Some circumstance has changed her mind.

The Strong-Minded or Matter-of-Fact School
Well! so my offer was no go!
She might do worse, I told her so;
She was a fool to answer "No".

However, things are as they stood;
Nor would I have her if I could,
For there are plenty more as good.

The Spasmodic or German School
Firebrands and Daggers! hope hath fled!
To atoms dash the doubly dead!
My brain is fire--my heart is lead!

Her soul is flint, and what am I?
Scorch'd by her fierce, relentless eye,
Nothingness is my destiny!

Lewis Carroll

Poeta Fit, Non Nascitur

"How shall I be a poet?
How shall I write in rhyme?
You told me once 'the very wish
Partook of the sublime.'
The tell me how! Don't put me off
With your 'another time'!"

The old man smiled to see him,
To hear his sudden sally;
He liked the lad to speak his mind
Enthusiastically;
And thought "There's no hum-drum in him,
Nor any shilly-shally."

"And would you be a poet
Before you've been to school?
Ah, well! I hardly thought you
So absolute a fool.
First learn to be spasmodic --
A very simple rule.

"For first you write a sentence,
And then you chop it small;
Then mix the bits, and sort them out
Just as they chance to fall:
The order of the phrases makes
No difference at all.

'Then, if you'd be impressive,
Remember what I say,
That abstract qualities begin
With capitals alway:
The True, the Good, the Beautiful --
Those are the things that pay!

"Next, when we are describing
A shape, or sound, or tint;
Don't state the matter plainly,
But put it in a hint;
And learn to look at all things
With a sort of mental squint."

"For instance, if I wished, Sir,
Of mutton-pies to tell,
Should I say 'dreams of fleecy flocks
Pent in a wheaten cell'?"
"Why, yes," the old man said: "that phrase
Would answer very well.

"Then fourthly, there are epithets
That suit with any word --
As well as Harvey's Reading Sauce

With fish, or flesh, or bird --
Of these, 'wild,' 'lonely,' 'weary,' 'strange,'
Are much to be preferred."

"And will it do, O will it do
To take them in a lump --
As 'the wild man went his weary way
To a strange and lonely pump'?"
"Nay, nay! You must not hastily
To such conclusions jump.

"Such epithets, like pepper,
Give zest to what you write;
And, if you strew them sparely,
They whet the appetite:
But if you lay them on too thick,
You spoil the matter quite!

"Last, as to the arrangement:
Your reader, you should show him,
Must take what information he
Can get, and look for no im
mature disclosure of the drift
And purpose of your poem.

"Therefore to test his patience --
How much he can endure --
Mention no places, names, or dates,
And evermore be sure
Throughout the poem to be found
Consistently obscure.

"First fix upon the limit
To which it shall extend:
Then fill it up with 'Padding'
(Beg some of any friend)
Your great SENSATION-STANZA
You place towards the end."

"And what is a Sensation,
Grandfather, tell me, pray?
I think I never heard the word
So used before to-day:
Be kind enough to mention one
'Exempli gratiâ'"

And the old man, looking sadly
Across the garden-lawn,
Where here and there a dew-drop
Yet glittered in the dawn,
Said "Go to the Adelphi,
And see the 'Colleen Bawn.'

"The word is due to Boucicault --
The theory is his,
Where Life becomes a Spasm,
And History a Whiz:
If that is not Sensation,
I don't know what it is,

"Now try your hand, ere Fancy
Have lost its present glow --"
"And then," his grandson added,
"We'll publish it, you know:
Green cloth -- gold-lettered at the back --
In duodecimo!"

Then proudly smiled that old man
To see the eager lad
Rush madly for his pen and ink
And for his blotting-pad --
But, when he thought of publishing,
His face grew stern and sad.

Lewis Carroll

Preface to Hunting of the Snark

PREFACE

If---and the thing is wildly possible---the charge of writing nonsense were ever brought against the author of this brief but instructive poem, it would be based, I feel convinced, on the line

``Then the bowsprit got mixed with the rudder sometimes''

In view of this painful possibility, I will not (as I might) appeal indignantly to my other writings as a proof that I am incapable of such a deed: I will not (as I might) point to the strong moral purpose of this poem itself, to the arithmetical principles so cautiously inculcated in it, or to its noble teachings in Natural History---I will take the more prosaic course of simply explaining how it happened.

The Bellman, who was almost morbidly sensitive about appearances, used to have the bowsprit unshipped once or twice a week to be revarnished, and it more than once happened, when the time came for replacing it, that no one on board could remember which end of the ship it belonged to. They knew it was not of the slightest use to appeal to the Bellman about it---he would only refer to his Naval Code, and read out in pathetic tones Admiralty Instructions which none of them had ever been able to understand---so it generally ended in its being fastened on, anyhow, across the rudder. The helmsman used to stand by with tears in his eyes: he knew it was all wrong, but alas! Rule 42 of the Code, ``No one shall speak to the Man at the Helm'', had been completed by the Bellman himself with the words ``and the Man at the Helm shall speak to no one''. So remonstrance was impossible, and no steering could be done till the next varnishing day. During these bewildering intervals the ship usually sailed backwards.

This office was usually undertaken by the Boots, who found in it a refuge from the Baker's constant complaints about the insufficient blacking of his three pairs of boots.

As this poem is to some extent connected with the lay of the Jabberwock, let me take this opportunity of answering a question that has often been asked me, how to pronounce ``slithy toves''. The ``i'' in ``slithy'' is long, as in ``writhe''; and ``toves'' is pronounced so as to rhyme with ``groves''. Again, the first ``o'' in ``borogoves'' is pronounced like the ``o'' in ``borrow''. I have heard people try to give it the sound of the ``o'' in ``worry''. Such is Human Perversity.

This also seems a fitting occasion to notice the other hard words in that poem. Humpty-Dumpty's theory, of two meanings packed into one word like a portmanteau, seems to me the right explanation for all.

For instance, take the two words ``fuming'' and ``furious''. Make up your mind that you will say both words, but leave it unsettled which

you will say first. Now open your mouth and speak. If your thoughts incline ever so little towards ``fuming'', you will say ``fuming-furious''; if they turn, by even a hair's breadth, towards ``furious'', you will say ``furious-fuming''; but if you have that rarest of gifts, a perfectly balanced mind, you will say ``frumious''.

Supposing that, when Pistol uttered the well-known words---

``Under which king, Bezonian? Speak or die!''

Justice Shallow had felt certain that it was either William or Richard, but had not been able to settle which, so that he could not possibly say either name before the other, can it be doubted that, rather than die, he would have gasped out ``Rilchiam!''.

'Lewis Carroll'

Lewis Carroll

Prologue

All in the golden afternoon
Full leisurely we glide;
For both our oars, with little skill,
By little arms are plied,
While little hands make vain pretence
Our wanderings to guide.

Ah, cruel Three! In such an hour
Beneath such dreamy weather,
To beg a tale of breath too weak
To stir the tiniest feather&xclm.
Yet what can one poor voice avail
Against three tongues together?

Imperious Prima flashes forth
Her edict ``to begin it'':
In gentler tones Secunda hopes
``There will be nonsense in it!''
While Tertia interrupts the tale
Not more than once a minute.

Anon, to sudden silence won,
In fancy they pursue
The dream-child moving through a land
Of wonders wild and new,
In friendly chat with bird or beast--
And half believe it true.

And ever, as the story drained
The wells of fancy dry,
And faintly strove that weary one
To put the subject by
``The rest next time--'' ``It is next time!''
The happy voices cry.

Thus grew the tale of Wonderland:
Thus slowly, one by one,
Its quaint events were hammered out--
And now the tale is done,
And home we steer, a merry crew,
Beneath the setting sun.

Alice! A childish story take,
And with a gentle hand,
Lay it where Childhoood's dreams are twined
In Memory's mystic band,
Like pilgrim's wither'd wreath of flowers
Pluck'd in a far-off land.

Lewis Carroll

Punctuality

Man Naturally loves delay,
And to procrastinate;
Business put off from day to day
Is always done to late.

Let ever hour be in its place
Firm fixed, nor loosely shift,
And well enjoy the vacant space,
As though a birthday gift.

And when the hour arrives, be there,
Where'er that "there" may be;
Uncleanly hands or ruffled hair
Let no one ever see.

If dinner at "half-past" be placed,
At "half-past" then be dressed.
If at a "quarter-past" make haste
To be down with the rest

Better to be before you time,
Than e're to be behind;
To open the door while strikes the chime,
That shows a punctual mind.

Moral:

Let punctuality and care
Seize every flitting hour,
So shalt thou cull a floweret fair,
E'en from a fading flower

Lewis Carroll

Rules and Regulations

A short direction
To avoid dejection,
By variations
In occupations,
And prolongation
Of relaxation,
And combinations
Of recreations,
And disputation
On the state of the nation
In adaptation
To your station,
By invitations
To friends and relations,
By evitation
Of amputation,
By permutation
In conversation,
And deep reflection
You'll avoid dejection.

Learn well your grammar,
And never stammer,
Write well and neatly,
And sing most sweetly,
Be enterprising,
Love early rising,
Go walk of six miles,
Have ready quick smiles,
With lightsome laughter,
Soft flowing after.
Drink tea, not coffee;
Never eat toffy.
Eat bread with butter.
Once more, don't stutter.

Don't waste your money,
Abstain from honey.
Shut doors behind you,
(Don't slam them, mind you.)
Drink beer, not porter.
Don't enter the water
Till to swim you are able.
Sit close to the table.
Take care of a candle.
Shut a door by the handle,
Don't push with your shoulder
Until you are older.
Lose not a button.
Refuse cold mutton.
Starve your canaries.
Believe in fairies.

If you are able,
Don't have a stable
With any mangers.
Be rude to strangers.

Moral: Behave.

Lewis Carroll

She's All My Fancy Painted Him

She's all my fancy painted him
(I make no idle boast);
If he or you had lost a limb,
Which would have suffered most?

He said that you had been to her,
And seen me here before;
But, in another character,
She was the same of yore.

There was not one that spoke to us,
Of all that thronged the street:
So he sadly got into a 'bus,
And pattered with his feet.

They sent him word I had not gone
(We know it to be true);
If she should push the matter on,
What would become of you?

They gave her one, the gave me two,
They gave us three or more;
They all returned from him to you,
Though they were mine before.

If I or she should chance to be
Involved in this affair,
He trusts to you to set them free,
Exactly as we were.

It seemed to me that you had been
(Before she had this fit)
An obstacle, that came between
Him, and ourselves, and it.

Don't let him know she liked them best,
For this must ever be
A secret, kept from all the rest,
Between yourself and me.

Lewis Carroll

Size and Tears

When on the sandy shore I sit,
Beside the salt sea-wave,
And fall into a weeping fit
Because I dare not shave -
A little whisper at my ear
Enquires the reason of my fear.

I answer "If that ruffian Jones
Should recognise me here,
He'd bellow out my name in tones
Offensive to the ear:
He chaffs me so on being stout
(A thing that always puts me out)."

Ah me! I see him on the cliff!
Farewell, farewell to hope,
If he should look this way, and if
He's got his telescope!
To whatsoever place I flee,
My odious rival follows me!

For every night, and everywhere,
I meet him out at dinner;
And when I've found some charming fair,
And vowed to die or win her,
The wretch (he's thin and I am stout)
Is sure to come and cut me out!

The girls (just like them!) all agree
To praise J. Jones, Esquire:
I ask them what on earth they see
About him to admire?
They cry "He is so sleek and slim,
It's quite a treat to look at him!"

They vanish in tobacco smoke,
Those visionary maids -
I feel a sharp and sudden poke
Between the shoulder-blades -
"Why, Brown, my boy! Your growing stout!"
(I told you he would find me out!)

"My growth is not YOUR business, Sir!"
"No more it is, my boy!
But if it's YOURS, as I infer,
Why, Brown, I give you joy!
A man, whose business prospers so,
Is just the sort of man to know!

"It's hardly safe, though, talking here -
I'd best get out of reach:
For such a weight as yours, I fear,

Must shortly sink the beach!" -
Insult me thus because I'm stout!
I vow I'll go and call him out!

Lewis Carroll

Speak Roughly to Your Little Boy

And with that she
began nursing her child again, singing a sort of
lullaby to it as she did so, and giving it a vio-
lent shake at the end of every line: -- --
  "Speak roughly to your little boy,
  And beat him when he sneezes;
  He only does it to annoy,
  Because he knows it teases."CHORUS
(in which the cook and the baby joined): -- -- "Wow! wow! wow!"While the Duchess
sang the second verse of
the song, she kept tossing the baby violently up
and down, and the poor little thing howled so,
that Alice could hardly hear the words: -- --
  "I speak severely to my boy,
  I beat him when he sneezes;
  For he can thoroughly enjoy
  The pepper when he pleases!" CHORUS"Wow! wow! wow!"

Lewis Carroll

Tema con Variazioni

Why is it that Poetry has never yet been subjected to that process of Dilution which has proved so advantageous to her sister-art Music? The Diluter gives us first a few notes of some well-known Air, then a dozen bars of his own, then a few more notes of the Air, and so on alternately: thus saving the listener, if not from all risk of recognising the melody at all, at least from the too-exciting transports which it might produce in a more concentrated form. The process is termed "setting" by Composers, and any one, that has ever experienced the emotion of being unexpectedly set down in a heap of mortar, will recognise the truthfulness of this happy phrase.

For truly, just as the genuine Epicure lingers lovingly over a
morsel of supreme Venison - whose every fibre seems to murmur "Excelsior!" - yet swallows, ere returning to the toothsome dainty, great mouthfuls of oatmeal-porridge and winkles: and just as the perfect Connoisseur in Claret permits himself but one delicate sip, and then tosses off a pint or more of boarding-school beer: so also -

I NEVER loved a dear Gazelle -
NOR ANYTHING THAT COST ME MUCH:
HIGH PRICES PROFIT THOSE WHO SELL,
BUT WHY SHOULD I BE FOND OF SUCH?

To glad me with his soft black eye
MY SON COMES TROTTING HOME FROM SCHOOL;
HE'S HAD A FIGHT BUT CAN'T TELL WHY -
HE ALWAYS WAS A LITTLE FOOL!

But, when he came to know me well,
HE KICKED ME OUT, HER TESTY SIRE:
AND WHEN I STAINED MY HAIR, THAT BELLE
MIGHT NOTE THE CHANGE, AND THUS ADMIRE

And love me, it was sure to dye
A MUDDY GREEN OR STARING BLUE:
WHILST ONE MIGHT TRACE, WITH HALF AN EYE,
THE STILL TRIUMPHANT CARROT THROUGH.

Lewis Carroll

The Aged Aged Man

I'll tell thee everything I can;
There's little to relate.
I saw an aged aged man,
A-sitting on a gate.
"Who are you, aged man?" I said,
"And how is it you live?"
And his answer trickled through my head
Like water through a sieve.

He said, "I look for butterflies
That sleep among the wheat:
I make them into mutton-pies,
And sell them in the street.
I sell them unto men," he said,
"Who sail on stormy seas;
And that's the way I get my bread—
A trifle; if you please."

But I was thinking of a plan
To dye one's whiskers green,
And always use so large a fan
That they could not be seen.
So, having no reply to give
To what the old man said,
I cried, "Come, tell me how you live!"
And thumped him on the head.

His accents mild took up the tale:
He said, "I go my ways,
And when I find a mountain-rill,
I set it in a blaze;
And thence they make a stuff they call
Rowland's Macassar-Oil—
Yet twopence-halfpenny is all
They give me for my toil."

But I was thinking of a way
To feed oneself on batter,
And so go on from day to day
Getting a little fatter.
I shook him well from side to side,
Until his face was blue:
"Come, tell me how you live," I cried,
"And what it is you do!"

He said, "I hunt for haddocks' eyes
Among the heather bright,
And work them into waistcoat buttons
In the silent night.
And these I do not sell for gold
Or coin of silvery shine,
But for a copper halfpenny,

And that will purchase nine.

"I sometimes dig for buttered rolls,
Or set limed twigs for crabs;
I sometimes search the grassy knolls
For wheels of hansom-cabs.
And that's the way" (he gave a wink)
"By which I get my wealth—
And very gladly will I drink
Your Honour's noble health."

I heard him then, for I had just
Completed my design
To keep the Menai bridge from rust
By boiling it in wine.
I thanked him much for telling me
The way he got his wealth,
But chiefly for his wish that he
Might drink my noble health.

And now, if e'er by chance I put
My fingers into glue,
Or madly squeeze a right-hand foot
Into a left-hand shoe,
Or if I drop upon my toe
A very heavy weight,
I weep, for it reminds me so
Of that old man I used to know—
Whose look was mild, whose speech was slow,
Whose hair was whiter than the snow,
Whose face was very like a crow,
With eyes, like cinders, all aglow,
Who seemed distracted with his woe,
Who rocked his body to and fro,
And muttered mumblingly and low,
As if his mouth were full of dough,
Who snorted like a buffalo—
That summer evening long ago
A-sitting on a gate.

Lewis Carroll

The Crocodile

How doth the little crocodile
Improve his shining tail,
And pour the waters of the Nile
On every golden scale!

How cheerfully he seems to grin
How neatly spreads his claws,
And welcomes little fishes in,
With gently smiling jaws!

Lewis Carroll

The Hunting of the Snark

Fit the First
THE LANDING

'Just the place for a Snark!' the Bellman cried,
As he landed his crew with care;
Supporting each man on the top of the tide
By a finger entwined in his hair.

'Just the place for a Snark! I have said it twice:
That alone should encourage the crew.
Just the place for a Snark! I have said it thrice:
What i tell you three times is true.'

The crew was complete: it included a Boots--
A maker of Bonnets and Hoods--
A Barrister, brought to arrange their disputes--
And a Broker, to value their goods.

A Billiard-maker, whose skill was immense,
Might perhaps have won more than his share--
But a Banker, engaged at enormous expense,
Had the whole of their cash in his care.

There was also a Beaver, that paced on the deck,
Or would sit making lace in the bow:
And had often (the Bellman said) saved them from wreck,
Though none of the sailors knew how.

There was one who was famed for the number of things
He forgot when he entered the ship:
His umbrella, his watch, all his jewels and rings,
And the clothes he had bought for the trip.

He had forty-two boxes, all carefully packed,
With his name painted clearly on each:
But, since he omitted to mention the fact,
They were all left behind on the beach.

The loss of his clothes hardly mattered, because
He had seven coats on when he came,
With three pairs of boots--but the worst of it was,
He had wholly forgotten his name.

He would answer to 'Hi!' or to any loud cry,
Such as 'Fry me!' or 'Fritter my wig!'
To 'What-you-may-call-um!' or 'What-was-his-name!'
But especially 'Thing-um-a-jig!'

While, for those who preferred a more forcible word,
He had different names from these:
His intimate friends called him 'Candle-ends,'
And his enemies 'Toasted-cheese.'

'His form in ungainly--his intellect small--'
(So the Bellman would often remark)
'But his courage is perfect! And that, after all,
Is the thing that one needs with a Snark.'

He would joke with hyenas, returning their stare
With an impudent wag of the head:
And he once went a walk, paw-in-paw, with a bear,
'Just to keep up its spirits,' he said.

He came as a Baker: but owned, when too late--
And it drove the poor Bellman half-mad--
He could only bake Bridecake--for which, I may state,
No materials were to be had.

The last of the crew needs especial remark,
Though he looked an incredible dunce:
He had just one idea--but, that one being 'Snark,'
The good Bellman engaged him at once.

He came as a Butcher: but gravely declared,
When the ship had been sailing a week,
He could only kill Beavers. The Bellman looked scared,
And was almost too frightened to speak:

But at length he explained, in a tremulous tone,
There was only one Beaver on board;
And that was a tame one he had of his own,
Whose death would be deeply deplored.

The Beaver, who happened to hear the remark,
Protested, with tears in its eyes,
That not even the rapture of hunting the Snark
Could atone for that dismal surprise!

It strongly advised that the Butcher should be
Conveyed in a separate ship:
But the Bellman declared that would never agree
With the plans he had made for the trip:

Navigation was always a difficult art,
Though with only one ship and one bell:
And he feared he must really decline, for his part,
Undertaking another as well.

The Beaver's best course was, no doubt, to procure
A second-hand dagger-proof coat--
So the Baker advised it-- and next, to insure
Its life in some Office of note:

This the Banker suggested, and offered for hire

(On moderate terms), or for sale,
Two excellent Policies, one Against Fire,
And one Against Damage From Hail.

Yet still, ever after that sorrowful day,
Whenever the Butcher was by,
The Beaver kept looking the opposite way,
And appeared unaccountably shy.

Fit the Second
THE BELLMAN'S SPEECH

The Bellman himself they all praised to the skies--
Such a carriage, such ease and such grace!
Such solemnity, too! One could see he was wise,
The moment one looked in his face!

He had bought a large map representing the sea,
Without the least vestige of land:
And the crew were much pleased when they found it to be
A map they could all understand.

'What's the good of Mercator's North Poles and Equators,
Tropics, Zones, and Meridian Lines?'
So the Bellman would cry: and the crew would reply
'They are merely conventional signs!

'Other maps are such shapes, with their islands and capes!
But we've got our brave Captain to thank:
(So the crew would protest) 'that he's bought us the best--
A perfect and absolute blank!'

This was charming, no doubt; but they shortly found out
That the Captain they trusted so well
Had only one notion for crossing the ocean,
And that was to tingle his bell.

He was thoughtful and grave--but the orders he gave
Were enough to bewilder a crew.
When he cried 'Steer to starboard, but keep her head larboard!'
What on earth was the helmsman to do?

Then the bowsprit got mixed with the rudder sometimes:
A thing, as the Bellman remarked,
That frequently happens in tropical climes,
When a vessel is, so to speak, 'snarked.'

But the principal failing occurred in the sailing,
And the Bellman, perplexed and distressed,
Said he had hoped, at least, when the wind blew due East,
That the ship would not travel due West!

But the danger was past--they had landed at last,
With their boxes, portmanteaus, and bags:
Yet at first sight the crew were not pleased with the view,
Which consisted to chasms and crags.

The Bellman perceived that their spirits were low,
And repeated in musical tone
Some jokes he had kept for a season of woe--
But the crew would do nothing but groan.

He served out some grog with a liberal hand,
And bade them sit down on the beach:
And they could not but own that their Captain looked grand,
As he stood and delivered his speech.

'Friends, Romans, and countrymen, lend me your ears!'
(They were all of them fond of quotations:
So they drank to his health, and they gave him three cheers,
While he served out additional rations).

'We have sailed many months, we have sailed many weeks,
(Four weeks to the month you may mark),
But never as yet ('tis your Captain who speaks)
Have we caught the least glimpse of a Snark!

'We have sailed many weeks, we have sailed many days,
(Seven days to the week I allow),
But a Snark, on the which we might lovingly gaze,
We have never beheld till now!

'Come, listen, my men, while I tell you again
The five unmistakable marks
By which you may know, wheresoever you go,
The warranted genuine Snarks.

'Let us take them in order. The first is the taste,
Which is meager and hollow, but crisp:
Like a coat that is rather too tight in the waist,
With a flavor of Will-o-the-wisp.

'Its habit of getting up late you'll agree
That it carries too far, when I say
That it frequently breakfasts at five-o'clock tea,
And dines on the following day.

'The third is its slowness in taking a jest.
Should you happen to venture on one,
It will sigh like a thing that is deeply distressed:
And it always looks grave at a pun.

'The fourth is its fondness for bathing-machines,

Which is constantly carries about,
And believes that they add to the beauty of scenes--
A sentiment open to doubt.

'The fifth is ambition. It next will be right
To describe each particular batch:
Distinguishing those that have feathers, and bite,
And those that have whiskers, and scratch.

'For, although common Snarks do no manner of harm,
Yet, I feel it my duty to say,
Some are Boojums--' The Bellman broke off in alarm,
For the Baker had fainted away.

Fit the Third
THE BAKER'S TALE

They roused him with muffins--they roused him with ice--
They roused him with mustard and cress--
They roused him with jam and judicious advice--
They set him conundrums to guess.

When at length he sat up and was able to speak,
His sad story he offered to tell;
And the Bellman cried 'Silence! Not even a shriek!'
And excitedly tingled his bell.

There was silence supreme! Not a shriek, not a scream,
Scarcely even a howl or a groan,
As the man they called 'Ho!' told his story of woe
In an antediluvian tone.

'My father and mother were honest, though poor--'
'Skip all that!' cried the Bellman in haste.
'If it once becomes dark, there's no chance of a Snark--
We have hardly a minute to waste!'

'I skip forty years,' said the Baker, in tears,
'And proceed without further remark
To the day when you took me aboard of your ship
To help you in hunting the Snark.

'A dear uncle of mine (after whom I was named)
Remarked, when I bade him farewell--'
'Oh, skip your dear uncle!' the Bellman exclaimed,
As he angrily tingled his bell.

'He remarked to me then,' said that mildest of men,
' 'If your Snark be a Snark, that is right:
Fetch it home by all means--you may serve it with greens,
And it's handy for striking a light.

' 'You may seek it with thimbles--and seek it with care;
You may hunt it with forks and hope;
You may threaten its life with a railway-share;
You may charm it with smiles and soap--' '

('That's exactly the method,' the Bellman bold
In a hasty parenthesis cried,
'That's exactly the way I have always been told
That the capture of Snarks should be tried!')

' 'But oh, beamish nephew, beware of the day,
If your Snark be a Boojum! For then
You will softly and suddenly vanish away,
And never be met with again!'

'It is this, it is this that oppresses my soul,
When I think of my uncle's last words:
And my heart is like nothing so much as a bowl
Brimming over with quivering curds!

'It is this, it is this--' 'We have had that before!'
The Bellman indignantly said.
And the Baker replied 'Let me say it once more.
It is this, it is this that I dread!

'I engage with the Snark--every night after dark--
In a dreamy delirious fight:
I serve it with greens in those shadowy scenes,
And I use it for striking a light:

'But if ever I meet with a Boojum, that day,
In a moment (of this I am sure),
I shall softly and suddenly vanish away--
And the notion I cannot endure!'

Fit the fourth
THE HUNTING

The Bellman looked uffish, and wrinkled his brow.
'If only you'd spoken before!
It's excessively awkward to mention it now,
With the Snark, so to speak, at the door!

'We should all of us grieve, as you well may believe,
If you never were met with again--
But surely, my man, when the voyage began,
You might have suggested it then?

'It's excessively awkward to mention it now--
As I think I've already remarked.'

And the man they called 'Hi!' replied, with a sigh,
'I informed you the day we embarked.

'You may charge me with murder--or want of sense--
(We are all of us weak at times):
But the slightest approach to a false pretense
Was never among my crimes!

'I said it in Hebrew--I said it in Dutch--
I said it in German and Greek:
But I wholly forgot (and it vexes me much)
That English is what you speak!'

''Tis a pitiful tale,' said the Bellman, whose face
Had grown longer at every word:
'But, now that you've stated the whole of your case,
More debate would be simply absurd.

'The rest of my speech' (he explained to his men)
'You shall hear when I've leisure to speak it.
But the Snark is at hand, let me tell you again!
'Tis your glorious duty to seek it!

'To seek it with thimbles, to seek it with care;
To pursue it with forks and hope;
To threaten its life with a railway-share;
To charm it with smiles and soap!

'For the Snark's a peculiar creature, that won't
Be caught in a commonplace way.
Do all that you know, and try all that you don't:
Not a chance must be wasted to-day!

'For England expects--I forbear to proceed:
'Tis a maxim tremendous, but trite:
And you'd best be unpacking the things that you need
To rig yourselves out for the fight.'

Then the Banker endorsed a blank check (which he crossed),
And changed his loose silver for notes.
The Baker with care combed his whiskers and hair,
And shook the dust out of his coats.

The Boots and the Broker were sharpening a spade--
Each working the grindstone in turn:
But the Beaver went on making lace, and displayed
No interest in the concern:

Though the Barrister tried to appeal to its pride,
And vainly proceeded to cite
A number of cases, in which making laces
Had been proved an infringement of right.

The maker of Bonnets ferociously planned
A novel arrangement of bows:
While the Billiard-marker with quivering hand
Was chalking the tip of his nose.

But the Butcher turned nervous, and dressed himself fine,
With yellow kid gloves and a ruff--
Said he felt it exactly like going to dine,
Which the Bellman declared was all 'stuff.'

'Introduce me, now there's a good fellow,' he said,
'If we happen to meet it together!'
And the Bellman, sagaciously nodding his head,
Said 'That must depend on the weather.'

The Beaver went simply galumphing about,
At seeing the Butcher so shy:
And even the Baker, though stupid and stout,
Made an effort to wink with one eye.

'Be a man!' said the Bellman in wrath, as he heard
The Butcher beginning to sob.
'Should we meet with a Jubjub, that desperate bird,
We shall need all our strength for the job!'

Fit the Fifth
THE BEAVER'S LESSON

They sought it with thimbles, they sought it with care;
They pursued it with forks and hope;
They threatened its life with a railway-share;
They charmed it with smiles and soap.

Then the Butcher contrived an ingenious plan
For making a separate sally;
And fixed on a spot unfrequented by man,
A dismal and desolate valley.

But the very same plan to the Beaver occurred:
It had chosen the very same place:
Yet neither betrayed, by a sign or a word,
The disgust that appeared in his face.

Each thought he was thinking of nothing but 'Snark'
And the glorious work of the day;
And each tried to pretend that he did not remark
That the other was going that way.

But the valley grew narrow and narrower still,
And the evening got darker and colder,

Till (merely from nervousness, not from goodwill)
They marched along shoulder to shoulder.

Then a scream, shrill and high, rent the shuddering sky,
And they knew that some danger was near:
The Beaver turned pale to the tip of its tail,
And even the Butcher felt queer.

He thought of his childhood, left far far behind--
That blissful and innocent state--
The sound so exactly recalled to his mind
A pencil that squeaks on a slate!

''Tis the voice of the Jubjub!' he suddenly cried.
(This man, that they used to call 'Dunce.')
'As the Bellman would tell you,' he added with pride,
'I have uttered that sentiment once.

''Tis the note of the Jubjub! Keep count, I entreat;
You will find I have told it you twice.
'Tis the song of the Jubjub! The proof is complete,
If only I've stated it thrice.'

The Beaver had counted with scrupulous care,
Attending to every word:
But it fairly lost heart, and outgrabe in despair,
When the third repetition occurred.

It felt that, in spite of all possible pains,
It had somehow contrived to lose count,
And the only thing now was to rack its poor brains
By reckoning up the amount.

'Two added to one--if that could but be done,'
It said, 'with one's fingers and thumbs!'
Recollecting with tears how, in earlier years,
It had taken no pains with its sums.

'The thing can be done,' said the Butcher, 'I think.
The thing must be done, I am sure.
The thing shall be done! Bring me paper and ink,
The best there is time to procure.'

The Beaver brought paper,portfolio, pens,
And ink in unfailing supplies:
While strange creepy creatures came out of their dens,
And watched them with wondering eyes.

So engrossed was the Butcher, he heeded them not,
As he wrote with a pen in each hand,
And explained all the while in a popular style
Which the Beaver could well understand.

'Taking Three as the subject to reason about--
A convenient number to state--
We add Seven, and Ten, and then multiply out
By One Thousand diminished by Eight.

'The result we proceed to divide, as you see,
By Nine Hundred and Ninety Two:
Then subtract Seventeen, and the answer must be
Exactly and perfectly true.

'The method employed I would gladly explain,
While I have it so clear in my head,
If I had but the time and you had but the brain--
But much yet remains to be said.

'In one moment I've seen what has hitherto been
Enveloped in absolute mystery,
And without extra charge I will give you at large
A Lesson in Natural History.'

In his genial way he proceeded to say
(Forgetting all laws of propriety,
And that giving instruction, without introduction,
Would have caused quite a thrill in Society),

'As to temper the Jubjub's a desperate bird,
Since it lives in perpetual passion:
Its taste in costume is entirely absurd--
It is ages ahead of the fashion:

'But it knows any friend it has met once before:
It never will look at a bride:
And in charity-meetings it stands at the door,
And collects--though it does not subscribe.

' Its flavor when cooked is more exquisite far
Than mutton, or oysters, or eggs:
(Some think it keeps best in an ivory jar,
And some, in mahogany kegs:)

'You boil it in sawdust: you salt it in glue:
You condense it with locusts and tape:
Still keeping one principal object in view--
To preserve its symmetrical shape.'

The Butcher would gladly have talked till next day,
But he felt that the lesson must end,
And he wept with delight in attempting to say
He considered the Beaver his friend.

While the Beaver confessed, with affectionate looks

More eloquent even than tears,
It had learned in ten minutes far more than all books
Would have taught it in seventy years.

They returned hand-in-hand, and the Bellman, unmanned
(For a moment) with noble emotion,
Said 'This amply repays all the wearisome days
We have spent on the billowy ocean!'

Such friends, as the Beaver and Butcher became,
Have seldom if ever been known;
In winter or summer, 'twas always the same--
You could never meet either alone.

And when quarrels arose--as one frequently finds
Quarrels will, spite of every endeavor--
The song of the Jubjub recurred to their minds,
And cemented their friendship for ever!

Fit the Sixth
THE BARRISTER'S DREAM

They sought it with thimbles, they sought it with care;
They pursued it with forks and hope;
They threatened its life with a railway-share;
They charmed it with smiles and soap.

But the Barrister, weary of proving in vain
That the Beaver's lace-making was wrong,
Fell asleep, and in dreams saw the creature quite plain
That his fancy had dwelt on so long.

He dreamed that he stood in a shadowy Court,
Where the Snark, with a glass in its eye,
Dressed in gown, bands, and wig, was defending a pig
On the charge of deserting its sty.

The Witnesses proved, without error or flaw,
That the sty was deserted when found:
And the Judge kept explaining the state of the law
In a soft under-current of sound.

The indictment had never been clearly expressed,
And it seemed that the Snark had begun,
And had spoken three hours, before any one guessed
What the pig was supposed to have done.

The Jury had each formed a different view
(Long before the indictment was read),
And they all spoke at once, so that none of them knew
One word that the others had said.

'You must know ---' said the Judge: but the Snark exclaimed 'Fudge!'
That statute is obsolete quite!
Let me tell you, my friends, the whole question depends
On an ancient manorial right.

'In the matter of Treason the pig would appear
To have aided, but scarcely abetted:
While the charge of Insolvency fails, it is clear,
If you grant the plea 'never indebted.'

'The fact of Desertion I will not dispute;
But its guilt, as I trust, is removed
(So far as related to the costs of this suit)
By the Alibi which has been proved.

'My poor client's fate now depends on you votes.'
Here the speaker sat down in his place,
And directed the Judge to refer to his notes
And briefly to sum up the case.

But the Judge said he never had summed up before;
So the Snark undertook it instead,
And summed it so well that it came to far more
Than the Witnesses ever had said!

When the verdict was called for, the Jury declined,
As the word was so puzzling to spell;
But they ventured to hope that the Snark wouldn't mind
Undertaking that duty as well.

So the Snark found the verdict, although, as it owned,
It was spent with the toils of the day:
When it said the word 'GUILTY!' the Jury all groaned,
And some of them fainted away.

Then the Snark pronounced sentence, the Judge being quite
Too nervous to utter a word:
When it rose to its feet, there was silence like night,
And the fall of a pin might be heard.

'Transportation for lift' was the sentence it gave,
'And *then* to be fined forty pound.'
The Jury all cheered, though the Judge said he feared
That the phrase was not legally sound.

But their wild exultation was suddenly checked
When the jailer informed them, with tears,
Such a sentence would have not the slightest effect,
As the pig had been dead for some years.

The Judge left the Court, looking deeply disgusted:

But the Snark, though a little aghast,
As the lawyer to whom the defense was entrusted,
Went bellowing on to the last.

Thus the Barrister dreamed, while the bellowing seemed
To grow every moment more clear:
Till he woke to the knell of a furious bell,
Which the Bellman rang close at his ear.

Fit the Seventh
THE BANKER'S FATE

They sought it with thimbles, they sought it with care;
They pursued it with forks and hope;
They threatened its life with a railway-share;
They charmed it with smiles and soap.

And the Banker, inspired with a courage so new
It was matter for general remark,
Rushed madly ahead and was lost to their view
In his zeal to discover the Snark

But while he was seeking with thimbles and care,
A Bandersnatch swiftly drew nigh
And grabbed at the Banker, who shrieked in despair,
For he knew it was useless to fly.

He offered large discount--he offered a check
(Drawn 'to bearer') for seven-pounds-ten:
But the Bandersnatch merely extended its neck
And grabbed at the Banker again.

Without rest or pause--while those frumious jaws
Went savagely snapping around-
He skipped and he hopped, and he floundered and flopped,
Till fainting he fell to the ground.

The Bandersnatch fled as the others appeared
Led on by that fear-stricken yell:
And the Bellman remarked 'It is just as I feared!'
And solemnly tolled on his bell.

He was black in the face, and they scarcely could trace
The least likeness to what he had been:
While so great was his fright that his waistcoat turned white-
A wonderful thing to be seen!

To the horror of all who were present that day.
He uprose in full evening dress,
And with senseless grimaces endeavored to say
What his tongue could no longer express.

Down he sank in a chair--ran his hands through his hair--
And chanted in mimsiest tones
Words whose utter inanity proved his insanity,
While he rattled a couple of bones.

'Leave him here to his fate--it is getting so late!'
The Bellman exclaimed in a fright.
'We have lost half the day. Any further delay,
And we sha'nt catch a Snark before night!'

Fit the Eighth
THE VANISHING

They sought it with thimbles, they sought it with care;
They pursued it with forks and hope;
They threatened its life with a railway-share;
They charmed it with smiles and soap.

They shuddered to think that the chase might fail,
And the Beaver, excited at last,
Went bounding along on the tip of its tail,
For the daylight was nearly past.

'There is Thingumbob shouting!' the Bellman said,
'He is shouting like mad, only hark!
He is waving his hands, he is wagging his head,
He has certainly found a Snark!'

They gazed in delight, while the Butcher exclaimed
'He was always a desperate wag!'
They beheld him--their Baker--their hero unnamed--
On the top of a neighboring crag.

Erect and sublime, for one moment of time.
In the next, that wild figure they saw
(As if stung by a spasm) plunge into a chasm,
While they waited and listened in awe.

'It's a Snark!' was the sound that first came to their ears,
And seemed almost too good to be true.
Then followed a torrent of laughter and cheers:
Then the ominous words 'It's a Boo-'

Then, silence. Some fancied they heard in the air
A weary and wandering sigh
Then sounded like '-jum!' but the others declare
It was only a breeze that went by.

They hunted till darkness came on, but they found
Not a button, or feather, or mark,

By which they could tell that they stood on the ground
Where the Baker had met with the Snark.

In the midst of the word he was trying to say,
In the midst of his laughter and glee,
He had softly and suddenly vanished away---
For the Snark *was* a Boojum, you see.

Lewis Carroll

The Knight's Song

I'll tell thee everything I can:
There's little to relate.
I saw an aged aged man,
A-sitting on a gate.

'Who are you, aged man?' I said.
'And how is it you live?'
And his answer trickled through my head,
Like water through a sieve.
He said, 'I look for butterflies
That sleep among the wheat:
I make them into mutton-pies,
And sell them in the street.

I sell them unto men,' he said,
'Who sail on stormy seas;
And that's the way I get my bread --
A trifle, if you please.'
But I was thinking of a plan
To dye one's whiskers green,
And always use so large a fan
That they could not be seen.

So having no reply to give
To what the old man said, I cried
'Come, tell me how you live!'
And thumped him on the head.
His accents mild took up the tale:

He said 'I go my ways,
And when I find a mountain-rill,
I set it in a blaze;
And thence they make a stuff they call
Rowland's Macassar-Oil --
Yet twopence-halfpenny is all
They give me for my toil.'

But I was thinking of a way
To feed oneself on batter,
And so go on from day to day '
Getting a little fatter.
I shook him well from side to side,
Until his face was blue:
'Come, tell me how you live,' I cried,
'And what it is you do!'

He said, 'I hunt for haddocks' eyes
Among the heather bright,
And work them into waistcoat-buttons
In the silent night.
And these I do not sell for gold
Or coin of silvery shine,

But for a copper halfpenny,
And that will purchase nine.

'I sometimes dig for buttered rolls,
Or set limed twigs for crabs:
I sometimes search the grassy knolls
For wheels of Hansom-cabs.
And that's the way' (he gave a wink)
'By which I get my wealth --
And very gladly will I drink
Your Honour's noble health.'

I heard him then, for I had just
Completed my design
To keep the Menai bridge from rust
By boiling it in wine.
I thanked him much for telling me
The way he got his wealth,
But chiefly for his wish that he
Might drink my noble health.

And now, if e'er by chance I put
My fingers into glue,
Or madly squeeze a right-hand foot
Into a left-hand shoe,
Or if I drop upon my toe
A very heavy weight,
I weep, for it reminds me so
Of that old man I used to know --
Whose look was mild, whose speech was slow
Whose hair was whiter than the snow,
Whose face was very like a crow,
With eyes, like cinders, all aglow,
Who seemed distracted with his woe,
Who rocked his body to and fro,
And muttered mumblingly and low,
As if his mouth were full of dough,
Who snorted like a buffalo-
That summer evening long ago,
A-sitting on a gate.

Lewis Carroll

The Lang Coortin'

The ladye she stood at her lattice high,
Wi' her doggie at her feet;
Thorough the lattice she can spy
The passers in the street,

'There's one that standeth at the door,
And tirleth at the pin:
Now speak and say, my popinjay,
If I sall let him in.'

Then up and spake the popinjay
That flew abune her head:
'Gae let him in that tirls the pin:
He cometh thee to wed.'

O when he cam' the parlour in,
A woeful man was he!
'And dinna ye ken your lover agen,
Sae well that loveth thee?'

'And how wad I ken ye loved me, Sir,
That have been sae lang away?
And how wad I ken ye loved me, Sir?
Ye never telled me sae.'

Said - 'Ladye dear,' and the salt, salt tear
Cam' rinnin' doon his cheek,
'I have sent the tokens of my love
This many and many a week.

'O didna ye get the rings, Ladye,
The rings o' the gowd sae fine?
I wot that I have sent to thee
Four score, four score and nine.'

'They cam' to me,' said that fair ladye.
'Wow, they were flimsie things!'
Said - 'that chain o' gowd, my doggie to howd,
It is made o' thae self-same rings.'

'And didna ye get the locks, the locks,
The locks o' my ain black hair,
Whilk I sent by post, whilk I sent by box,
Whilk I sent by the carrier?'

'They cam' to me,' said that fair ladye;
'And I prithee send nae mair!'
Said - 'that cushion sae red, for my doggie's head,
It is stuffed wi' thae locks o' hair.'

'And didna ye get the letter, Ladye,
Tied wi' a silken string,

Whilk I sent to thee frae the far countrie,
A message of love to bring?'

'It cam' to me frae the far countrie
Wi' its silken string and a';
But it wasna prepaid,' said that high-born maid,
'Sae I gar'd them tak' it awa'.'

'O ever alack that ye sent it back,
It was written sae clerkly and well!
Now the message it brought, and the boon that it sought,
I must even say it mysel'.'

Then up and spake the popinjay,
Sae wisely counselled he.
'Now say it in the proper way:
Gae doon upon thy knee!'

The lover he turned baith red and pale,
Went doon upon his knee:
'O Ladye, hear the waesome tale
That must be told to thee!

'For five lang years, and five lang years,
I coorted thee by looks;
By nods and winks, by smiles and tears,
As I had read in books.

'For ten lang years, O weary hours!
I coorted thee by signs;
By sending game, by sending flowers,
By sending Valentines.

'For five lang years, and five lang years,
I have dwelt in the far countrie,
Till that thy mind should be inclined
Mair tenderly to me.

'Now thirty years are gane and past,
I am come frae a foreign land:
I am come to tell thee my love at last -
O Ladye, gie me thy hand!'

The ladye she turned not pale nor red,
But she smiled a pitiful smile:
'Sic' a coortin' as yours, my man,' she said
'Takes a lang and a weary while!'

And out and laughed the popinjay,
A laugh of bitter scorn:
'A coortin' done in sic' a way,
It ought not to be borne!'

Wi' that the doggie barked aloud,
And up and doon he ran,
And tugged and strained his chain o' gowd,
All for to bite the man.

'O hush thee, gentle popinjay!
O hush thee, doggie dear!
There is a word I fain wad say,
It needeth he should hear!'

Aye louder screamed that ladye fair
To drown her doggie's bark:
Ever the lover shouted mair
To make that ladye hark:

Shrill and more shrill the popinjay
Upraised his angry squall:
I trow the doggie's voice that day
Was louder than them all!

The serving-men and serving-maids
Sat by the kitchen fire:
They heard sic' a din the parlour within
As made them much admire.

Out spake the boy in buttons
(I ween he wasna thin),
'Now wha will tae the parlour gae,
And stay this deadlie din?'

And they have taen a kerchief,
Casted their kevils in,
For wha will tae the parlour gae,
And stay that deadlie din.

When on that boy the kevil fell
To stay the fearsome noise,
'Gae in,' they cried, 'whate'er betide,
Thou prince of button-boys!'

Syne, he has taen a supple cane
To swinge that dog sae fat:
The doggie yowled, the doggie howled
The louder aye for that.

Syne, he has taen a mutton-bane -
The doggie ceased his noise,
And followed doon the kitchen stair
That prince of button-boys!

Then sadly spake that ladye fair,

Wi' a frown upon her brow:
'O dearer to me is my sma' doggie
Than a dozen sic' as thou!

'Nae use, nae use for sighs and tears:
Nae use at all to fret:
Sin' ye've bided sae well for thirty years,
Ye may bide a wee langer yet!'

Sadly, sadly he crossed the floor
And tirled at the pin:
Sadly went he through the door
Where sadly he cam' in.

'O gin I had a popinjay
To fly abune my head,
To tell me what I ought to say,
I had by this been wed.

'O gin I find anither ladye,'
He said wi' sighs and tears,
'I wot my coortin' sall not be
Anither thirty years

'For gin I find a ladye gay,
Exactly to my taste,
I'll pop the question, aye or nay,
In twenty years at maist.'

Lewis Carroll

The Lobster-Quadrille

'Will you walk a little faster?' said a whiting to a snail,
'There's a porpoise close behind us, and he's treading on my tail.
See how eagerly the lobsters and the turtles all advance!
They are waiting on the shingle -- will you come and join the dance?
Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, will you join the dance?
Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, won't you join the dance?

'You can really have no notion how delightful it will be
When they take us up and throw us, with the lobsters, out to sea!'
But the snail replied 'Too far, too far!' and gave a look askance --
Said he thanked the whiting kindly, but he would not join the dance.
Would not, could not, would not, could not, would not join the dance.
Would not, could not, would not, could not, could not join the dance.

'What matters it how far we go?' his scaly friend replied.
'There is another shore, you know, upon the other side.
The further off from England the nearer is to France --
Then turn not pale, beloved snail, but come and join the dance.
Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, will you join the dance?
Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, won't you joint the dance?

Lewis Carroll

The Mad Gardener's Song

He thought he saw an Elephant,
That practised on a fife:
He looked again, and found it was
A letter from his wife.
'At length I realise,' he said,
The bitterness of Life!'

He thought he saw a Buffalo
Upon the chimney-piece:
He looked again, and found it was
His Sister's Husband's Niece.
'Unless you leave this house,' he said,
'I'll send for the Police!'

He thought he saw a Rattlesnake
That questioned him in Greek:
He looked again, and found it was
The Middle of Next Week.
'The one thing I regret,' he said,
'Is that it cannot speak!'

He thought he saw a Banker's Clerk
Descending from the bus:
He looked again, and found it was
A Hippopotamus.
'If this should stay to dine,' he said,
'There won't be much for us!'

He thought he saw a Kangaroo
That worked a coffee-mill:
He looked again, and found it was
A Vegetable-Pill.
'Were I to swallow this,' he said,
'I should be very ill!'

He thought he saw a Coach-and-Four
That stood beside his bed:
He looked again, and found it was
A Bear without a Head.
'Poor thing,' he said, 'poor silly thing!
It's waiting to be fed!'

He thought he saw an Albatross
That fluttered round the lamp:
He looked again, and found it was
A Penny-Postage Stamp.
'You'd best be getting home,' he said:
'The nights are very damp!'

He thought he saw a Garden-Door
That opened with a key:
He looked again, and found it was

A Double Rule of Three:
'And all its mystery,' he said,
'Is clear as day to me!'

He thought he saw a Argument
That proved he was the Pope:
He looked again, and found it was
A Bar of Mottled Soap.
'A fact so dread,' he faintly said,
'Extinguishes all hope!'

Lewis Carroll

The Manlet

In stature the Manlet was dwarfish--
No burly, big Blunderbore he;
And he wearily gazed on the crawfish
His Wifelet had dressed for his tea.
'Now reach me, sweet Atom, my gunlet,
And hurl the old shoelet for luck;
Let me hie to the bank of the runlet,
And shoot thee a Duck!'

She has reached him his minikin gunlet;
She has hurled the old shoelet for luck;
She is busily baking a bunlet,
To welcome him home with his Duck.
On he speeds, never wasting a wordlet,
Though thoughtlets cling, closely as wax,
To the spot where the beautiful birdlet
So quietly quacks.

Where the Lobsterlet lurks, and the Crablet
So slowly and sleepily crawls;
Where the Dolphin's at home, and the Dablet
Pays long, ceremonious calls;
Where the Grublet is sought by the Froglet;
Where the Frog is pursued by the Duck;
Where the Ducklet is chased by the Doglet--
So runs the world's luck!

He has loaded with bullet and powder;
His footfall is noiseless as air;
But the Voices grow louder and louder,
And bellow and bluster and blare.
They bristle before him and after,
They flutter above and below,
Shrill shriekings of lubberly laughter,
Weird wailings of woe!

They echo without him, within him;
They thrill through his whiskers and beard;
Like a teetotum seeming to spin him,
With sneers never hitherto sneered.
'Avengement,' they cry, 'on our Foelet!
Let the Manikin weep for our wrongs!
Let us drench him, from toplet to toelet,
With Nursery Songs!

'He shall muse upon 'Hey! Diddle! Diddle!'
On the Cow that surmounted the Moon;
He shall rave of the Cat and the Fiddle,
And the Dish that eloped with the Spoon;
And his soul shall be sad for the Spider,
When Miss Muffet was sipping her whey,
That so tenderly sat down beside her,

And scared her away!

'The music of Midsummer madness
Shall sting him with many a bite,
Till, in rapture of rollicking sadness,
He shall groan with a gloomy delight;
He shall swathe him, like mists of the morning,
In platitudes luscious and limp,
Such as deck, with a deathless adorning,
The Song of the Shrimp!

'When the Ducklet's dark doom is decided,
We will trundle him home in a trice;
And the banquet, so plainly provided,
Shall round into rose-buds and rice;
In a blaze of pragmatic invention
He shall wrestle with Fate, and shall reign;
But he has not a friend fit to mention,
So hit him again!'

He has shot it, the delicate darling!
And the Voices have ceased from their strife;
Not a whisper of sneering or snarling,
As he carries it home to his wife;
Then, cheerily champing the bunlet
His spouse was so skilful to bake,
He hies him once more to the runlet
To fetch her the Drake!

Lewis Carroll

The Palace of Humbug

Lays of Mystery,
Imagination, and Humor

Number 1

I dreamt I dwelt in marble halls,
And each damp thing that creeps and crawls
Went wobble-wobble on the walls.

Faint odours of departed cheese,
Blown on the dank, unwholesome breeze,
Awoke the never ending sneeze.

Strange pictures decked the arras drear,
Strange characters of woe and fear,
The humbugs of the social sphere.

One showed a vain and noisy prig,
That shouted empty words and big
At him that nodded in a wig.

And one, a dotard grim and gray,
Who wasteth childhood's happy day
In work more profitless than play.

Whose icy breast no pity warms,
Whose little victims sit in swarms,
And slowly sob on lower forms.

And one, a green thyme-honoured Bank,
Where flowers are growing wild and rank,
Like weeds that fringe a poisoned tank.

All birds of evil omen there
Flood with rich Notes the tainted air,
The witless wanderer to snare.

The fatal Notes neglected fall,
No creature heeds the treacherous call,
For all those goodly Strawn Baits Pall.

The wandering phantom broke and fled,
Straightway I saw within my head
A vision of a ghostly bed,

Where lay two worn decrepit men,
The fictions of a lawyer's pen,
Who never more might breathe again.

The serving-man of Richard Roe
Wept, inarticulate with woe:
She wept, that waiting on John Doe.

"Oh rouse", I urged, "the waning sense
With tales of tangled evidence,
Of suit, demurrer, and defence."

"Vain", she replied, "such mockeries:
For morbid fancies, such as these,
No suits can suit, no plea can please."

And bending o'er that man of straw,
She cried in grief and sudden awe,
Not inappropriately, "Law!"

The well-remembered voice he knew,
He smiled, he faintly muttered "Sue!"
(Her very name was legal too.)

The night was fled, the dawn was nigh:
A hurricane went raving by,
And swept the Vision from mine eye.

Vanished that dim and ghostly bed,
(The hangings, tape; the tape was red happy
'Tis o'er, and Doe and Roe are dead!

Oh, yet my spirit inly crawls,
What time it shudderingly recalls
That horrid dream of marble halls!

Lewis Carroll

The Sea

There are certain things -a spider, a ghost,
The income-tax, gout, an umbrella for three -
That I hate, but the thing that I hate the most
Is a thing they call the SEA.

Pour some salt water over the floor -
Ugly I'm sure you'll allow it to be:
Suppose it extended a mile or more,
That's very like the SEA.

Beat a dog till it howls outright -
Cruel, but all very well for a spree;
Suppose that one did so day and night,
That would be like the SEA.

I had a vision of nursery-maids;
Tens of thousands passed by me -
All leading children with wooden spades,
And this was by the SEA.

Who invented those spades of wood?
Who was it cut them out of the tree?
None, I think, but an idiot could -
Or one that loved the SEA.

It is pleasant and dreamy, no doubt, to float
With `thoughts as boundless, and souls as free';
But suppose you are very unwell in a boat,
How do you like the SEA.

There is an insect that people avoid
(Whence is derived the verb `to flee')
Where have you been by it most annoyed?
In lodgings by the SEA.

If you like coffee with sand for dregs,
A decided hint of salt in your tea,
And a fishy taste in the very eggs -
By all means choose the SEA.

And if, with these dainties to drink and eat,
You prefer not a vestige of grass or tree,
And a chronic state of wet in your feet,
Then -I recommend the SEA.

For I have friends who dwell by the coast,
Pleasant friends they are to me!
It is when I'm with them I wonder most
That anyone likes the SEA.

They take me a walk: though tired and stiff,
To climb the heights I madly agree:

And, after a tumble or so from the cliff,
They kindly suggest the SEA.

I try the rocks, and I think it cool
That they laugh with such an excess of glee,
As I heavily slip into every pool,
That skirts the cold, cold SEA.

Lewis Carroll

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Lewis Carroll

The Three Voices

The First Voice

He trilled a carol fresh and free,
He laughed aloud for very glee:
There came a breeze from off the sea:

It passed athwart the glooming flat -
It fanned his forehead as he sat -
It lightly bore away his hat,

All to the feet of one who stood
Like maid enchanted in a wood,
Frowning as darkly as she could.

With huge umbrella, lank and brown,
Unerringly she pinned it down,
Right through the centre of the crown.

Then, with an aspect cold and grim,
Regardless of its battered rim,
She took it up and gave it him.

A while like one in dreams he stood,
Then faltered forth his gratitude
In words just short of being rude:

For it had lost its shape and shine,
And it had cost him four-and-nine,
And he was going out to dine.

'To dine!' she sneered in acid tone.
'To bend thy being to a bone
Clothed in a radiance not its own!'

The tear-drop trickled to his chin:
There was a meaning in her grin
That made him feel on fire within.

'Term it not 'radiance,'' said he:
''Tis solid nutriment to me.
Dinner is Dinner: Tea is Tea.'

And she 'Yea so? Yet wherefore cease?
Let thy scant knowledge find increase.
Say 'Men are Men, and Geese are Geese.''

He moaned: he knew not what to say.
The thought 'That I could get away!'
Strove with the thought 'But I must stay.

'To dine!' she shrieked in dragon-wrath.
'To swallow wines all foam and froth!

To simper at a table-cloth!

'Say, can thy noble spirit stoop
To join the gormandising troup
Who find a solace in the soup?

'Canst thou desire or pie or puff?
Thy well-bred manners were enough,
Without such gross material stuff.'

'Yet well-bred men,' he faintly said,
'Are not willing to be fed:
Nor are they well without the bread.'

Her visage scorched him ere she spoke:
'There are,' she said, 'a kind of folk
Who have no horror of a joke.

'Such wretches live: they take their share
Of common earth and common air:
We come across them here and there:

'We grant them - there is no escape -
A sort of semi-human shape
Suggestive of the man-like Ape.'

'In all such theories,' said he,
'One fixed exception there must be.
That is, the Present Company.'

Baffled, she gave a wolfish bark:
He, aiming blindly in the dark,
With random shaft had pierced the mark.

She felt that her defeat was plain,
Yet madly strove with might and main
To get the upper hand again.

Fixing her eyes upon the beach,
As though unconscious of his speech,
She said 'Each gives to more than each.'

He could not answer yea or nay:
He faltered 'Gifts may pass away.'
Yet knew not what he meant to say.

'If that be so,' she straight replied,
'Each heart with each doth coincide.
What boots it? For the world is wide.'

'The world is but a Thought,' said he:
'The vast unfathomable sea

Is but a Notion - unto me.'

And darkly fell her answer dread
Upon his unresisting head,
Like half a hundredweight of lead.

'The Good and Great must ever shun
That reckless and abandoned one
Who stoops to perpetrate a pun.

'The man that smokes - that reads the TIMES -
That goes to Christmas Pantomimes -
Is capable of ANY crimes!'

He felt it was his turn to speak,
And, with a shamed and crimson cheek,
Moaned 'This is harder than Bezique!'

But when she asked him 'Wherefore so?'
He felt his very whiskers glow,
And frankly owned 'I do not know.'

While, like broad waves of golden grain,
Or sunlit hues on cloistered pane,
His colour came and went again.

Pitying his obvious distress,
Yet with a tinge of bitterness,
She said 'The More exceeds the Less.'

'A truth of such undoubted weight,'
He urged, 'and so extreme in date,
It were superfluous to state.'

Roused into sudden passion, she
In tone of cold malignity:
'To others, yea: but not to thee.'

But when she saw him quail and quake,
And when he urged 'For pity's sake!'
Once more in gentle tones she spake.

'Thought in the mind doth still abide
That is by Intellect supplied,
And within that Idea doth hide:

'And he, that yearns the truth to know,
Still further inwardly may go,
And find Idea from Notion flow:

'And thus the chain, that sages sought,
Is to a glorious circle wrought,

For Notion hath its source in Thought.'

So passed they on with even pace:
Yet gradually one might trace
A shadow growing on his face.

The Second Voice

THEY walked beside the wave-worn beach;
Her tongue was very apt to teach,
And now and then he did beseech

She would abate her dulcet tone,
Because the talk was all her own,
And he was dull as any drone.

She urged 'No cheese is made of chalk':
And ceaseless flowed her dreary talk,
Tuned to the footfall of a walk.

Her voice was very full and rich,
And, when at length she asked him 'Which?'
It mounted to its highest pitch.

He a bewildered answer gave,
Drowned in the sullen moaning wave,
Lost in the echoes of the cave.

He answered her he knew not what:
Like shaft from bow at random shot,
He spoke, but she regarded not.

She waited not for his reply,
But with a downward leaden eye
Went on as if he were not by

Sound argument and grave defence,
Strange questions raised on 'Why?' and 'Whence?'
And wildly tangled evidence.

When he, with racked and whirling brain,
Feebly implored her to explain,
She simply said it all again.

Wrenched with an agony intense,
He spake, neglecting Sound and Sense,
And careless of all consequence:

'Mind - I believe - is Essence - Ent -
Abstract - that is - an Accident -
Which we - that is to say - I meant - '

When, with quick breath and cheeks all flushed,
At length his speech was somewhat hushed,
She looked at him, and he was crushed.

It needed not her calm reply:
She fixed him with a stony eye,
And he could neither fight nor fly.

While she dissected, word by word,
His speech, half guessed at and half heard,
As might a cat a little bird.

Then, having wholly overthrown
His views, and stripped them to the bone,
Proceeded to unfold her own.

'Shall Man be Man? And shall he miss
Of other thoughts no thought but this,
Harmonious dews of sober bliss?

'What boots it? Shall his fevered eye
Through towering nothingness descry
The grisly phantom hurry by?

'And hear dumb shrieks that fill the air;
See mouths that gape, and eyes that stare
And redden in the dusky glare?

'The meadows breathing amber light,
The darkness toppling from the height,
The feathery train of granite Night?

'Shall he, grown gray among his peers,
Through the thick curtain of his tears
Catch glimpses of his earlier years,

'And hear the sounds he knew of yore,
Old shufflings on the sanded floor,
Old knuckles tapping at the door?

'Yet still before him as he flies
One pallid form shall ever rise,
And, bodying forth in glassy eyes

'The vision of a vanished good,
Low peering through the tangled wood,
Shall freeze the current of his blood.'

Still from each fact, with skill uncouth
And savage rapture, like a tooth
She wrenched some slow reluctant truth.

Till, like a silent water-mill,
When summer suns have dried the rill,
She reached a full stop, and was still.

Dead calm succeeded to the fuss,
As when the loaded omnibus
Has reached the railway terminus:

When, for the tumult of the street,
Is heard the engine's stifled beat,
The velvet tread of porters' feet.

With glance that ever sought the ground,
She moved her lips without a sound,
And every now and then she frowned.

He gazed upon the sleeping sea,
And joyed in its tranquillity,
And in that silence dead, but she

To muse a little space did seem,
Then, like the echo of a dream,
Harked back upon her threadbare theme.

Still an attentive ear he lent
But could not fathom what she meant:
She was not deep, nor eloquent.

He marked the ripple on the sand:
The even swaying of her hand
Was all that he could understand.

He saw in dreams a drawing-room,
Where thirteen wretches sat in gloom,
Waiting - he thought he knew for whom:

He saw them drooping here and there,
Each feebly huddled on a chair,
In attitudes of blank despair:

Oysters were not more mute than they,
For all their brains were pumped away,
And they had nothing more to say -

Save one, who groaned 'Three hours are gone!'
Who shrieked 'We'll wait no longer, John!
Tell them to set the dinner on!'

The vision passed: the ghosts were fled:
He saw once more that woman dread:
He heard once more the words she said.

He left her, and he turned aside:
He sat and watched the coming tide
Across the shores so newly dried.

He wondered at the waters clear,
The breeze that whispered in his ear,
The billows heaving far and near,

And why he had so long preferred
To hang upon her every word:
'In truth,' he said, 'it was absurd.'

The Third Voice

NOT long this transport held its place:
Within a little moment's space
Quick tears were raining down his face

His heart stood still, aghast with fear;
A wordless voice, nor far nor near,
He seemed to hear and not to hear.

'Tears kindle not the doubtful spark.
If so, why not? Of this remark
The bearings are profoundly dark.'

'Her speech,' he said, 'hath caused this pain.
Easier I count it to explain
The jargon of the howling main,

'Or, stretched beside some babbling brook,
To con, with inexpressive look,
An unintelligible book.'

Low spake the voice within his head,
In words imagined more than said,
Soundless as ghost's intended tread:

'If thou art duller than before,
Why quittedst thou the voice of lore?
Why not endure, expecting more?'

'Rather than that,' he groaned aghast,
'I'd writhe in depths of cavern vast,
Some loathly vampire's rich repast.'

''Twere hard,' it answered, 'themes immense
To coop within the narrow fence
That rings THY scant intelligence.'

'Not so,' he urged, 'nor once alone:
But there was something in her tone
That chilled me to the very bone.

'Her style was anything but clear,
And most unpleasantly severe;
Her epithets were very queer.

'And yet, so grand were her replies,
I could not choose but deem her wise;
I did not dare to criticise;

'Nor did I leave her, till she went
So deep in tangled argument
That all my powers of thought were spent.'

A little whisper inly slid,
'Yet truth is truth: you know you did.'
A little wink beneath the lid.

And, sickened with excess of dread,
Prone to the dust he bent his head,
And lay like one three-quarters dead

The whisper left him - like a breeze
Lost in the depths of leafy trees -
Left him by no means at his ease.

Once more he weltered in despair,
With hands, through denser-matted hair,
More tightly clenched than then they were.

When, bathed in Dawn of living red,
Majestic frowned the mountain head,
'Tell me my fault,' was all he said.

When, at high Noon, the blazing sky
Scorched in his head each haggard eye,
Then keenest rose his weary cry.

And when at Eve the unpitying sun
Smiled grimly on the solemn fun,
'Alack,' he sighed, 'what HAVE I done?'

But saddest, darkest was the sight,
When the cold grasp of leaden Night
Dashed him to earth, and held him tight.

Tortured, unaided, and alone,
Thunders were silence to his groan,
Bagpipes sweet music to its tone:

'What? Ever thus, in dismal round,
Shall Pain and Mystery profound
Pursue me like a sleepless hound,

'With crimson-dashed and eager jaws,
Me, still in ignorance of the cause,
Unknowing what I broke of laws?'

The whisper to his ear did seem
Like echoed flow of silent stream,
Or shadow of forgotten dream,

The whisper trembling in the wind:
'Her fate with thine was intertwined,'
So spake it in his inner mind:

'Each orbed on each a baleful star:
Each proved the other's blight and bar:
Each unto each were best, most far:

'Yea, each to each was worse than foe:
Thou, a scared dullard, gibbering low,
AND SHE, AN AVALANCHE OF WOE!'

Lewis Carroll

The Voice of the Lobster

''Tis the voice of the Lobster: I heard him declare
'You have baked me too brown, I must sugar my hair.'
As a duck with its eyelids, so he with his nose
Trims his belt and his buttons, and turns out his toes.
When the sands are all dry, he is gay as a lark,
And will talk in contemptuous tones of the Shark:
But, when the tide rises and sharks are around,
His voice has a timid and tremulous sound.'

'I passed by his garden, and marked, with one eye,
How the Owl and the Panter were sharing a pie:
The Panther took pie-crust, and gravy, and meat,
While the Old had the dish as its share of the treat.
When the pie was all finished, the Owl, as a boon,
Was kindly permitted to pocket the spoon:
While the Panther received knife and fork with a growl,
And concluded the banquet by [eating the owl.]

Lewis Carroll

The Walrus and the Carpenter

The sun was shining on the sea,
Shining with all his might:
He did his very best to make
The billows smooth and bright --
And this was odd, because it was
The middle of the night.

The moon was shining sulkily,
Because she thought the sun
Had got no business to be there
After the day was done --
'It's very rude of him.' she said,
'To come and spoil the fun!'

The sea was wet as wet could be,
The sands were dry as dry.
You could not see a cloud, because
No cloud was in the sky:
No birds were flying overhead --
There were no birds to fly.

The Walrus and the Carpenter
Were walking close at hand:
They wept like anything to see
Such quantities of sand:
'If this were only cleared away,'
They said, 'it would be grand.'

'If seven maids with seven mops
Swept it for half a year,
Do you suppose,' the Walrus said,
'That they could get it clear?'
'I doubt it,' said the Carpenter,
And shed a bitter tear.

'O Oysters, come and walk with us!
The Walrus did beseech.
'A pleasant walk, a pleasant talk,
Along the briny beach:
We cannot do with more than four,
To give a hand to each.'

The eldest Oyster looked at him,
But never a word he said:
The eldest Oyster winked his eye,
And shook his heavy head --
Meaning to say he did not choose
To leave the oyster-bed.

Out four young Oysters hurried up.
All eager for the treat:
Their coats were brushed, their faces washed,

Their shoes were clean and neat --
And this was odd, because, you know,
They hadn't any feet.

Four other Oysters followed them,
And yet another four;
And thick and fast they came at last,
And more, and more, and more --
All hopping through the frothy waves,
And scrambling to the shore.

The Walrus and the Carpenter
Walked on a mile or so,
And then they rested on a rock
Conveniently low:
And all the little Oysters stood
And waited in a row.

'The time has come,' the Walrus said,
'To talk of many things:
Of shoes -- and ships -- and sealing wax --
Of cabbages -- and kings --
And why the sea is boiling hot --
And whether pigs have wings.'

'But wait a bit,' the Oysters cried,
'Before we have our chat;
For some of us are out of breath,
And all of us are fat!'
'No hurry!' said the Carpenter.
They thanked him much for that.

'A loaf of bread,' the Walrus said,
'Is what we chiefly need:
Pepper and vinegar besides
Are very good indeed --
Now, if you're ready, Oysters dear,
We can begin to feed.'

'But not on us!' the Oysters cried,
Turning a little blue.
'After such kindness, that would be
A dismal thing to do!'
'The night is fine,' the Walrus said,
'Do you admire the view?'

'It was so kind of you to come!
And you are very nice!'
The Carpenter said nothing but
'Cut us another slice-
I wish you were not quite so deaf-
I've had to ask you twice!'

'It seems a shame,' the Walrus said,
'To play them such a trick.
After we've brought them out so far,
And made them trot so quick!'
The Carpenter said nothing but
'The butter's spread too thick!'

'I weep for you,'the Walrus said:
'I deeply sympathize.'
With sobs and tears he sorted out
Those of the largest size,
Holding his pocket-handkerchief
Before his streaming eyes.

'O Oysters,' said the Carpenter,
'You've had a pleasant run!
Shall we be trotting home again?'
But answer came there none --
And this was scarcely odd, because
They'd eaten every one.

Lewis Carroll

The White Knight's Song

'Haddock's Eyes' or 'The Aged Aged Man' or
'Ways and Means' or 'A-Sitting On A Gate'

I'll tell thee everything I can;
There's little to relate.
I saw an aged, aged man,
A-sitting on a gate.
'Who are you, aged man?' I said.
'And how is it you live?'
And his answer trickled through my head
Like water through a sieve.

He said 'I look for butterflies
That sleep among the wheat;
I make them into mutton-pies,
And sell them in the street.
I sell them unto men,' he said,
'Who sail on stormy seas;
And that's the way I get my bread--
A trifle, if you please.'

But I was thinking of a plan
To dye one's whiskers green,
And always use so large a fan
That it could not be seen.
So, having no reply to give
To what the old man said,
I cried, 'Come, tell me how you live!'
And thumped him on the head.

His accents mild took up the tale;
He said, 'I go my ways,
And when I find a mountain-rill,
I set it in a blaze.
And thence they make a stuff they call
Rowland's Macassar Oil--
Yet twopence-halfpenny is all
They give me for my toil.'

But I was thinking of a way
To feed oneself on batter,
And so go on from day to day
Getting a little fatter.
I shook him well from side to side,
Until his face was blue;
'Come, tell me how you live,' I cried
'And what it is you do!'

He said, 'I hunt for haddocks' eyes
Among the heather bright,
And work them into waistcoat-buttons
In the silent night.

And these I do not sell for gold
    Or coin of silvery shine,
But for a copper halfpenny,
    And that will purchase nine.

'I sometimes dig for buttered rolls,
    Or set limed twigs for crabs;
I sometimes search the grassy knolls
    For wheels of hansom-cabs.
And that's the way' (he gave a wink)
    'By which I get my wealth--
And very gladly will I drink
    Your Honor's noble health.'

I heard him then, for I had just
    Completed my design
To keep the Menai bridge from rust
    By boiling it in wine.
I thanked him much for telling me
    The way he got his wealth,
But chiefly for his wish that he
    Might drink my noble health.

And now, if e'er by chance I put
    My fingers into glue,
Or madly squeeze a right-hand foot
    Into a left-hand shoe,
Or if I drop upon my toe
    A very heavy weight,
I weep, for it reminds me so
Of that old man I used to know--
Whose look was mild, whose speech was slow,
Whose hair was whiter than the snow,
Whose face was very like a crow
With eyes, like cinders, all aglow,
Who seemed distracted with his woe,
Who rocked his body to and fro,
And muttered mumblingly and low,
As if his mouth were full of dough,
Who snorted like a buffalo--
That summer evening long ago
    A-sitting on a gate.

Lewis Carroll

Theme with Variations

I never loved a dear Gazelle--
Nor anything that cost me much:
High prices profit those who sell,
But why should I be fond of such?
To glad me with his soft black eye
My son comes trotting home from school;
He's had a fight but can't tell why--
He always was a little fool!

But, when he came to know me well,
He kicked me out, her testy Sire:
And when I stained my hair, that Belle
Might note the change and this admire

And love me, it was sure to dye
A muddy green, or staring blue:
Whilst one might trace, with half an eye,
The still triumphant carrot through

Lewis Carroll

Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Bat!

" -- -- it was at the great concert given by the
Queen of Hearts, and I had to sing
  `Twinkle, twinkle, little bat!
  How I wonder what you're at!'You know the song, perhaps?" "I've heard something like it," said Alice. "It goes on, you know," the Hatter continued,
"in this way: -- --
  `Up above the world you fly,
  Like a teatray in the sky.
      Twinkle, twinkle --'"

Lewis Carroll

Ye Carpette Knyghte

I have a horse - a ryghte good horse -
Ne doe Y envye those
Who scoure ye playne yn headye course
Tyll soddayne on theyre nose
They lyghte wyth unexpected force
Yt ys - a horse of clothes.

I have a saddel - "Say'st thou soe?
Wyth styrruppes, Knyghte, to boote?"
I sayde not that - I answere "Noe" -
Yt lacketh such, I woote:
Yt ys a mutton-saddel, loe!
Parte of ye fleecye brute.

I have a bytte - a ryghte good bytte -
As shall bee seene yn tyme.
Ye jawe of horse yt wyll not fytte;
Yts use ys more sublyme.
Fayre Syr, how deemest thou of yt?
Yt ys - thys bytte of rhyme.

Lewis Carroll

You Are Old Father William

"You are old, father William," the young man said,
"And your hair has become very white;
And yet you incessantly stand on your head --
Do you think, at your age, it is right?

"In my youth," father William replied to his son,
"I feared it might injure the brain;
But, now that I'm perfectly sure I have none,
Why, I do it again and again."

"You are old," said the youth, "as I mentioned before,
And you have grown most uncommonly fat;
Yet you turned a back-somersault in at the door --
Pray what is the reason for that?"

"In my youth," said the sage, as he shook his grey locks,
"I kept all my limbs very supple
By the use of this ointment -- one shilling a box --
Allow me to sell you a couple?"

"You are old," said the youth, "and your jaws are too weak
For anything tougher than suet;
Yet you finished the goose, with the bones and the beak --
Pray, how did you mange to do it?"

"In my youth," said his fater, "I took to the law,
And argued each case with my wife;
And the muscular strength, which it gave to my jaw,
Has lasted the rest of my life."

"You are old," said the youth, "one would hardly suppose
That your eye was as steady as every;
Yet you balanced an eel on the tend of your nose --
What made you so awfully clever?"

"I have answered three questions, and that is enough,"
Said his father. "Don't give yourself airs!
Do you think I can listen all day to such stuff?

Be off, or I'll kick you down stairs.

Lewis Carroll