

Classic Poetry Series

Edward Lear
- poems -

Publication Date:
2012

Publisher:
Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive

Edward Lear(12 May 1812 – 29 January 1888)

Edward Lear was an English artist, illustrator, author, and poet, renowned today primarily for his literary nonsense, in poetry and prose, and especially his limericks, a form that he popularised.

Biography

Lear was born into a middle-class family in the village of Holloway, the 21st child of Ann and Jeremiah Lear. He was raised by his eldest sister, also named Ann, 21 years his senior. Ann doted on Lear and continued to mother him until her death, when Lear was almost 50 years of age. Due to the family's failing financial fortune, at age four he and his sister had to leave the family home and set up house together.

Lear suffered from health problems. From the age of six he suffered frequent grand mal epileptic seizures, and bronchitis, asthma, and in later life, partial blindness. Lear experienced his first seizure at a fair near Highgate with his father. The event scared and embarrassed him. Lear felt lifelong guilt and shame for his epileptic condition. His adult diaries indicate that he always sensed the onset of a seizure in time to remove himself from public view. How Lear was able to anticipate them is not known, but many people with epilepsy report a ringing in their ears (tinnitus) or an aura before the onset of a seizure. In Lear's time epilepsy was believed to be associated with demonic possession, which contributed to his feelings of guilt and loneliness. When Lear was about seven he began to show signs of depression, possibly due to the constant instability of his childhood. He suffered from periods of severe depression which he referred to as "the Morbids."

Lear travelled widely throughout his life and eventually settled in Sanremo, on his beloved Mediterranean coast, in the 1870s, at a villa he named "Villa Tennyson." The closest he came to marriage was two proposals, both to the same woman 46 years his junior, which were not accepted. For companions he relied instead on a circle of friends and correspondents, and especially, in later life, on his Albanian Suliote chef, Giorgis, a faithful friend and, as Lear complained, a thoroughly unsatisfactory chef. Another trusted companion in Sanremo was his cat, Foss, who died in 1886 and was buried with some ceremony in a garden at Villa Tennyson. After a long decline in his health, Lear died at his villa in 1888, of the heart disease from which he had suffered since at least 1870. Lear's funeral was said to be a sad, lonely affair by the wife of Dr. Hassall, Lear's physician, not one of Lear's many lifelong friends being able to attend.

Lear is buried in the Foce Cemetery in Sanremo. On his headstone are inscribed these lines about Mount Tomohrit (Albania) from Tennyson's *To E.L. [Edward Lear], On His Travels in Greece*:

Tomohrit, Athos, all things fair.
With such a pencil, such a pen.
You shadow forth to distant men,
I read and felt that I was there.

Edward Lear was known to introduce himself with his long name: "Mr Abebika kratoponoko Prizzikalo Kattefello Ablegorabalus Ableborinto phashyph" or "Chakonoton the Cozovex Dossi Fossi Sini Tomentilla Coronilla Polentilla Battledore & Shuttlecock Derry down Derry Dumps" which he based on *Aldiborontiphoskyphorniositikos*.

The centenary of his death was marked in Britain with a set of Royal Mail stamps in 1988 and an exhibition at the Royal Academy. Lear's birthplace area is now badged with a plaque at Bowman's Mews, Islington in London and his bicentenary in 2012 celebrated with a range of events, exhibitions and lectures in venues across the world including an International Owl and Pussycat Day on his birthday.

Artist

Lear was already drawing "for bread and cheese" by the time he was aged 16 and soon developed into a serious "ornithological draughtsman" employed by the Zoological Society and then from 1832-36 by the Earl of Derby, who had a private menagerie. His first publication, published when he was 19, was *Illustrations of the Family of Psittacidae, or Parrots* in 1830. His paintings were well received and he was favourably compared with Audubon.

Lear travelled for three years in Italy from 1837 and published two volumes of illustrations, *Illustrated Excursions in Italy*, the first of many such books. Lear briefly gave drawing lessons to Queen Victoria, who had been pleased by the *Excursions* and summoned him to court, leading to some awkward incidents when he failed to observe proper court protocol. Lear then returned to the Mediterranean, wishing to illustrate all points along the coast of that sea.

Among other trips, he visited Greece and Egypt in 1848-49, and toured the length of India and Ceylon in 1873-75. While travelling he produced large quantities of coloured wash drawings in a distinctive style, which he worked up

back in his studio into oils and watercolours, as well as prints for his books. His landscape style often shows views with strong sunlight, with intense contrasts of colour.

Throughout his life he continued to paint seriously. He had a lifelong ambition to illustrate Tennyson's poems; near the end of his life a volume with a small number of illustrations was published, but his vision for the work was never realized.

Author

In 1846 Lear published *A Book of Nonsense*, a volume of limericks that went through three editions and helped popularize the form. In 1865 *The History of the Seven Families of the Lake Pipple-Popple* was published, and in 1867 his most famous piece of nonsense, *The Owl and the Pussycat*, which he wrote for the children of his patron Edward Stanley, 13th Earl of Derby. Many other works followed.

Lear's nonsense books were quite popular during his lifetime, but a rumour circulated that "Edward Lear" was merely a pseudonym, and the books' true author was the man to whom Lear had dedicated the works, his patron the Earl of Derby. Supporters of this rumour offered as evidence the facts that both men were named Edward, and that "Lear" is an anagram of "Earl".

Lear's Limericks

Lear's nonsense works are distinguished by a facility of verbal invention and a poet's delight in the sounds of words, both real and imaginary. A stuffed rhinoceros becomes a "diaphanous doorscraper". A "blue Boss-Woss" plunges into "a perpendicular, spicular, orbicular, quadrangular, circular depth of soft mud". His heroes are Quangle-Wangles, Pobbles, and Jumblies. His most famous piece of verbal invention, a "runcible spoon" occurs in the closing lines of *The Owl and the Pussycat*, and is now found in many English dictionaries:

They dined on mince, and slices of quince
Which they ate with a runcible spoon;
And hand in hand, on the edge of the sand,
They danced by the light of the moon,
The moon,
The moon,
They danced by the light of the moon.

Though famous for his neologisms, Lear employed a number of other devices in his works in order to defy reader expectations. For example, "Cold Are The Crabs", adheres to the sonnet tradition until the dramatically foreshortened last line.

Limericks are invariably typeset as four plus one lines today, but Lear's limericks were published in a variety of formats. It appears that Lear wrote them in manuscript in as many lines as there was room for beneath the picture. In the first three editions most are typeset as, respectively, two, five, and three lines. The cover of one edition bears an entire limerick typeset in two lines:

There was an Old Derry down Derry, who loved to see little folks merry;
So he made them a book, and with laughter they shook at the fun of that Derry
down Derry.

In Lear's limericks the first and last lines usually end with the same word rather than rhyming. For the most part they are truly nonsensical and devoid of any punch line or point. They are completely free of the off-colour humour with which the verse form is now associated. A typical thematic element is the presence of a callous and critical "they". An example of a typical Lear limerick:

There was an Old Man of Aôsta,
Who possessed a large Cow, but he lost her;
But they said, 'Don't you see,
she has rushed up a tree?
You invidious Old Man of Aôsta!'

Lear's self-portrait in verse, How Pleasant to know Mr. Lear, closes with this stanza, a reference to his own mortality:

He reads but he cannot speak Spanish,
He cannot abide ginger-beer;
Ere the days of his pilgrimage vanish,
How pleasant to know Mr. Lear!

Five of Lear's limericks from the Book of Nonsense, in the 1946 Italian translation by Carlo Izzo, were set to music for choir a cappella by Goffredo Petrassi, in 1952.

Alphabet Poem

A was once an ant,
Tiny,
Busy,
Speedy,
Shiny
In the groundy
Little ant!

A was once a little ant,
Antsy
Fantsy
Mantsy
Antsy,
Fantsy anty,
Little ant!

B was once a little bat,
Batsy,
Watsy,
Fatsy,
Batsy,
Bumpy smacky
Little bat!

C was once a little cat,
Batty,
Catty,
Fatty,
Jatty,
Fatty batty,
Little cat!

C was once a little cow,
Cowy,
Bowy,
Wowy,
Howy,
Powy cowy,
Little cow!

D was once a little dog,
Doggy,
Woggy,
Loggy,
Doggy,
Fasty-runner,
Little doggy!

E was once the whole wide earth,
Earthy,
Mearthy,
Girthy,
It gave birthy
To this new earthy,
This whole wide earth!

G was once a little goat,
Goaty,
Woaty,
Foaty,
Goaty,
Baa, baa oaty,
Little goat!

H was once a little hawk,
Hawky,
Lawky,
Stawky,
Hawky,
Smawky hawky,
Little hawk!

I was once a little iguana,
Igy,
Wigy,
Ligy,
Igy,
Silly willy,
Little iguana!

J was once a little juke box,

Boxy,
Koxy,
Loxy,
Boxy,
Wide insidy,
Little juke box!

K was once a little kit,
Kitty,
Bitty,
Itty,
Witty,
Icky kitty,
Little kit!

L was once little lion,
Mindon,
Gion,
Bion,
Sighon
Gooley zion,
Little lion!

M is an 'm' you see,
Memmy,
Temmy,
Semmy,
Shemmy,
Now 'm' is a moose you see,
But she doesn't want to be!

O was once a little ox,
Oxy,
Woxy,
Foxy,
Noxy,
Run run oxy,
Little Ox!

P was once a plump old lady,
Plumpy,
Pumpy,

Tunky,
Wunky,
Plumpy pumpy,
Little old lady!

Q was once a little quail,
Quaily,
Scaly,
Whaly,
Quaily,
Paly quaily,
Little quail!

S was once a little snake,
Snakey,
Bakey,
Kakey,
Sakey,
In a jungel,
Little snake!

T was once a little turtle,
Turtally,
Urtally,
Nurtally,
Turtally,
Murtally burtally,
Little turtle!

U was once a little unicorn,
Unicorny,
Tricorny,
Minocorny,
Unicorny,
In a barn,
Little unicorn!

V was once a little van,
Vanny,
Flanny,
Manny
Vanny,

Drive really fasty,
Little van!

W was once a little witch,
Witchy,
Twitchy,
Cwitchy,
Witchy,
Fly real high,
Little witch!

X was once a little x-man,
Mexman,
Nexman,
Pexman,
Mexman,
X-man has big claws,
Little x-man!

Y was once a little yarn,
Yarny,
Carny,
Larny,
Yarny,
Rolly yarny,
Little yarn!

Z was once a little zucchini,
Winey,
Tiney,
Liney,
Winey,
Tinky zinky,
Little letter z!

Edward Lear

Calicoe Pie

Calico Pie,
The little Birds fly
Down to the calico tree,
Their wings were blue,
And they sang 'Tilly-loo!'
Till away they flew,
And they never came back to me!
They never came back!
They never came back!
They never came back to me!

Calico Jam,
The little Fish swam
Over the syllabub sea,
He took off his hat
To the Sole and the Sprat,
And the Willeby-wat,
But he never came back to me!
He never came back!
He never came back!
He never came back to me!

Calico Ban,
The little Mice ran,
To be ready in time for tea,
Flippity-flup,
They drank it all up,
And danced in the cup,
But they never came back to me!
They never came back!
They never came back!
They never came back to me!

Calico Drum,
The Grasshoppers come,
The Butterfly, Beetle, and Bee,
Over the ground,
Around and around,
With a hop and a bound -

But they never came back!
They never came back!
They never came back!
They never came back to me!

Edward Lear

Cold Are The Crabs

Cold are the crabs that crawl on yonder hills,
Colder the cucumbers that grow beneath,
And colder still the brazen chops that wreath
The tedious gloom of philosophic pills!
For when the tardy film of nectar fills
The simple bowls of demons and of men,
There lurks the feeble mouse, the homely hen,
And there the porcupine with all her quills.
Yet much remains - to weave a solemn strain
That lingering sadly - slowly dies away,
Daily departing with departing day
A pea-green gamut on a distant plain
When wily walrusses in congresses meet -
Such such is life -

Edward Lear

He Lived At Dingle Bank

He lived at Dingle Bank - he did; -
He lived at Dingle Bank;
And in his garden was one Quail,
Four tulips and a Tank:
And from his window he could see
The otion and the River Dee.

His house stood on a Cliff, - it did,
Its aspic it was cool;
And many thousand little boys
Resorted to his school,
Where if of progress they could boast
He gave them heaps of buttered toast.

But he grew rabid-wroth, he did,
If they neglected books,
And dragged them to adjacent Cliffs
With beastly Button Hooks,
And there with fatuous glee he threw
Them down into the ocean blue.

And in the sea they sway, they did, -
All playfully about,
And some eventually became
Sponges, or speckled trout: -
But Liverpool doth all bewail
Their Fate; - likewise his Garden Quail.

Edward Lear

How Pleasant To Know Mr. Lear

How pleasant to know Mr. Lear,
Who has written such volumes of stuff.
Some think him ill-tempered and queer,
But a few find him pleasant enough.

His mind is concrete and fastidious,
His nose is remarkably big;
His visage is more or less hideous,
His beard it resembles a wig.

He has ears, and two eyes, and ten fingers,
(Leastways if you reckon two thumbs);
He used to be one of the singers,
But now he is one of the dumbs.

He sits in a beautiful parlour,
With hundreds of books on the wall;
He drinks a great deal of marsala,
But never gets tipsy at all.

He has many friends, laymen and clerical,
Old Foss is the name of his cat;
His body is perfectly spherical,
He weareth a runcible hat.

When he walks in waterproof white,
The children run after him so!
Calling out, "He's gone out in his night-
Gown, that crazy old Englishman, oh!"

He weeps by the side of the ocean,
He weeps on the top of the hill;
He purchases pancakes and lotion,
And chocolate shrimps from the mill.

He reads, but he does not speak, Spanish,
He cannot abide ginger beer;
Ere the days of his pilgrimage vanish,
How pleasant to know Mr. Lear!

Edward Lear

Imitation Of The Olden Poets

Time is a taper waning fast!
Use it, man, well whilst it doth last:
Lest burning downwards it consume away,
Before thou hast commenced the labour of the day.

Time is a pardon of a goodly soil!
Plenty shall crown thine honest toil:
But if uncultivated, rankest weeds
Shall choke the efforts of the rising seeds.

Time is a leasehold of uncertain date!
Granted to thee by everlasting fate.
Neglect not thou, ere thy short term expire,
To save thy soul from ever-burning fire.

Edward Lear

Incidents In The Life Of My Uncle Arly

O my aged Uncle Arly!
Sitting on a heap of Barley
Thro' the silent hours of night,
Close beside a leafy thicket:
On his nose there was a Cricket,
In his hat a Railway-ticket
(But his shoes were far too tight).

Long ago, in youth, he squander'd
All his goods away, and wander'd
To the Tinskoop-hills afar.
There on golden sunsets blazing,
Every evening found him gazing,
Singing, 'Orb! you're quite amazing!
How I wonder what you are!'

Like the ancient Medes and Persians,
Always by his own exertions
He subsisted on those hills;
Whiles, by teaching children spelling,
Or at times by merely yelling,
Or at intervals by selling
'Propter's Nicodemus Pills.'

Later, in his morning rambles
He perceived the moving brambles
Something square and white disclose;
'Twas a First-class Railway-Ticket;
But, on stooping down to pick it
Off the ground - a pea-green Cricket
Settled on my uncle's Nose.

Never - never more - oh, never,
Did that Cricket leave him ever,
Dawn or evening, day or night;
Clinging as a constant treasure,
Chirping with a cheerious measure,
Wholly to my uncle's pleasure
(Though his shoes were far too tight).

So for three and forty winters,
Till his shoes were worn to splinters,
All those hills he wander'd o'er,
Sometimes silent; sometimes yelling;
Till he came to Borley-Melling,
Near his old ancestral dwelling
(But his shoes were far too tight).

On a little heap of Barley
Died my aged Uncle Arly,
And they buried him one night;
Close beside the leafy thicket;
There - his hat and Railway-Ticket;
There - his ever-faithful Cricket
(But his shoes were far too tight).

Edward Lear

Limerick: The Was A Young Lady Of Bute

The was a Young Lady of Bute,
Who played on a silver-gilt flute;
She played several jigs,
To her uncle's white pigs,
That amusing Young Lady of Bute.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was A Young Lady In White

There was a Young Lady in White,
Who looked out at the depths of the Night;
But the birds of the air
Filled her heart with despair,
And oppressed that Young Lady in White.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was A Young Lady Of Dorking,

There was a Young Lady of Dorking,
Who bought a large bonnet for walking;
But its colour and size,
So bedazzled her eyes,
That she very soon went back to Dorking.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was A Young Lady Of Hull

There was a Young Lady of Hull,
Who was chased by a virulent bull;
But she seized on a spade,
And called out, 'Who's afraid?'
Which distracted that virulent bull.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was A Young Lady Of Norway,

There was a Young Lady of Norway,
Who casually sat on a doorway;
When the door squeezed her flat,
She exclaimed, 'What of that?'
This courageous Young Lady of Norway.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was A Young Lady Of Poole

There was a Young Lady of Poole,
Whose soup was excessively cool;
So she put it to boil
By the aid of some oil,
That ingenious Young Lady of Poole.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was A Young Lady Of Portugal

There was a Young Lady of Portugal,
Whose ideas were excessively nautical:
She climbed up a tree,
To examine the sea,
But declared she would never leave Portugal.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was A Young Lady Of Ryde

There was a Young Lady of Ryde,
Whose shoe-strings were seldom untied.
She purchased some clogs,
And some small spotted dogs,
And frequently walked about Ryde

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was A Young Lady Of Turkey

There was a Young Lady of Turkey,
Who wept when the weather was murky;
When the day turned out fine,
She ceased to repine,
That capricious Young Lady of Turkey.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was A Young Lady Of Tyre

There was a Young Lady of Tyre,
Who swept the loud chords of a lyre;
At the sound of each sweep
She enraptured the deep,
And enchanted the city of Tyre.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was A Young Lady Whose Bonnet

There was a Young Lady whose bonnet,
Came untied when the birds sate upon it;
But she said: 'I don't care!
All the birds in the air
Are welcome to sit on my bonnet!'

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was A Young Lady Whose Chin

There was a Young Lady whose chin,
Resembled the point of a pin;
So she had it made sharp,
And purchased a harp,
And played several tunes with her chin.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was A Young Lady Whose Nose

There was a Young Lady whose nose,
Was so long that it reached to her toes;
So she hired an Old Lady,
Whose conduct was steady,
To carry that wonderful nose.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was A Young Person Of Crete

There was a Young Person of Crete,
Whose toilette was far from complete;
She dressed in a sack,
Spickle-speckled with black,
That ombliferous person of Crete.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was A Young Person Of Smyrna,

There was a Young Person of Smyrna,
Whose Grandmother threatened to burn her;
But she seized on the cat,
And said, 'Granny, burn that!
You incongruous Old Woman of Smyrna!'

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was A Young Person Whose History

There was a young person whose history
Was always considered a mystery.
She sate in a ditch,
Although no one knew which,
And composed a small treatise on history.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Ol Man Of Quebec

There was an Ol Man of Quebec,
A beetle ran over his neck;
But he cried, 'With a needle,
I'll slay you, O beadle!'
That angry Old Man of Quebec.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Derry Down Derry,

There was an Old Derry down Derry,
Who loved to see little folks merry;
So he made them a Book,
And with laughter they shook,
At the fun of that Derry down Derry!

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Lady Of Chertsey

There was an Old Lady of Chertsey,
Who made a remarkable curtsey;
She twirled round and round,
Till she sunk underground,
Which distressed all the people of Chertsey.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Lady Of Winchelsea

There was an old Lady of Winchelsea,
Who said, 'If you needle or pin shall see
On the floor of my room,
Sweep it up with the broom!'
- That exhaustive old Lady of Winchelsea!

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man In A Boat

There was an Old Man in a boat,
Who said, 'I'm afloat! I'm afloat!'
When they said, 'No! you aint!'
He was ready to faint,
That unhappy Old Man in a boat.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of Apulia

There was an Old Man of Apulia,
Whose conduct was very peculiar
He fed twenty sons,
Upon nothing but buns,
That whimsical Man of Apulia.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of Bohemia

There was an Old Man of Bohemia,
Whose daughter was christened Euphemia,
Till one day, to his grief,
She married a thief,
Which grieved that Old Man of Bohemia.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of Cape Horn,

There was an Old Man of Cape Horn,
Who wished he had never been born;
So he sat on a chair,
Till he died of despair,
That dolorous Man of Cape Horn.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of Coblenz

There was an Old Man of Coblenz,
The length of whose legs was immense;
He went with one prance
From Turkey to France,
That surprising Old Man of Coblenz.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of Columbia

There was an Old Man of Columbia,
Who was thirsty, and called out for some beer;
But they brought it quite hot,
In a small copper pot,
Which disgusted that man of Columbia.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of Corfu

There was an Old Man of Corfu,
Who never knew what he should do;
So he rushed up and down,
Till the sun made him brown,
That bewildered Old Man of Corfu.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of Dundee

There was an Old Man of Dundee,
Who frequented the top of a tree;
When disturbed by the crows,
He abruptly arose,
And exclaimed, 'I'll return to Dundee.'

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of Hong Kong

There was an Old Man of Hong Kong,
Who never did anything wrong.
He lay on his back,
With his head in a sack,
That innocuous Old Man of Hong Kong.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of Jamaica

There was an Old Man of Jamaica,
Who suddenly married a Quaker;
But she cried out, 'Alack!
I have married a black!'
Which distressed that Old Man of Jamaica

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of Kamschatka

There was an Old Man of Kamschatka,
Who possessed a remarkable fat cur;
His gait and his waddle
Were held as a model
To all the fat dogs in Kamschatka.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of Kildare

There was an Old Man of Kildare,
Who climbed into a very old chair;
When he said,-- 'Here I stays,--
till the end of my days,'
That immovable Man of Kildare.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of Kilkenny

There was an Old Man of Kilkenny,
Who never had more than a penny;
He spent all that money,
In onions and honey,
That wayward Old Man of Kilkenny.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of Leghorn

There was an Old Man of Leghorn,
The smallest that ever was born;
But quickly snapped up he
Was once by a puppy,
Who devoured that Old Man of Leghorn.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of Madras

There was an Old Man of Madras,
Who rode on a cream-coloured ass;
But the length of its ears,
So promoted his fears,
That it killed that Old Man of Madras.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of Melrose

There was an Old Man of Melrose,
Who walked on the tips of his toes;
But they said, 'It ain't pleasant,
To see you at present,
You stupid Old Man of Melrose.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of Moldavia

There was an Old Man of Moldavia,
Who had the most curious behaviour;
For while he was able,
He slept on a table.
That funny Old Man of Moldavia.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of Nepaul

There was an Old Man of Nepaul,
From his horse had a terrible fall;
But, though split quite in two,
By some very strong glue,
They mended that Man of Nepaul.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of Peru

There was an Old Man of Peru,
Who never knew what he should do;
So he tore off his hair,
And behaved like a bear,
That intrinsic Old Man of Peru.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of Th' Abruzzi

There was an Old Man of th' Abruzzi,
So blind that he couldn't his foot see;
When they said, 'That's your toe,'
He replied, 'Is it so?'
That doubtful Old Man of th' Abruzzi.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of The Dee

There was an Old Man of the Dee,
Who was sadly annoyed by a flea;
When he said, 'I will scratch it,'
They gave him a hatchet,
Which grieved that Old Man of the Dee.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of The East

There was an Old Man of the East,
Who gave all his children a feast;
But they all ate so much
And their conduct was such
That it killed that Old Man of the East

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of The Hague

There was an Old Man of the Hague,
Whose ideas were excessively vague;
He built a balloon
To examine the moon,
That deluded Old Man of the Hague.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of The Isles

There was an Old Man of the Isles,
Whose face was pervaded with smiles;
He sung high dum diddle,
And played on the fiddle,
That amiable Man of the Isles.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of The Nile,

There was an Old Man of the Nile,
Who sharpened his nails with a file,
Till he cut out his thumbs,
And said calmly, 'This comes
Of sharpening one's nails with a file!'

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of The North

There was an Old Man of the North,
Who fell into a basin of broth;
But a laudable cook,
Fished him out with a hook,
Which saved that Old Man of the North

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of The South

There was an Old Man of the South,
Who had an immederate mouth;
But in swallowing a dish,
That was quite full of fish,
He was choked, that Old Man of the South.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of The West

There was an Old Man of the West,
Who wore a pale plum-coloured vest;
When they said, 'Does it fit?'
He replied, 'Not a bit!'
That uneasy Old Man of the West.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of The Wrekin

There was an Old Man of the Wrekin
Whose shoes made a horrible creaking
But they said, 'Tell us whether,
Your shoes are of leather,
Or of what, you Old Man of the Wrekin?'

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of Tobago

There was an old man of Tobago,
Who lived on rice, gruel and sago
Till, much to his bliss,
His physician said this -
To a leg, sir, of mutton you may go.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of Vesuvius,

There was an Old Man of Vesuvius,
Who studied the works of Vitruvius;
When the flames burnt his book,
To drinking he took,
That morbid Old Man of Vesuvius.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of Vienna

There was an Old Man of Vienna,
Who lived upon Tincture of Senna;
When that did not agree,
He took Camomile Tea,
That nasty Old Man of Vienna.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man On A Hill

There was an Old Man on a hill,
Who seldom, if ever, stood still;
He ran up and down,
In his Grandmother's gown,
Which adorned that Old Man on a hill.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man On Some Rocks,

There was an Old Man on some rocks,
Who shut his wife up in a box;
When she said, 'Let me out!'
He exclaimed, 'Without doubt,
You will pass all your life in that box.'

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Who Felt Pert

There was an old man who felt pert
When he wore a pale rose-coloured shirt.
When they said 'Is it pleasant?'
He cried 'Not at present--
It's a little to short -- is my shirt!'

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Who Said,

There was an Old Man who said, 'Well!
Will nobody answer this bell?
I have pulled day and night,
Till my hair has grown white,
But nobody answers this bell!'

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Who Said, 'How

There was an Old Man who said, 'How
Shall I flee from that horrible cow?
I will sit on this stile,
And continue to smile,
Which may soften the heart of that cow.'

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Who Said, 'Hush!

There was an Old Man who said, 'Hush!
I perceive a young bird in this bush!'
When they said, 'Is it small?'
He replied, 'Not at all!
It is four times as big as the bush!'

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Who Supposed

There was an Old Man who supposed,
That the street door was partially closed;
But some very large rats,
Ate his coats and his hats,
While that futile old gentleman dozed.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Who, When Little

There was an Old Man who, when little,
Fell casually into a Kettle;
But, growing too stout,
He could never get out,
So he passed all his life in that Kettle.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Whose Despair

There was an old man whose despair
Induced him to purchase a hare:
Whereon one fine day,
He rode wholly away,
Which partly assuaged his despair.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man With A Beard

There was an Old Man with a beard,
Who said, 'It is just as I feared!
Two Owls and a Hen,
Four Larks and a Wren,
Have all built their nests in my beard!'

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man With A Flute

There was an Old Man with a flute,
A serpent ran into his boot;
But he played day and night,
Till the serpent took flight,
And avoided that man with a flute.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man With A Gong

There was an Old Man with a gong,
Who bumped at it all day long;
But they called out, 'O law!
You're a horrid old bore!'
So they smashed that Old Man with a gong.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man With A Nose

There was an Old Man with a nose,
Who said, 'If you choose to suppose,
That my nose is too long,
You are certainly wrong!'
That remarkable Man with a nose.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Person In Black

There was an Old Person in Black,
A Grasshopper jumped on his back;
When it chirped in his ear,
He was smitten with fear,
That helpless Old Person in Black.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Person In Gray

There was an Old Person in Gray,
Whose feelings were tinged with disman;
She purchased two Parrots,
And fed them with Carrots,
Which pleased that Old Person in Gray.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Person Of Bangor

There was an Old Person of Bangor,
Whose face was distorted with anger!
He tore off his boots,
And subsisted on roots,
That irascible Person of Bangor.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Person Of Basing

There was an Old Person of Basing,
Whose presence of mind was amazing;
He purchased a steed,
Which he rode at full speed,
And escaped from the people of Basing.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Person Of Buda

There was an Old Person of Buda,
Whose conduct grew ruder and ruder;
Till at last, with a hammer,
They silenced his clamour,
By smashing that Person of Buda.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Person Of Cadiz

There was an Old Person of Cadiz,
Who was always polite to all ladies;
But in handing his daughter,
He fell into the water,
Which drowned that Old Person of Cadiz.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Person Of Chili

There was an Old Person of Chili,
Whose conduct was painful and silly,
He sate on the stairs,
Eating apples and pears,
That imprudent Old Person of Chili.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Person Of Dover

There was an Old Person of Dover,
Who rushed through a field of blue Clover;
But some very large bees,
Stung his nose and his knees,
So he very soon went back to Dover.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Person Of Dutton

There was an Old Person of Dutton,
Whose head was as small as a button,
So, to make it look big,
He purchased a wig,
And rapidly rushed about Dutton.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Person Of Leeds

There was an Old Person of Leeds,
Whose head was infested with beads;
She sat on a stool,
And ate gooseberry fool,
Which agreed with that person of Leeds.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Person Of Mold

There was an Old Person of Mold,
Who shrank from sensations of cold,
So he purchased some muffs,
Some furs and some fluffs,
And wrapped himself from the cold.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Person Of Paxo

There was an old person of Paxo
Which complained when the fleas bit his back so,
But they gave him a chair
And impelled him to swear,
Which relieved that old person of Paxo.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Person Of Philæ,

There was an Old Person of Philæ,
Whose conduct was scroobious and wily;
He rushed up a Palm,
When the weather was calm,
And observed all the ruins of Philæ.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Person Of Philæ,

There was an Old Person of Philæ,
Whose conduct was scroobious and wily;
He rushed up a Palm,
When the weather was calm,
And observed all the ruins of Philæ.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Person Of Rheims

There was an Old Person of Rheims,
Who was troubled with horrible dreams;
So, to keep him awake
They fed him on cake,
Which amused that Old Person of Rheims.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Person Of Rhodes

There was an Old Person of Rhodes,
Who strongly objected to toads;
He paid several cousins,
To catch them by the dozens,
That futile Old Person of Rhodes.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Person Of Tring

There was an Old Person of Tring,
Who embellished his nose with a ring;
Ha gazed at the moon
Every evening in June,
That ecstatic Old Person in Tring.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Person Of Troy

There was an old person of Troy,
Whose drink was warm brandy and soy,
Which he took with a spoon,
By the light of the moon,
In sight of the city of Troy.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Person Of Wick

There was an Old Person of Wick,
Who said, 'Tick-a-Tick, Tick-a-Tick;
Chickabee, Chickabaw.'
And he said nothing more,
That laconic Old Person of Wick

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Person Whose Habits,

There was an Old Person whose habits,
Induced him to feed upon rabbits;
When he'd eaten eighteen,
He turned perfectly green,
Upon which he relinquished those habits.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Sailor Of Compton

There was an Old Sailor of Compton,
Whose vessel a rock it once bump'd on;
The shock was so great,
that it damaged the pate,
Of that singular Sailor of Compton.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was Old Man In A Pew

There was Old Man in a pew,
Whose waistcoat was spotted with blue;
But he tore it in pieces
To give to his nieces,
That cheerful Old Man in a pew.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was A Young Girl Of Majorca

There was a Young Girl of Majorca,
Whose aunt was a very fast walker;
She walked seventy miles,
And leaped fifteen stiles,
Which astonished that Girl of Majorca.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was A Young Lady Of Clare

There was a Young Lady of Clare,
Who was sadly pursued by a bear;
When she found she was tired,
She abruptly expired,
That unfortunate Lady of Clare.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was A Young Lady Of Lucca

There was a Young Lady of Lucca,
Whose lovers completely forsook her;
She ran up a tree,
And said, 'Fiddle-de-dee!'
Which embarrassed the people of Lucca.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was A Young Lady Of Parma

There was a Young Lady of Parma,
Whose conduct grew calmer and calmer;
When they said, 'Are you dumb?'
She merely said, 'Hum!'
That provoking Young Lady of Parma.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was A Young Lady Of Russia

There was a Young Lady of Russia,
Who screamed so that no one could hush her;
Her screams were extreme,--
No one heard such a scream
As was screamed by that Lady from Russia.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was A Young Lady Of Sweden

There was a Young Lady of Sweden,
Who went by the slow rain to Weedon;
When they cried, 'Weedon Station!'
She made no observation
But thought she should go back to Sweden.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was A Young Lady Of Troy,

There was a Young Lady of Troy,
Whom several large flies did annoy;
Some she killed with a thump,
Some she drowned at the pump,
And some she took with her to Troy.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was A Young Lady Of Wales

There was a Young Lady of Wales,
Who caught a large fish without scales;
When she lifted her hook
She exclaimed, 'Only look!'
That ecstatic Young Lady of Wales.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was A Young Lady Of Welling

There was a Young Lady of Welling,
Whose praise all the world was a-telling;
She played on a harp,
And caught several carp,
That accomplished Young Lady of Wel

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Lady Of Prague

There was an Old Lady of Prague,
Whose language was horribly vague;
When they said, 'Are these caps?'
She answered, 'Perhaps!'
That oracular Lady of Prague.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man At A Casement

There was an Old Man at a casement,
Who held up his hands in amazement;
When they said, 'Sir, you'll fall!'
He replied, 'Not at all!'
That incipient Old Man at a casement.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of Aôsta

There was an Old Man of Aôsta,
Who possessed a large cow, but he lost her;
But they said, 'Don't you see
She has rushed up a tree?
You invidious Old Man of Aôsta!'

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of Calcutta

There was an Old Man of Calcutta,
Who perpetually ate bread and butter,
Till a great bit of muffin,
On which he was stuffing,
Choked that horrid Old Man of Calcutta

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of Marseilles

There was an Old Man of Marseilles,
Whose daughters wore bottle-green veils;
They caught several Fish,
Which they put in a dish,
And sent to their Pa' at Marseilles.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of The Cape

There was an Old Man of the Cape,
Who possessed a large Barbary ape,
Till the ape one dark night
Set the house all alight,
Which burned that Old Man of the Cape.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of The Coast

There was an Old Man of the coast,
Who placidly sat on a post;
But when it was cold
He relinquished his hold
And called for some hot buttered toast.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man Of Whitehaven

There was an Old Man of Whitehaven,
Who danced a quadrille with a raven;
But they said, 'It's absurd
To encourage this bird!'
So they smashed that Old Man of Whitehaven.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man With A Beard

There was an Old Man with a beard,
Who sat on a horse when he reared;
But they said, 'Never mind!
You will fall off behind,
You propitious Old Man with a beard!'

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man With A Owl

There was an Old Man with a owl,
Who continued to bother and howl;
He sat on a rail
And imbibed bitter ale,
Which refreshed that Old Man and his owl.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Man, On Whose Nose

There was an Old Man, on whose nose,
Most birds of the air could repose;
But they all flew away
At the closing of day,
Which relieved that Old Man and his nose.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Person From Gretna

There was an Old Person from Gretna,
Who rushed down the crater of Etna;
When they said, 'Is it hot?'
He replied, 'No, it's not!'
That mendacious Old Person of Gretna.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Person Of Anerley

There was an Old Person of Anerley,
Whose conduct was strange and unmannerly;
He rushed down the Strand
With a pig in each hand,
But returned in the evening to Anerley.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Person Of Berlin

There was an Old Person of Berlin,
Whose form was uncommonly thin;
Till he once, by mistake,
Was mixed up in a cake,
So they baked that Old Man of Berlin.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Person Of Burton

There was an Old Person of Burton,
Whose answers were rather uncertain;
When they said, 'How d'ye do?'
He replied, 'Who are you?'
That distressing Old Person of Burton.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Person Of Cheadle

There was an Old Person of Cheadle,
Who was put in the stocks by the beadle
For stealing some pigs,
Some coats, and some wigs,
That horrible person of Cheadle.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Person Of Chester

There was an Old Person of Chester,
Whom several small children did pester;
They threw some large stones,
Which broke most of his bones,
And displeased that Old Person of Chester.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Person Of Ems

There was an Old Person of Ems,
Who casually fell in the Thames;
And when he was found
They said he was drowned,
That unlucky Old Person of Ems

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Person Of Ewell

There was an Old Person of Ewell,
Who chiefly subsisted on gruel;
But to make it more nice
He inserted some mice,
Which refreshed that Old Person of Ewell.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Person Of Spain

There was an Old Person of Spain,
Who hated all trouble and pain;
So he sat on a chair,
With his feet in the air,
That umbrageous Old Person of Spain.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Person Of Sparta

There was an Old Person of Sparta,
Who had twenty-one sons and one 'darter';
He fed them on snails,
And weighed them in scales,
That wonderful Person of Sparta.

Edward Lear

Limerick: There Was An Old Person Of Tartary

There was an Old Person of Tartary,
Who divided his jugular artery;
But he screeched to his wife,
And she said, 'Oh, my life!
Your death will be felt by all Tartary!'

Edward Lear

Mr And Mrs Discobbolos

First Part

Mr and Mrs Discobbolos
Climbed to the top of a wall,
And they sat to watch the sunset sky
And to hear the Nupiter Piffkin cry
And the Biscuit Buffalo call.
They took up a roll and some Chamomile tea,
And both were as happy as happy could be -
Till Mrs Discobbolos said, -
'Oh! W! X! Y! Z!
It has just come into my head -
Suppose we should happen to fall!!!!
Darling Mr Discobbolos?

'Suppose we should fall down flumpetty
Just like two pieces of stone!
On to the thorns, - or into the moat!
What would become of your new green coat?
And might you not break a bone?
It never occurred to me before -
That perhaps we shall never go down any more!'
And Mrs Discobbolos said -
'Oh! W! X! Y! Z!
What put it into your head
To climb up this wall? - my own
Darling Mr Discobbolos?'

Mr Discobbolos answered, -
'At first it gave me pain, -
And I felt my ears turn perfectly pink
When your exclamation made me think
We might never get down again!
But now I believe it is wiser far
To remain for ever just where we are.' -
And Mr Discobbolos said,
'Oh! W! X! Y! Z!
It has just come into my head -
'- We shall never go down again -
Dearest Mrs Discobbolos.!'

So Mr and Mrs Discobbolos
Stood up, and began to sing,
'Far away from hurry and strife
Here we will pass the rest of life,
Ding a dong, ding dong, ding!
We want no knives nor forks nor chairs,
No tables nor carpets nor household cares,
From worry of life we've fled -
'Oh! W! X! Y! Z!
There is no more trouble ahead
Sorrow or any such thing -
For Mr and Mrs Discobbolos!'

Second Part.

Mr and Mrs Discobbolos
Lived on the top of the wall
For twenty years, a month and a day,
Till their hair had grown all pearly gray,
And their teeth began to fall.
They never were ill, or at all dejected,
By all admired, and by some respected,
Till Mrs Discobbolos said,
'Oh! W! X! Y! Z!
It has just come into my head,
We have no more room at all -
Darling Mr Discobbolos!

Look at our six fine boys!
And our six sweet girls so fair!
Upon this wall they have all been born,
And not one of the twelve has happened to fall
Through my maternal care!
Surely they should not pass their lives
Without any chance of husbands or wives!'
And Mrs Discobbolos said,
'Oh! W! X! Y! Z!
Did it never come into your head
That our lives must be lived elsewhere,
Dearest Mr Discobbolos?

'They have never been at a ball,
Nor have even seen a bazaar!
Nor have heard folks say in a tone all hearty,
'What loves of girls (at a garden party)
Those Misses Discobbolos are!'
Morning and night it drives me wild
To think of the fate of each darling child!
But Mr Discobbolos said,
'Oh! W! X! Y! Z!
What has come to your fiddledum head!
What a runcible goose you are!
Octopod Mrs Discobbolos!'

Suddenly Mr Discobbolos
Slid from the top of the wall;
And beneath it he dug a dreadful trench,
And filled it with dynamite, gunpowder gench,
And aloud he began to call -
'Let the wild bee sing,
And the blue bird hum!
For the end of your lives has certainly come!'
And Mrs Discobbolos said,
'Oh! W! X! Y! Z!
We shall presently all be dead,
On this ancient runcible wall,
Terrible Mr Discobbolos!'

Pensively, Mr Discobbolos
Sat with his back to the wall;
He lighted a match, and fired the train,
And the mortified mountain echoed again
To the sound of an awful fall!
And all the Discobbolos family flew
In thousands of bits to the sky so blue,
And no one was left to have said,
'Oh! W! X! Y! Z!
Has it come into anyone's head
That the end has happened to all
Of the whole of the Clan Discobbolos?'

Mr. And y Sparrow

I

On a little piece of wood,
Mr. Spikky Sparrow stood;
Mrs. Sparrow sate close by,
A-making of an insect pie,
For her little children five,
In the nest and all alive,
Singing with a cheerful smile
To amuse them all the while,
Twicky wikky wikky wee,
Wikky bikky twicky tee,
Spikky bikky bee!

II

Mrs. Spikky Sparrow said,
'Spikky, Darling! in my head
'Many thoughts of trouble come,
'Like to flies upon a plum!
'All last night, among the trees,
'I heard you cough, I heard you sneeze;
'And, thought I, it's come to that
'Because he does not wear a hat!
'Chippy wippy sikky tee!
'Bikky wikky tikky mee!
'Spikky chippy wee!

III

'Not that you are growing old,
'But the nights are growing cold.
'No one stays out all night long
'Without a hat: I'm sure it's wrong!'
Mr. Spikky said 'How kind,
'Dear! you are, to speak your mind!
'All your life I wish you luck!
'You are! you are! a lovely duck!

'Witchy witchy witchy wee!
'Twitchy witchy witchy bee!
Tikky tikky tee!

IV

'I was also sad, and thinking,
'When one day I saw you winking,
'And I heard you sniffle-snuffle,
'And I saw your feathers ruffle;
'To myself I sadly said,
'She's neuralgia in her head!
'That dear head has nothing on it!
'Ought she not to wear a bonnet?
'Witchy kitchy kitchy wee?
'Spikky wikky mikky bee?
'Chippy wippy chee?

V

'Let us both fly up to town!
'There I'll buy you such a gown!
'Which, completely in the fashion,
'You shall tie a sky-blue sash on.
'And a pair of slippers neat,
'To fit your darling little feet,
'So that you will look and feel,
'Quite galloobious and genteel!
'Jikky wikky bikky see,
'Chicky bikky wikky bee,
'Twikky witchy wee!'

VI

So they both to London went,
Alighting on the Monument,
Whence they flew down swiftly -- pop,
Into Moses' wholesale shop;
There they bought a hat and bonnet,

And a gown with spots upon it,
A satin sash of Cloxam blue,
And a pair of slippers too.
Zikky wikky mikky bee,
Witchy witchy mitchy kee,
Sikky tikky wee.

VII

Then when so completely drest,
Back they flew and reached their nest.
Their children cried, 'O Ma and Pa!
'How truly beautiful you are!'
Said they, 'We trust that cold or pain
'We shall never feel again!
'While, perched on tree, or house, or steeple,
'We now shall look like other people.
'Witchy witchy witchy wee,
'Twikky mikky bikky bee,
Zikky sikky tee.'

Edward Lear

Mrs Jaypher

Mrs Jaypher found a wafer
Which she stuck upon a note;
This she took and gave the cook.
Then she went and bought a boat,
Which she paddled down the stream,
Shouting, 'Ice produces cream,
Beer when churned produces butter!
Henceforth all the words I utter
Distant ages thus shall note -
'From the Jaypher Wisdom-Boat.'

Mrs Jaypher said, 'It's safer
If you've lemons in your head;
First to eat, a pound of meat,
And then to go at once to bed.
Eating meat is half the battle,
Till you hear the Lemons rattle!
If you don't, you'll always moan,
In a Lemoncolly tone;
For there's nothing half so dreadful,
as Lemons in your head.

Edward Lear

Nonsense Alphabet

A was an ant
Who seldom stood still,
And who made a nice house
In the side of a hill.
Nice little ant!

B was a bat,
Who slept all the day,
And fluttered about
When the sun went away.
Brown little bat!

C was a camel:
You rode on his hump;
And if you fell off,
You came down such a bump!
What a high camel!

D was a duck
With spots on his back,
Who lived in the water,
And always said 'Quack!'
Dear little duck!

E was an elephant,
Stately and wise:
He had tusks and a trunk,
And two queer little eyes.
Oh, what funny small eyes!

F was a fish
Who was caught in a net;
But he got out again,
And is quite alive yet.
Lively young fish!

G was a goat
Who was spotted with brown:
When he did not lie still

He walked up and down.
Good little goat!

H was a hat
Which was all on one side;
Its crown was too high,
And its brim was too wide.
Oh, what a hat!

I was some ice
So white and so nice,
But which nobody tasted;
And so it was wasted.
All that good ice!

J was a jug,
So pretty and white,
With fresh water in it
At morning and night.
Nice little jug!

K was a kite
Which flew out of sight,
Above houses so high,
Quite into the sky.
Fly away, kite!

L was a lily,
So white and so sweet!
To see it and smell it
Was quite a nice treat.
Beautiful lily!

M was a man,
Who walked round and round;
And he wore a long coat
That came down to the ground.
Funny old man!

N was a net
Which was thrown In the sea
To catch fish for dinner
For you and for me.

Nice little net!

O was an orange
So yellow and round:
When it fell off the tree,
It fell down to the ground.
Down to the ground!

P was a polly.
All red, blue, and green,--
The most beautiful polly
That ever was seen.
Poor little polly!
Q was a quail
With a very short tail;
And he fed upon corn
In the evening and morn.
Quaint little quail!

R was a rabbit,
Who had a bad habit
Of eating the flowers
In gardens and bowers.
Naughty fat rabbit!

S was the sugar-tongs,
Nippity-nee,
To take up the sugar
To put in our tea.
Nippity-nee!

T was a tortoise,
All yellow and black:
He walked slowly away,
And he never came back.
Torty never came back!

U was an urn
All polished and bright,
And full of hot water
At noon and at night.
Useful old urn!

V was a veil
With a border upon it,
And a ribbon to tie it
All round a pink bonnet.
Pretty green veil!

W was a watch,
Where, in letters of gold,
The hour of the day
You might always behold.
Beautiful watch!

Y was a yew,
Which flourished and grew
By a quiet abode
Near the side of a road.
Dark little yew!

Z was a zebra,
All striped white and black;
And if he were tame,
You might ride on his back.
Pretty striped zebra!

Edward Lear

Parody Of Tennyson's to Edward Lear On His Travels In Greece

Delirious Bulldogs; -- echoing calls
My daughter, -- green as summer grass; --
The long supine Plebeian ass,
The nasty crockery boring falls; --

Tom-Moory Pathos; -- all things bare, --
With such a turket! such a hen!
And scrambling forms of distant men,
O! ain't you glad you were not there!

Edward Lear

Teapots And Quails

Teapots and Quails,
Snuffers and Snails,
Set him a sailing
and see how he sails!

..

Mitres and Beams,
Thimbles and Creams,
Set him a screaming
and hark! how he screams!

..

Houses and Kings,
Whiskers and Swings,
Set him a stinging
and see how he stings!

..

Ribands and Pigs,
Helmets and Figs,
Set him a jiggling
and see how he jigs!

..

Rainbows and Knives,
Muscles and Hives,
Set him a driving
and see how he drives!

..

Tadpoles and Tops,
Teacups and Mops,
Set him a hopping
and see how he hops!

..

Hérons and Sweeps,
Turbans and Sheeps,
Set him a weeping
and see how he weeps!
Lobsters and Owls,
Scissors and Fowls,
Set him a howling
and hark how he howls!

..

Eagles and Pears,
Slippers and Bears,
Set him a staring
and see how he stares!

..

Sofas and Bees,
Camels and Keys,
Set him a sneezing
and see how he'll sneeze!

..

Wafers and Bears,
Ladders and Squares,
Set him a staring
and see how he stares!

..

Cutlets and Eyes,
Swallows and Pies,
Set it a flying
and see how it flies!

..

Thistles and Moles,
Crumpets and Soles,
Set it a rolling
and see how it rolls!

..

Tea urns and Pews,
Muscles and Jews,
Set him a mewling
and hear how he mews!
Watches and Oaks,
Custards and Cloaks,
Set him a poking
and see how he pokes!

..

Bonnets and Legs,
Steamboats and Eggs,
Set him a begging
and see how he begs!

..

Volumes and Pigs,
Razors and Figs,
Set him a jigging

and see how he jigs!

..

Hurdles and Mumps,
Poodles and Pumps,
Set it a jumping
and see how he jumps!

..

Pancakes and Fins,
Roses and Pins,
Set him a grinning
and see how he grins!

..

Gruel and Prawns,
Bracelets and Thorns,
Set him a yawning
and see how he yawns!

..

Chimnies and Wings,
Sailors and Rings,
Set him a singing,
and hark how he sings!
Trumpets and Guns,
Beetles and Buns,
Set him a running
and see how he runs!

..

Saucers and Tops,
Lobsters and Mops,
Set it a hopping
and see how it hops!

..

Puddings and Beams,
Cobwebs and Creams,
Set him a screaming
and hear how he screams!

..

Rainbows and Wives,
Puppies and Hives,
Set him a driving
and see how he drives!

..

Houses and Kings,

Oysters and Rings,
Set him a singing
and see how he sings!

..

Scissors and Fowls,
Filberts and Owls,
Set him a howling
and see how he howls!

..

Blackbirds and Ferns,
Spiders and Churns,
Set it a turning
and see how it turns!

Edward Lear

The Broom, The Shovel, The Poker And The Tongs

The Broom and the Shovel, the Poker and Tongs,
They all took a drive in the Park,
and they each sang a song, Ding-a-dong, Ding-a-dong,
Before they went back in the dark.
Mr Poker he sate quite upright in the coach,
Mr Tongs made a clatter and clash,
Miss Shovel was dressed all in black (with a brooch),
Mrs Broom was in blue (with a sash).
Ding-a-dong! Ding-a-dong!
And they all sang a song!

'O Shovely so lovely!' the Poker he sang,
'You have perfectly conquered my heart!
Ding-a-dong! Ding-a-dong! If you're pleased with my song,
I will feed you with cold apple tart!
When you scrape up the coals with a delicate sound,
You enrapture my life with delight!
Your nose is so shiny! your head is so round!
And your shape is so slender and bright!
Ding-a-dong! Ding-a-dong!
Ain't you pleased with my song?'

'Alas! Mrs Broom!' sighed the Tongs in his song,
'O is it because I'm so thin,
And my legs are so long - Ding-a-dong! Ding-a-dong!
That you don't care about me a pin?
Ah! fairest of creatures, when sweeping the room,
Ah! why don't you heed my complaint!
Must you needs be so cruel, you beautiful Broom,
Because you are covered with paint!
Ding-a-dong! Ding-a-dong!
You are certainly wrong!'

Mrs Broom and Miss Shovel together they sang,
'What nonsense you're singing today!'
Said the Shovel, 'I'll certainly hit you a bang!'
Said the Broom, 'And I'll sweep you away!'
So the Coachman drove homeward as fast as he could,
Perceiving their anger with pain;

But they put on the kettle, and little by little,
They all became happy again.
Ding-a-dong! Ding-a-dong!
There's an end of my song!

Edward Lear

The Courtship Of The Yonghy-Bonghy-Bo

I

On the Coast of Coromandel
Where the early pumpkins blow,
In the middle of the woods
Lived the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.
Two old chairs, and half a candle,--
One old jug without a handle,--
These were all his worldly goods:
In the middle of the woods,
These were all the worldly goods,
Of the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò,
Of the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.

II

Once, among the Bong-trees walking
Where the early pumpkins blow,
To a little heap of stones
Came the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.
There he heard a Lady talking,
To some milk-white Hens of Dorking,--
'Tis the lady Jingly Jones!
'On that little heap of stones
'Sits the Lady Jingly Jones!
Said the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò,
Said the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.

III

'Lady Jingly! Lady Jingly!
'Sitting where the pumpkins blow,
'Will you come and be my wife?'
Said the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.
'I am tired of living singly,--
'On this coast so wild and shingly,--
'I'm a-weary of my life:
'If you'll come and be my wife,
'Quite serene would be my life!'

Said the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò,
Said the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.

IV

'On this Coast of Coromandel,
'Shrimps and watercresses grow,
'Prawns are plentiful and cheap,'
Said the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.
'You shall have my chairs and candle,
'And my jug without a handle!--
'Gaze upon the rolling deep
('Fish is plentiful and cheap)
'As the sea, my love is deep!'
Said the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò,
Said the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.

V

Lady Jingly answered sadly,
And her tears began to flow,--
'Your proposal comes too late,
'Mr. Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò!
'I would be your wife most gladly!'
(Here she twirled her fingers madly,)
'But in England I've a mate!
'Yes! you've asked me far too late,
'For in England I've a mate,
'Mr. Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò!
'Mr. Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò!'

VI

'Mr. Jones -- (his name is Handel,--
'Handel Jones, Esquire, & Co.)
'Dorking fowls delights to send,
'Mr. Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò!
'Keep, oh! keep your chairs and candle,
'And your jug without a handle,--
'I can merely be your friend!
'-- Should my Jones more Dorkings send,
'I will give you three, my friend!

'Mr. Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò!
'Mr. Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò!'

VII

'Though you've such a tiny body,
'And your head so large doth grow,--
'Though your hat may blow away,
'Mr. Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò!
'Though you're such a Hoddy Doddy--
'Yet a wish that I could modi-
'fy the words I needs must say!
'Will you please to go away?
'That is all I have to say--
'Mr. Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò!
'Mr. Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò!'

VIII

Down the slippery slopes of Myrtle,
Where the early pumpkins blow,
To the calm and silent sea
Fled the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.
There, beyond the Bay of Gurtle,
Lay a large and lively Turtle,--
'You're the Cove,' he said, 'for me
'On your back beyond the sea,
'Turtle, you shall carry me!'
Said the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò,
Said the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.

IX

Through the silent-roaring ocean
Did the Turtle swiftly go;
Holding fast upon his shell
Rode the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.
With a sad primæval motion
Towards the sunset isles of Boshen
Still the Turtle bore him well.
Holding fast upon his shell,
'Lady Jingly Jones, farewell!'

Sang the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò,
Sang the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.

X

From the Coast of Coromandel,
Did that Lady never go;
On that heap of stones she mourns
For the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.
On that Coast of Coromandel,
In his jug without a handle
Still she weeps, and daily moans;
On that little hep of stones
To her Dorking Hens she moans,
For the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò,
For the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.

Edward Lear

The Cummerbund: An Indian Poem

I

She sate upon her Dobie,
To watch the Evening Star,
And all the Punkahs as they passed,
Cried, 'My! how fair you are!'
Around her bower, with quivering leaves,
The tall Kamsamahs grew,
And Kitmutgars in wild festoons
Hung down from Tchokis blue.

II

Below her home the river rolled
With soft meloobious sound,
Where golden-finned Chuprassies swam,
In myriads circling round.
Above, on tall trees remote
Green Ayahs perched alone,
And all night long the Mussak moan'd
Its melancholy tone.

III

And where the purple Nullahs threw
Their branches far and wide,--
And silvery Goreewallahs flew
In silence, side by side,--
The little Bheesties' twittering cry
Rose on the fragrant air,
And oft the angry Jampan howled
Deep in his hateful lair.

IV

She sate upon her Dobie,--

She heard the Nimmak hum,--
When all at once a cry arose,--
'The Cumberbund is come!'
In vain she fled: -- with open jaws
The angry monster followed,
And so, (before assistance came,)
That Lady Fair was swallowed.

V

They sought in vain for even a bone
Respectfully to bury,--
They said, -- 'Hers was a dreadful fate!'
(And Echo answered 'Very.')

They nailed her Dobie to the wall,
Where last her form was seen,
And underneath they wrote these words,
In yellow, blue, and green:--

Beware, ye Fair! Ye Fair, beware!
Nor sit out late at night,--
Lest horrid Cumberbunds should come,
And swallow you outright.

Edward Lear

The Daddy Long-Legs And The Fly

Once Mr Daddy Long-Legs,
Dressed in brown and gray,
Walked about upon the sands
Upon a summer's day;
And there among the pebbles,
When the wind was rather cold,
He met with Mr Floppy Fly,
All dressed in blue and gold.
And as it was too soon to dine,
They drank some Periwinkle-wine,
And played an hour or two, or more,
At battlecock and shuttledore.

Said Mr Daddy Long-legs
To Mr Floppy Fly,
'Why do you never come to court?
I wish you'd tell me why.
All gold and shine, in dress so fine,
You'd quite delight the court.
Why do you never go at all?
I really think you ought!
And if you went, you'd see such sights!
Such rugs! and jugs! and candle-lights!
And more than all, the King and Queen,
One in red, and one in green!'

'O Mr Daddy Long-Legs,'
Said Mr Floppy Fly,
'It's true I never go to court,
And I will tell you why.
If I had six long legs like yours,
At once I'd go to court!
But Oh! I can't, because my legs
Are so extremely short.
And I'm afraid the King and Queen
(One in red and one in green)
Would say aloud, 'You are not fit,
You Fly, to come to court a bit.'
O Mr Daddy Long-Legs,'

Said Mr Floppy Fly,
'I wish you'd sing one little song!
One mumbian melody!
You used to sing so awful well
In former days gone by,
But now you never sing at all;
I wish you'd tell me why:
For if you would, the silvery sound
Would please the shrimps and cockles round,
And all the crabs would gladly come
To hear you sing, 'Ah, Hum di Hum!''

Said Mr Daddy Long-Legs,
'I can never sing again!
And if you wish, I'll tell you why,
Although it gives me pain.
For years I could not hum a bit,
Or sing the smallest song;
And this the dreadful reason is,
My legs are grown too long!
My six long legs, all here and there,
Oppress my bosom with despair;
And if I stand, or lie, or sit,
I cannot sing one single bit!'

So Mr Daddy Long-Legs
And Mr Floppy Fly
Sat down in silence by the sea,
And gazed upon the sky.
They said, 'This is a dreadful thing!
The world has all gone wrong,
Since one has legs too short by half,
The other much too long!
One never more can go to court,
Because his legs have grown too short;
The other cannot sing a song,
Because his legs have grown too long!'

Then Mr Daddy Long-Legs
And Mr Floppy Fly
Rushed downward to the foaming sea
With one sponge-taneous cry;

And there they found a little boat
Whose sails were pink and gray;
And off they sailed among the waves
Far, and far away.
They sailed across the silent main
And reached the great Gromboolian plain;
And there they play for evermore
At battlecock and shuttledore.

Edward Lear

The Dong With A Luminous Nose

When awful darkness and silence reign
Over the great Gromboolian plain,
Through the long, long wintry nights; --
When the angry breakers roar
As they beat on the rocky shore; --
When Storm-clouds brood on the towering heights
Of the Hills of the Chankly Bore: --

Then, through the vast and gloomy dark,
There moves what seems a fiery spark,
A lonely spark with silvery rays
Piercing the coal-black night, --
A Meteor strange and bright: --
Hither and thither the vision strays,
A single lurid light.

Slowly it wander, -- pauses, -- creeps, --
Anon it sparkles, -- flashes and leaps;
And ever as onward it gleaming goes
A light on the Bong-tree stems it throws.
And those who watch at that midnight hour
From Hall or Terrace, or lofty Tower,
Cry, as the wild light passes along, --
"The Dong! -- the Dong!"
"The wandering Dong through the forest goes!"
"The Dong! the Dong!"
"The Dong with a luminous Nose!"

Long years ago
The Dong was happy and gay,
Till he fell in love with a Jumbly Girl
Who came to those shores one day.
For the Jumblies came in a sieve, they did, --
Landing at eve near the Zemmery Fidd
Where the Oblong Oysters grow,
And the rocks are smooth and gray.
And all the woods and the valleys rang
With the Chorus they daily and nightly sang, --
"Far and few, far and few,

Are the lands where the Jumblies live;
Their heads are green, and the hands are blue
And they went to sea in a sieve.

Happily, happily passed those days!
While the cheerful Jumblies staid;
They danced in circlets all night long,
To the plaintive pipe of the lively Dong,
In moonlight, shine, or shade.
For day and night he was always there
By the side of the Jumbly Girl so fair,
With her sky-blue hands, and her sea-green hair.
Till the morning came of that hateful day
When the Jumblies sailed in their sieve away,
And the Dong was left on the cruel shore
Gazing -- gazing for evermore, --
Ever keeping his weary eyes on
That pea-green sail on the far horizon, --
Singing the Jumbly Chorus still
As he sate all day on the grassy hill, --
"Far and few, far and few,
Are the lands where the Jumblies live;
Their heads are green, and the hands are blue
And they went to sea in a sieve.

But when the sun was low in the West,
The Dong arose and said;
-- "What little sense I once possessed
Has quite gone out of my head!" --
And since that day he wanders still
By lake and dorest, marsh and hills,
Singing -- "O somewhere, in valley or plain
"Might I find my Jumbly Girl again!
"For ever I'll seek by lake and shore
"Till I find my Jumbly Girl once more!"

Playing a pipe with silvery squeaks,
Since then his Jumbly Girl he seeks,
And because by night he could not see,
He gathered the bark of the Twangum Tree
On the flowery plain that grows.
And he wove him a wondrous Nose, --

A Nose as strange as a Nose could be!
Of vast proportions and painted red,
And tied with cords to the back of his head.
-- In a hollow rounded space it ended
With a luminous Lamp within suspended,
All fenced about
With a bandage stout
To prevent the wind from blowing it out; --
And with holes all round to send the light,
In gleaming rays on the dismal night.

And now each night, and all night long,
Over those plains still roams the Dong;
And above the wail of the Chimp and Snipe
You may hear the squeak of his plaintive pipe
While ever he seeks, but seeks in vain
To meet with his Jumbly Girl again;
Lonely and wild -- all night he goes, --
The Dong with a luminous Nose!
And all who watch at the midnight hour,
From Hall or Terrace, or lofty Tower,
Cry, as they trace the Meteor bright,
Moving along through the dreary night, --
"This is the hour when forth he goes,
"The Dong with a luminous Nose!
"Yonder -- over the plain he goes;
"He goes!
"He goes;
"The Dong with a luminous Nose!"

Edward Lear

The Duck And The Kangaroo

Said the Duck to the Kangaroo,
'Good gracious! how you hop!
Over the fields and the water too,
As if you never would stop!
My life is a bore in this nasty pond,
And I long to go out in the world beyond!
I wish I could hop like you!'
Said the Duck to the Kangaroo.

'Please give me a ride on your back!'
Said the Duck to the Kangaroo.
'I would sit quite still, and say nothing but 'Quack',
The whole of the long day through!
And we'd go to the Dee, and the Jelly Bo Lee,
Over the land, and over the sea;
Please take me a ride! O do!'
Said the Duck to the Kangaroo.

Said the Kangaroo to the Duck,
'This requires some little reflection;
Perhaps on the whole it might bring me luck,
And there seems but one objection,
Which is, if you'll let me speak so bold,
Your feet are unpleasantly wet and cold,
And would probably give me the roo-
Matiz!' said the Kangaroo.

Said the Duck, 'As I sat on the rocks,
I have thought over that completely,
And I bought four pairs of worsted socks
Which fit my web-feet neatly.
And to keep out the cold I've bought a cloak,
And every day a cigar I'll smoke,
All to follow my own dear true
Love of a Kangaroo!'

Said the Kangaroo, 'I'm ready!
'All in the moonlight pale;
'But to balance me well, dear Duck, sit steady!

'And quite at the end of my tail!'
So away they went with a hop and a bound,
And they hopped the whole world three times round;
And who so happy - O who,
As the Duck and the Kangaroo?

Edward Lear

The Jumblies

They went to sea in a Sieve, they did,
In a Sieve they went to sea:
In spite of all their friends could say,
On a winter's morn, on a stormy day,
In a Sieve they went to sea!
And when the Sieve turned round and round,
And every one cried, `You'll all be drowned!'
They called aloud, `Our Sieve ain't big,
But we don't care a button! we don't care a fig!
In a Sieve we'll go to sea!'
Far and few, far and few,
Are the lands where the Jumblies live;
Their heads are green, and their hands are blue,
And they went to sea in a Sieve.

They sailed away in a Sieve, they did,
In a Sieve they sailed so fast,
With only a beautiful pea-green veil
Tied with a riband by way of a sail,
To a small tobacco-pipe mast;
And every one said, who saw them go,
`O won't they be soon upset, you know!
For the sky is dark, and the voyage is long,
And happen what may, it's extremely wrong
In a Sieve to sail so fast!'
Far and few, far and few,
Are the lands where the Jumblies live;
Their heads are green, and their hands are blue,
And they went to sea in a Sieve.

The water it soon came in, it did,
The water it soon came in;
So to keep them dry, they wrapped their feet
In a pinky paper all folded neat,
And they fastened it down with a pin.
And they passed the night in a crockery-jar,
And each of them said, `How wise we are!
Though the sky be dark, and the voyage be long,
Yet we never can think we were rash or wrong,

While round in our Sieve we spin!
Far and few, far and few,
Are the lands where the Jumblies live;
Their heads are green, and their hands are blue,
And they went to sea in a Sieve.

And all night long they sailed away;
And when the sun went down,
They whistled and warbled a moony song
To the echoing sound of a coppery gong,
In the shade of the mountains brown.
`O Timballo! How happy we are,
When we live in a Sieve and a crockery-jar,
And all night long in the moonlight pale,
We sail away with a pea-green sail,
In the shade of the mountains brown!
Far and few, far and few,
Are the lands where the Jumblies live;
Their heads are green, and their hands are blue,
And they went to sea in a Sieve.

They sailed to the Western Sea, they did,
To a land all covered with trees,
And they bought an Owl, and a useful Cart,
And a pound of Rice, and a Cranberry Tart,
And a hive of silvery Bees.
And they bought a Pig, and some green Jack-daws,
And a lovely Monkey with lollipop paws,
And forty bottles of Ring-Bo-Ree,
And no end of Stilton Cheese.
Far and few, far and few,
Are the lands where the Jumblies live;
Their heads are green, and their hands are blue,
And they went to sea in a Sieve.

And in twenty years they all came back,
In twenty years or more,
And every one said, `How tall they've grown!
For they've been to the Lakes, and the Terrible Zone,
And the hills of the Chankly Bore!
And they drank their health, and gave them a feast
Of dumplings made of beautiful yeast;

And every one said, `If we only live,
We too will go to sea in a Sieve,---
To the hills of the Chankly Bore!
Far and few, far and few,
Are the lands where the Jumblies live;
Their heads are green, and their hands are blue,
And they went to sea in a Sieve.

Edward Lear

The New Vestments

There lived an old man in the kingdom of Tess,
Who invented a purely original dress;
And when it was perfectly made and complete,
He opened the door, and walked into the street.

By way of a hat, he'd a loaf of Brown Bread,
In the middle of which he inserted his head;--
His Shirt was made up of no end of dead Mice,
The warmth of whose skins was quite fluffy and nice;--
His Drawers were of Rabbit-skins, -- but it is not known whose;--
His Waistcoat and Trowsers were made of Pork Chops;--
His Buttons were Jujubes, and Chocolate Drops;--
His Coat was all Pancakes with Jam for a border,
And a girdle of Biscuits to keep it in order;
And he wore over all, as a screen from bad weather,
A Cloak of green Cabbage-leaves stitched all together.

He had walked a short way, when he heard a great noise,
Of all sorts of Beasticles, Birdlings, and Boys;--
And from every long street and dark lane in the town
Beasts, Birdles, and Boys in a tumult rushed down.
Two Cows and a half ate his Cabbage-leaf Cloak;--
Four Apes seized his Girdle, which vanished like smoke;--
Three Kids ate up half of his Pancaky Coat,--
And the tails were devour'd by an ancient He Goat;--
An army of Dogs in a twinkling tore up his
Pork Waistcoat and Trowsers to give to their Puppies;--
And while they were growling, and mumbling the Chops,
Ten boys prigged the Jujubes and Chocolate Drops.--
He tried to run back to his house, but in vain,
Four Scores of fat Pigs came again and again;--
They rushed out of stables and hovels and doors,--
They tore off his stockings, his shoes, and his drawers;--
And now from the housetops with screechings descend,
Striped, spotted, white, black, and gray Cats without end,
They jumped on his shoulders and knocked off his hat,--
When Crows, Ducks, and Hens made a mincemeat of that;--
They speedily flew at his sleeves in trice,
And utterly tore up his Shirt of dead Mice;--

They swallowed the last of his Shirt with a squall,--
Whereon he ran home with no clothes on at all.

And he said to himself as he bolted the door,
'I will not wear a similar dress any more,
'Any more, any more, any morre, never more!'

Edward Lear

The Nutcrackers And The Sugar-Tongs

The Nutcrackers sate by a plate on the table,
The Sugar-tongs sate by a plate at his side;
And the Nutcrackers said, 'Don't you wish we were able
'Along the blue hills and green meadows to ride?
'Must we drag on this stupid existence for ever,
'So idle so weary, so full of remorse,--
'While every one else takes his pleasure, and never
'Seems happy unless he is riding a horse?

II

'Don't you think we could ride without being instructed?
'Without any saddle, or bridle, or spur?
'Our legs are so long, and so aptly constructed,
'I'm sure that an accident could not occur.
'Let us all of a sudden hop down from the table,
'And hustle downstairs, and each jump on a horse!
'Shall we try? Shall we go! Do you think we are able?'
The Sugar-tongs answered distinctly, 'Of course!'

III

So down the long staircase they hopped in a minute,
The Sugar-tongs snapped, and the Crackers said 'crack!'
The stable was open, the horses were in it;
Each took out a pony, and jumped on his back.
The Cat in a fright scrambled out of the doorway,
The Mice tumbled out of a bundle of hay,
The brown and white Rats, and the black ones from Norway,
Screamed out, 'They are taking the horses away!'

IV

The whole of the household was filled with amazement,
The Cups and the Saucers danced madly about,
The Plates and the Dishes looked out of the casement,
The Saltcellar stood on his head with a shout,

The Spoons with a clatter looked out of the lattice,
The Mustard-pot climbed up the Gooseberry Pies,
The Soup-ladle peeped through a heap of Veal Patties,
And squeaked with a ladle-like scream of surprise.

V

The Frying-pan said, 'It's an awful delusion!'
The Tea-kettle hissed and grew black in the face;
And they all rushed downstairs in the wildest confusion,
To see the great Nutcracker-Sugar-tong race.
And out of the stable, with screamings and laughter,
(Their ponies were cream-coloured, speckled with brown,)
The Nutcrackers first, and the Sugar-tongs after,
Rode all round the yard, and then all round the town.

VI

They rode through the street, and they rode by the station,
They galloped away to the beautiful shore;
In silence they rode, and 'made no observation',
Save this: 'We will never go back any more!'
And still you might hear, till they rode out of hearing,
The Sugar-tongs snap, and the Crackers say 'crack!'
Till far in the distance their forms disappearing,
They faded away. -- And they never came back!

Edward Lear

The Owl And The Pussy-Cat

The Owl and the Pussy-cat went to sea
In a beautiful pea green boat,
They took some honey, and plenty of money,
Wrapped up in a five pound note.
The Owl looked up to the stars above,
And sang to a small guitar,
'O lovely Pussy! O Pussy my love,
What a beautiful Pussy you are,
You are,
You are!
What a beautiful Pussy you are!'

Pussy said to the Owl, 'You elegant fowl!
How charmingly sweet you sing!
O let us be married! too long we have tarried:
But what shall we do for a ring?'
They sailed away, for a year and a day,
To the land where the Bong-tree grows
And there in a wood a Piggy-wig stood
With a ring at the end of his nose,
His nose,
His nose,
With a ring at the end of his nose.

'Dear pig, are you willing to sell for one shilling
Your ring?' Said the Piggy, 'I will.'
So they took it away, and were married next day
By the Turkey who lives on the hill.
They dined on mince, and slices of quince,
Which they ate with a runcible spoon;
And hand in hand, on the edge of the sand,
They danced by the light of the moon,
The moon,
The moon,
They danced by the light of the moon.

Edward Lear

The Pelican Chorus

King and Queen of the Pelicans we;
No other Birds so grand we see!
None but we have feet like fins!
With lovely leathery throats and chins!
Ploffskin, Pluffskin, Pelican jee!
We think no birds so happy as we!
Plumpskin, Ploshkin, Pelican jill!
We think so then, and we thought so still!

We live on the Nile. The Nile we love.
By night we sleep on the cliffs above.
By day we fish, and at eve we stand
On long bare islands of yellow sand.
And when the sun sinks slowly down
And the great rock walls grow dark and brown,
Where the purple river rolls fast and dim
And the ivory Ibis starlike skim,
Wing to wing we dance around, -
Stamping our feet with a flumpy sound, -
Opening our mouths as Pelicans ought,
And this is the song we nightly snort:
Ploffskin, Pluffskin, Pelican jee!
We think no Birds so happy as we!
Plumpskin, Ploshkin, Pelican jill!
We think so then, and we thought so still.

Last year came out our Daughter, Dell;
And all the Birds received her well.
To do her honour, a feast we made
For every bird that can swim or wade.
Herons and Gulls, and Cormorants black,
Cranes, and Flamingoes with scarlet back,
Plovers and Storks, and Geese in clouds,
Swans and Dilberry Ducks in crowds.
Thousands of Birds in wondrous flight!
They ate and drank and danced all night,
And echoing back from the rocks you heard
Multitude-echoes from Bird and Bird, -
Ploffskin, Pluffskin, Pelican jee!

We think no Birds so happy as we!
Plumpskin, Ploshkin, Pelican jill!
We think so then, and we thought so still!
Yes, they came; and among the rest,
The king of the Cranes all grandly dressed.
Such a lovely tail! Its feathers float
Between the ends of his blue dress-coat;
With pea-green trowsers all so neat,
And a delicate frill to hide his feet, -
(For though no one speaks of it, everyone knows,
He has got no webs between his toes!)
As soon as he saw our Daughter Dell,
In violent love that Crane King fell, -
On seeing her waddling form so fair,
With a wreath of shrimps in her short white hair,
And before the end of the next long day,
Our Dell had given her heart away;
For the King of the Cranes had won that heart,
With a Crocodile's egg and a large fish-tart.
She vowed to marry the King of the Cranes,
Leaving the Nile for stranger plains;
And away they flew in a gathering crowd
Of endless birds in a lengthening cloud.
Ploffskin, Pluffskin, Pelican jee!
We think no Birds so happy as we!
Plumpskin, Ploshkin, Pelican jill!
We think so then, and we thought so still!

And far away in the twilight sky,
We heard them singing in a lessening cry, -
Farther and farther till out of sight,
And we stood alone in the silent night!
Often since, in the nights of June,
We sit on the sand and watch the moon; -
- She dwells by the streams of the Chankly Bore,
And we probably never shall see her more.
Ploffskin, Pluffskin, Pelican jee!
We think no Birds so happy as we!
Plumpskin, Ploshkin, Pelican jill!
We think so then, and we thought so still!

The Pobble Who Has No Toes

The Pobble who has no toes
Had once as many as we;
When they said "Some day you may lose them all;"
He replied "Fish, fiddle-de-dee!"
And his Aunt Jobiska made him drink
Lavender water tinged with pink,
For she said "The World in general knows
There's nothing so good for a Pobble's toes!"

The Pobble who has no toes
Swam across the Bristol Channel;
But before he set out he wrapped his nose
In a piece of scarlet flannel.
For his Aunt Jobiska said "No harm
Can come to his toes if his nose is warm;
And it's perfectly known that a Pobble's toes
Are safe, -- provided he minds his nose!"

The Pobble swam fast and well,
And when boats or ships came near him,
He tinkledy-blinkledy-winkled a bell,
So that all the world could hear him.
And all the Sailors and Admirals cried,
When they saw him nearing the further side -
"He has gone to fish for his Aunt Jobiska's
Runcible Cat with crimson whiskers!"

But before he touched the shore,
The shore of the Bristol Channel,
A sea-green porpoise carried away
His wrapper of scarlet flannel.
And when he came to observe his feet,
Formerly garnished with toes so neat,
His face at once became forlorn,
On perceiving that all his toes were gone!

And nobody ever knew,
From that dark day to the present,
Whoso had taken the Pobble's toes,

In a manner so far from pleasant.
Whether the shrimps, or crawfish grey,
Or crafty Mermaids stole them away -
Nobody knew: and nobody knows
How the Pobble was robbed of his twice five toes!

The Pobble who has no toes
Was placed in a friendly Bark,
And they rowed him back, and carried him up
To his Aunt Jobiska's Park.
And she made him a feast at his earnest wish
Of eggs and buttercups fried with fish, -
And she said "It's a fact the whole world knows,
That Pobbles are happier without their toes!"

Edward Lear

The Quangle Wangle's Hat

I.

On the top of the Crumpetty Tree
The Quangle Wangle sat,
But his face you could not see,
On account of his Beaver Hat.
For his Hat was a hundred and two feet wide,
With ribbons and bibbons on every side
And bells, and buttons, and loops, and lace,
So that nobody every could see the face
Of the Quangle Wangle Quee.II.

The Quangle Wangle said
To himself on the Crumpetty Tree, --
"Jam; and jelly; and bread;
"Are the best of food for me!
"But the longer I live on this Crumpetty Tree
"The plainer than ever it seems to me
"That very few people come this way
"And that life on the whole is far from gay!"
Said the Quangle Wangle Quee.III.

But there came to the Crumpetty Tree,
Mr. and Mrs. Canary;
And they said, -- "Did every you see
"Any spot so charmingly airy?
"May we build a nest on your lovely Hat?
"Mr. Quangle Wangle, grant us that!
"O please let us come and build a nest
"Of whatever material suits you best,
"Mr. Quangle Wangle Quee!"IV.

And besides, to the Crumpetty Tree
Came the Stork, the Duck, and the Owl;
The Snail, and the Bumble-Bee,
The Frog, and the Fimble Fowl;
(The Fimble Fowl, with a corkscrew leg;)
And all of them said, -- "We humbly beg,
"We may build out homes on your lovely Hat, --
"Mr. Quangle Wangle, grant us that!

"Mr. Quangle Wangle Quee!"V.

And the Golden Grouse came there,
And the Pobble who has no toes, --
And the small Olympian bear, --
And the Dong with a luminous nose.
And the Blue Baboon, who played the Flute, --
And the Orient Calf from the Land of Tute, --
And the Attery Squash, and the Bisky Bat, --
All came and built on the lovely Hat
Of the Quangle Wangle Quee.VI.

And the Quangle Wangle said
To himself on the Crumpetty Tree, --
"When all these creatures move
"What a wonderful noise there'll be!"
And at night by the light of the Mulberry moon
They danced to the Flute of the Blue Baboon,
On the broad green leaves of the Crumpetty Tree,
And all were as happy as happy could be,
With the Quangle Wangle Quee.

Edward Lear

The Table And The Chair

Said the Table to the Chair,
'You can hardly be aware
How I suffer from the heat,
And from chilblains on my feet!
If we took a little walk,
We might have a little talk!
Pray let us take the air!'
Said the Table to the Chair.

Said the Chair unto the Table,
'Now you know we are not able!
How foolishly you talk,
When you know we cannot walk!'
Said the Table with a sigh,
'It can do no harm to try;
I've as many legs as you;
Why can't we walk on two?'

So they both went slowly down,
And walked about the town
With a cheerful bumpy sound,
As they toddled round and round.
And everybody cried,
As they hastened to their side,
'See! the Table and the Chair
Have come out to take the air!'

But, in going down an alley
To a castle in the valley,
They completely lost their way,
And wandered all the day
Till, to see them safely back,
They paid a Ducky-quack,
And a Beetle, and a Mouse,
Who took them to their house.

Then they whispered to each other,
'O delightful little brother!
What a lovely walk we've taken!

Let us dine on Beans and Bacon!
So the Ducky and the leetle
Brownny-Mousy and the Beetle
Dined, and danced upon their heads
Till they toddled to their beds.

Edward Lear

The Two Old Bachelors

Two old Bachelors were living in one house;
One caught a Muffin, the other caught a Mouse.
Said he who caught the Muffin to him who caught the Mouse,--
'This happens just in time! For we've nothing in the house,
'Save a tiny slice of lemon and a teaspoonful of honey,
'And what to do for dinner -- since we haven't any money?
'And what can we expect if we haven't any dinner,
'But to lose our teeth and eyelashes and keep on growing thinner?'

Said he who caught the Mouse to him who caught the Muffin,--
'We might cook this little Mouse, if we had only some Stuffin'!
'If we had but Sage and Onion we could do extremely well,
'But how to get that Stuffin' it is difficult to tell'--

Those two old Bachelors ran quickly to the town
And asked for Sage and Onions as they wandered up and down;
They borrowed two large Onions, but no Sage was to be found
In the Shops, or in the Market, or in all the Gardens round.

But some one said, -- 'A hill there is, a little to the north,
'And to its purpledicular top a narrow way leads forth;--
'And there among the rugged rocks abides an ancient Sage,--
'An earnest Man, who reads all day a most perplexing page.
'Climb up, and seize him by the toes! -- all studious as he sits,--
'And pull him down, -- and chop him into endless little bits!
'Then mix him with your Onion, (cut up likewise into Scraps,)--
'When your Stuffin' will be ready -- and very good: perhaps.'

Those two old Bachelors without loss of time
The nearly purpledicular crags at once began to climb;
And at the top, among the rocks, all seated in a nook,
They saw that Sage, a reading of a most enormous book.

'You earnest Sage!' aloud they cried, 'your book you've read enough in!--
'We wish to chop you into bits to mix you into Stuffin'!--

But that old Sage looked calmly up, and with his awful book,
At those two Bachelors' bald heads a certain aim he took;--
and over crag and precipice they rolled promiscuous down,--

At once they rolled, and never stopped in lane or field or town,--
And when they reached their house, they found (besides their want
of Stuffin',)
The Mouse had fled; -- and, previously, had eaten up the Muffin.

They left their home in silence by the once convivial door.
And from that hour those Bachelors were never heard of more.

Edward Lear

There Was A Young Lady Whose Eyes

There was a young lady whose eyes,
were unique as to colour and size;
When she opened them wide,
people all turned aside,
and started away in surprise.

Edward Lear

There Was An Old Lady Whose Folly

There was an Old Lady whose folly
Induced her to sit in a holly:
Whereupon by a thorn
Her dress being torn,
She quickly became melancholy.

Edward Lear

There Was An Old Man In A Tree

There was an Old Man in a tree,
Who was horribly bored by a bee.
When they said "Does it buzz?"
He replied "Yes, it does!
It's a regular brute of a bee!"

Edward Lear

There Was An Old Man Of Calcutta

There was an old man of Calcutta,
Who perpetually ate bread & butter;
Till a great bit of muffin on which he was stuffing,
Choked that horrid old man of Calcutta.

Edward Lear

There Was An Old Man Of New York

THERE WAS AN OLD MAN OF NEW YORK, WHO MURDERED HIMSELF WITH A
FORK;
BUT NOBODY CRIED THOUGH HE VERY SOON DIED, --
FOR THAT SILLY OLD MAN OF NEW YORK.

Edward Lear

There Was An Old Man Of Thermopylae

There was an old man of Thermopylæ,
Who never did anything properly;
But they said, "If you choose, To boil eggs in your shoes,
You shall never remain in Thermopylæ."

Edward Lear

There Was An Old Man On The Border

There was an old man on the Border,
Who lived in the utmost disorder;
He danced with the cat, and made tea in his hat,
Which vexed all the folks on the Border.

Edward Lear

There Was An Old Man With A Beard

There was an Old Man with a beard,
Who said, "It is just as I feared! --
Two Owls and a Hen, four Larks and a Wren,
Have all built their nests in my beard.

Edward Lear

There Was An Old Person Of Nice

There was an old person of Nice,
Whose associates were usually Geese.
They walked out together, in all sorts of weather.
That affable person of Nice!

Edward Lear