

THE WHITE KNIGHT

A STUDY OF C. L. DODGSON

(LEWIS CARROLL)

BY

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### SUMMARY.

In "The White Knight," the story of C.L. Dodgson ("Lewis Carroll") is re-told. The original biography by Stuart Dodgson Collingwood was written in the lifetime of many people whose feelings had to be considered and information vital to an understanding of Dodgson as a man was deliberately suppressed. His relations with Alice Liddell and with the Liddell family were passed over in silence when they could not be represented as idyllic.

Proof is now offered that Dodgson's love for the child Alice Liddell did not end with her childhood but affected his entire life. Alice was more than the heroine of the "Adventures," more than the child to whom they were originally told. She acted on Dodgson as a powerful stimulus and catalyst, fusing in her service all his powers and rewarding him with a smile. At her feet he laid his mathematics, his imagination, wit and adult interest in the intellectual battles which raged in and about Oxford during the years in which "Alice" and "Through the Looking-glass" were composed.

Robbed of her by disparity in age, the long-drawn-out hostility of the Dean and Mrs. Liddell and Alice's preference for a younger man, he slowly disintegrated, aged prematurely and died without fulfilling the promise of his earlier work.

The development of Dodgson's ideas from "Rectory Umbrella" days, through "Alice" to "Through the Looking-glass" is traced in



detail. It is shown that "Alice" in part and "Through the Looking-glass" as a whole can be appreciated by children only as "Gulliver's Travels" is appreciated. In "The Hunting of the Snark" wit struggles, and in the long run triumphs over feelings akin to despair, while in "Sylvie and Bruno" genius has given way to mere ingenuity and creation to thinly disguised autobiography.

The analytical parts are claimed as new and original, but new biographical material will also be found, concerning Dodgson and the Liddells. Much of this has been supplied by Miss F. Menella Dodgson who, with her sisters, now has the surviving volumes of Dodgson's unpublished diary. During a correspondence which has extended over several years no request by the present writer has ever been refused. As a result, the picture has been transformed and much that in Collingwood appears casual and chatty acquires new significance in the light of this information.

## CHAPTER I

### BEFORE ALICE

On January 27th, 1832, Charles Lutwidge Dodgson was born at Daresbury, near Warrington. His father and mother were full cousins and he was the eldest son and third of eleven children, all of whom stammered.

His mother was a quiet, gentle person, whose influence, though life-long, was mild and the dominant personality in the Rectory was that of his father.

Charles Dodgson, the elder was a very remarkable father to have. The son of a captain in the 4th Dragoon Guards, he was born at Hamilton in Lanarkshire and educated at Westminster and Christ Church, Oxford, where he took a double first in Classics and Mathematics.

His father, the Captain, was the first break in a long line of churchmen and Charles Dodgson reverted to the family profession. In 1830 he married his first cousin, Frances Jane Lutwidge and settled at Daresbury as Rector of that quiet, sleepy little place. It was thirteen years before Sir Robert Peel's influence obtained for him the Crown living at Croft in Yorkshire. Soon afterwards, he was examining chaplain to the Bishop of Ripon; later Arch-deacon of Richmond and in 1853 a Canon of Ripon Cathedral.

That was his limit. He was comfortably off but never rich, a man of strong views, on the fringe of the important events which happened in the Church during his life time, a brilliant but never an eminent mathematician, a ripe Classical scholar, a reader of the Times, a wit.

Of his qualifications to be the father of "Lewis Carroll," the two most important were his mathematics and his strong (but not extreme) views on Church affairs. In both of these, whether deliberately or inadvertently, he interested Charles at an early age, whereas the boy showed little aptitude for Latin, in which his father had been equally proficient.

Charles had a natural aptitude for mathematics. As a mere child he found a book of logarithms and took it to his father with the request: "Please explain." His father smilingly told him he was much too young to understand so difficult a subject. "But," said young Dodgson, with devastating simplicity, "please explain."

He was educated entirely at home in the years he spent at Daresbury and for a year after that at Croft. During this period the Tracts for the Times were appearing and being read by his father whose theological position as he later revealed it in his sermon "Ritual Worship" of 1852 was that of Keble and even Newman up to the Tract XC period.

Young Charles saw his father at work on his translation of

Tertullian for the Library of the Fathers. He knew that Dr. Pusey was writing footnotes for it. Here were mysteries; Logarithms and the Primitive Church, numbers arranged according to some unfathomable system and a great incomprehensible Church controversy in which his own father was somehow involved.

The boy would seek refuge in the garden where he made pets of snails and toads and tried to understand their ways of thought - with about equal success. He tried to interest earth worms in fighting but with no success at all.

These were the early days of the railways and Charles must have been one of the first children in the world to play at trains. He had a model railway in the garden at Croft and, displaying a practical streak no doubt transmitted from his Yorkshire ancestors, sold tickets and refreshments to the passengers. He was always extremely conscious of the value of money and though generous with it in his later affluence, neither careless himself nor inclined to condone carelessness in others. In this the child was father of the man.

He was also a born entertainer, and found an audience ready to hand in his numerous brothers and sisters. He enjoyed mystifying them and here again displayed a trait which remained with him throughout his life. One of his amusements was amateur conjuring and another marionettes. For the latter he wrote his own plays, but while this shows his bent towards writing it is still more important that he liked doing things

behind a screen, manipulating wires and making puppets dance, disguising his voice, producing things out of nowhere.

Abracadabra!

One winter he constructed a maze in the snow; all his life he enjoyed setting puzzles.

At the age of twelve, Charles was sent to a private school at Richmond from which he wrote his first parody, to his brother Skeffington, aged six:

"My dear Skeff -

Roar not lest thou be abolished.

Yours, etc. - "

All his life he was a parodist.

In his first report upon him, Mr Tate remarks upon his remarkable prowess in mathematics - scarcely surprising when one considers that few children of his age are coached by a first-class mathematician; nevertheless it does prove his mathematical bent, for his progress in latin is less satisfactory and he had been coached by a first-class classical scholar. Mr Tate does not hesitate to credit him with genius, but advises his parents to conceal from him his "superiority over other boys."

His reports from Rugby, to which he proceeded in 1846 confirm his mathematical precociousness and for the first time we have direct evidence of his interest in theology.

"His mathematical knowledge," writes Dr Tait, "is great for his age." He does not say that his knowledge of the classics is

great for his age but only "and I doubt not he will do himself credit in classics." If he had already done himself credit, Dr Tait would doubtless have said so. "As I believe I mentioned to you before, his examination for the Divinity prize was one of the most creditable exhibitions I have ever seen."

Now Dr Tait was formerly one of the Four Tutors who protested against Newman's Tract XC, and a future archbishop of Canterbury.

"My dear father," Dodgson wrote to a friend in the 1880's, "was what is called a 'High Churchman' and I naturally adopted these views."

Before he left Rugby he was evidently deeply interested in Church affairs and in mathematics; and he continued to be deeply interested in both as long as he lived.

Charles was not happy at Rugby. "I cannot say," he afterwards wrote, "that I look back upon my life at a Public School with any sensation of pleasure, or that any earthly considerations could induce me to go through my three years again."

To begin with he was no good at games; nor had he that all-round brilliance in scholarship which the wondering school-boy accepts as a substitute for powerful physique, brute courage and acts of skill. He made, he later supposes, "some progress in learning of various kinds, but none of it was done con amore," and he spent "an incalculable time in writing out impositions."

Again he complains of the lack of privacy, particularly at night and one cannot help wondering if his later prudishness

was not another trait in his character which showed itself early. He was a bad mixer, an odd fish. Not for him the adoration of the House and the "three times three"; for him, rather, the apple-pie bed, the "de-bagging" the feeling of insufficiently recognised merit.

How sweet to return to the Rectory in the holidays and at the end of schooldays, to his mother's affection, talks with his father on subjects of which probably not one of his school-fellows, or for that matter many of his masters knew anything whatever, and above all to the worship of the ever-increasing tribe of brothers and sisters, all inferior in knowledge and experience, all granting him unquestioned leadership! As early as 1845 he began editing and in the main writing what Collingwood calls happily enough "very local magazines," their circulation being confined to the inmates of Croft Rectory. In the preface to "Mischmasch," 1855, he supplies a bibliography. Apart from "Mischmasch" itself which was a private anthology or scrapbook added to until 1862, there were seven of these. The first was "Useful and Instructive Poetry" in 1845. There followed the only one to which the family contributed with any enthusiasm, "The Rectory Magazine," which was not bound until 1848.

Then came (and went) the Comet, the Rosebud, the Star and the Will o' the Wisp, of all of which he had a low opinion. Nevertheless they show him hard at work creating a world of fantasy into which he could escape and from which he could peep

1. Stuart Dodgson Collingwood's "Life and Letters of Charles  
Lutwidge Dodgson" is the authority for these early years.

out at the larger and steadily widening prospect around him.

The case of the "Rectory Umbrella" is rather different. Charles had left Rugby after the winter term of 1848 and spent the next two years at home. Perhaps his father thought he would prepare for Oxford better under his own eye; or perhaps he realised that Charles was a misfit at Rugby and felt that he had stuck it long enough.

At all events there is no doubt that he was at Croft during the whole time that the "Rectory Umbrella" was being produced and that this magazine was the most important result of the unusually long interval between school and university. It is in fact, Charles Dodgson's first book.

"This we started, we believe, in 1849 or 1850, in a ready-bound square volume. It was admired at the time, but wholly unsupported, and it took us a year or more, to fill the volume by our own unaided efforts. The volume exists and in good preservation, and therefore any further account of it is needless."

The "we" is Royal or editorial and in the valedictory poem he insists on his sole authorship of all the contents.

"But in thee - let future ages  
Mark the fact which I record,  
No one helped me in thy pages,  
Even with a single word."

It was his own little world, made by himself and despite the fact that he was entertaining his brothers and sisters and perhaps his parents also, one feels that he made it chiefly for

1. "The Rectory Umbrella and Mischmasch," ed. Florence Milner, p. 91.



himself.

It is a world in which the events of the Rectory, his reading and his mathematics appear whimsically distorted and embellished with footnotes which burlesque those in the learned tomes of his father's library.

Moreover, he is his own illustrator and while his drawings have no real artistic merit, they have the same impish quality as his prose and verse and are in their crude way extremely effective. Apart from illustrations there is a series of drawings which parody well-known pictures; the best of them substituting an engaging young hippopotamus for the child in the yellow frock of Sir Joshua Reynolds' "Age of Innocence." A prose commentary accompanies each drawing.

The peculiar genius which produced the Mock Turtle is already evident in the Zoological Papers, "Pixies," the "Lory," "Fishes" (not Fishes) and the "One-winged Dove."

The "Lory" which was later to reappear in "Alice's Adventures," was a stuffed one in the York Museum. It had struck him as so quaint that he thought there could never have been more than one and he gave it a mythological background derived from Southey's "Curse of Kehama."

"Fishes" he found in "a German book." Fishs have "ordinarily angles at them," he quotes delightedly, by which they can be "fanged and heaved out of the water." The geometrical sense of the word "angles" obtrudes itself and the result is a species of

angular fishes.

In the Times of July 22nd, 1850, he found a cryptic advertisement: "The one-winged Dove must Die, unless the Crane returns to be a shield against her enemies." Here was another new species ready-made for him.

It was in the Times too, or so he says, that he read of "Cuffey, or the Chartist." In this, the second of a series called "Representative Men" he reveals the orthodox tory attitude to the Monster Petition and march on London.

"Chartism or democracy, has always had its little men. It is intrinsically a little ambition which inspires its followers: they would have all men level: all equally little: all little as themselves. Their natural representative is Cuffey. (The history of this man may be found in The Times.) The little Cuffey was born in humble life: so are all little men: it is a remarkable and peculiar trait of little men: in body (He was a tailor and therefore only the ninth part of a man, as everyone knows) he was little, in mind, less: his wife took in washing: he gloried in making the fact public: could anything be littler? One fact shows the profound littleness of this man: he declared in public; 'I gave my wife leave to take in washing! Leave! No doubt his wife boxed his ears for it afterwards: it was a fitting reward for such littleness. His little seditious attempts had little effect: he and his littleness were transported.

Ah! little, little man!"

Schoolboy wit, of course; not to be taken seriously, but it passed the Archdeacon's censorship whereas there is no sign of theology or mention of Church matters in the Umbrella.

Mathematics, on the other hand, crept back into his fantasy-world in the form of two "Difficulties," both of which concern time. One is merely an ingenious riddle: which is more useful, a clock which is right only once a year, or a clock which is right twice a day? As the second clock is stopped, the first, surprisingly enough, is the more useful.

The other "difficulty" is called "A Hemispherical Problem," or "Where Does the Day Change its Name?"

"Half of the world, or nearly so, is always in the light of the sun: as the world turns round, this hemisphere of light shifts round too, and passes over each part of it in succession.

"Supposing on Tuesday it is morning at London; in another hour it would be Tuesday morning at the west of England; if the whole world were land, we might go on tracing Tuesday Morning, Tuesday Morning all the way round, till in twenty-four hours we get to London again. But we know that at London, twenty-four hours after Tuesday morning, it is Wednesday morning. Where, then, in its passage round the earth, does the day change its name? Where does it lose its identity?"

This is a real problem the practical answer to which is: "The International Date-line," though Sandford Fleming did not

suggest the "time zones" we use today until 1878.<sup>1</sup>

To young Dodgson it suggested nonsense, a kind of make-believe world with absurd laws of its own. A line might be fixed, on one side of which it would be Tuesday and on the other, Wednesday. (The Date Line is now bent to avoid just this farcical state of affairs.) The position of the people on the line is noted as ambiguous and the only other possibility - that everybody should be allowed to choose what day it is for themselves - dismissed as impracticable.

But there is a query here as to the nature of time, which opens up vast fields of speculation. For example, he suggests that unless a line were fixed, "there would be no distinction at all between each successive day, and no week, month, etc., so that we should have to say, 'The Battle of Waterloo happened today, about two million hours ago.'"

Note that 'today.' The familiar divisions of time which we take for granted, have disappeared and we are in a strange, new world, dayless, weekless, monthless, really timeless.

With a sigh, he gives it up, reduces it to the level of a nursery rhyme:

"If all the world were apple pie  
And all the sea were ink  
And all the trees were bread and cheese,  
What should we have to drink?"

Here already, the product of a mind only seventeen years of age, is a new approach to reality, the approach he has taught us

1. See P. W. Wilson: "The Romance of the Calendar," pp. 305-307.

to regard as nonsense - that is to say something more profound than the sense of the workaday world.

On January 24th, 1851, Charles took up residence at Christ Church, where his father had been before him.

Only seven years previously, the University had been linked to the outside world by railway and still its walls and towers whispered, as Arnold said, the last enchantments of the Middle Age.

"On all sides, except where it touched the railway," writes Sir Edward Burne-Jones "the city came to an end abruptly as if a wall had been about it, and you came suddenly upon the meadows. There was little brick in the city; it was either grey with stone, or yellow with the wash of the pebble-cast in the poorer streets, where there were still many old houses with wood carving and a little sculpture here and there."

It was, in fact, a little like going into a monastery. Nevertheless it was a disturbed and shaken Oxford at which Charles Dodgson arrived.

"The least reflecting person," said Benjamin Jowett, then a mere tutor, "cannot fail to be aware that during the last twenty years a great change of opinion has taken place in this university and almost, it may be said, throughout the country. How far such changes of opinion may be the reawakening of a slumbering past, what reactions they may give birth to, whether they tend to further divisions or separations, to strengthen religion or the

contrary, is not necessary to enquire here ... Happening in this place they must exercise an undue influence over us." <sup>1</sup>

He was referring to the first Oxford Movement, which had so greatly stirred Charles Dodgson senior during his years at Daresbury and which was still having repercussions, though the main battle had been fought and lost before the younger Charles went to Rugby.

It was in a way the result of the Great Reform Bill of 1832, the year of our Charles Dodgson's birth. So long as Members of Parliament were drawn from good Anglican families they were content to leave Church government to the Bishops and Archbishops in the House of Lords. But the Parliament which met in 1833 was a reforming parliament and proceeded without delay to reform the Church of England.

Reform was actually needed. Not only were more than half the clergymen in England appointed by lay patrons, but a clergyman could hold a number of livings and put a miserably paid curate into each of the least desirable parishes. <sup>2</sup>

Within two years an Ecclesiastical Commission was set up, new bishoprics were created in Manchester and Ripon; it became illegal to hold two benefices more than a mile apart; canonries were suppressed and the funds thus obtained redistributed. When, later Archdeacon Dodgson became a Canon of Ripon Cathedral, he had to spend three months every year in residence at Ripon, his family moving with him.

1. In a sermon preached at Oxford, 1852 or 1853.

2. J. L. and B. Hammond: "The Age of the Chartists," p. 220.

The Church did not accept this lay interference without protest. On the contrary it reacted violently and from the start Oxford was the source of the resistance movement. On Sunday, July 14th, 1833, John Keble, Fellow of Oriel College and Professor of Poetry in the University of Oxford preached a sermon in which he pointed out that Parliament, whose members could now be of any denomination was taking upon itself the right to make laws for the Church. He also denied the implication that "the Apostolic Church" was merely "one sect among many."

In the same year appeared the first of the "Tracts for the Times" by John Newman which also insisted on "Apostolical Descent" and stated plainly "We must necessarily consider none to be really ordained who have not thus been ordained - " ordained that is by the laying on of hands transmitted directly from the Apostles themselves.<sup>2</sup> To this, Archdeacon Dodgson subscribed in his sermon of 1852.

For some time, and in some cases all the time, there was no thought of a return to Rome. On the contrary the claim made by Swift in the Tale of a Tub, that the English Church is as old as the Church of Rome was vigorously re-affirmed. In fact it might be said that there was much concern about the Church of Rome and speculation as to the exact point at which it had left the original, only-true-begotten Church of England.

But in 1841, Newman carried his interest in the Primitive

1. John Keble: "Advertisement to the 'National Apostasy considered in a Sermon'."

2. Tract No. 1, p. 2.

Church one step too far and attacked the Thirty-nine Articles, subscription to which was still a condition of attendance at both Oxford and Cambridge. He first quoted the words of the article: "The Romish doctrine concerning purgatory, pardons, etc., is a fond thing (res est futilis) vainly invented and grounded upon no warranty of scripture, but rather repugnant to the Word of God."<sup>1</sup>

Next he pointed out that it was only the Romish doctrine on these points which was condemned in the Articles, not for instance the Calvinistic doctrine; nor the Primitive doctrine.

The way lay open to a return to long-forgotten practices and beliefs. The Thirty-nine Articles, the defence-system of English Protestantism had been by-passed.

Logically the case was unanswerable. As Gladstone wrote to Lord Lyttelton, it was "an abc truth."<sup>2</sup>

But the reaction was immediate and violent. Protests within the University led to a sensational press campaign, censure of the Tract and Newman's withdrawal from Oxford. Moreover Tract XC was not merely the last tract but the end of the Tractarian Movement as a single-minded Anglican revival.<sup>3</sup>

In future there were two camps; those like Dr Pusey on whom leadership of the High Church party at Oxford devolved and those like Ward who openly stated that he himself had subscribed to the Thirty-Nine Articles with the mental reservation that he

1. Tract XC, Section 6.

2. Morley: Life of Gladstone, Vol. I, p. 306.

3. Letters of J. H. Newman, Vol. II, pp. 327-334; Life of Stanley, Vol. I, p. 291-292.



none-the-less considered Rome the true church.

On February 13th, 1845 Ward and Newman appeared before Convocation to answer a charge which amounted to heresy and though only Ward was censured and "degraded" both seceded to the Church of Rome and were followed by numerous other converts.

These were the events to which Benjamin Jowett referred in his sermon delivered soon after Dodgson's arrival at Oxford. As he darkly hinted, reactions did take place and Jowett himself was to figure prominently in a new and fierce Oxford Movement in the opposite direction. For twenty years, Dodgson, the University and the English Church were to be "unduly influenced" and yet all three survived to breathe a more tranquil air.

Altogether, Dodgson spent forty-seven years at Christ Church, and this was by no means a record. Christ Church was like that. Meantime he had to find his feet and whatever may be thought of an upbringing in which all but four years were spent entirely at home, it was certainly a big advantage to follow a distinguished father to Christ Church.

One of the canons, Dr Jelf, author of a work on "Confession and Ritualism", wrote to the Archdeacon: "I am sure I express the common feeling of all who remember you at Christ Church when I say that we shall rejoice to see a son of yours worthy to tread in your footsteps," and it was no doubt on his father's account that one of the tutors, the Rev. J. Lew offered him one of his

1. *Life of Jowett*, Vol. I pp. 93, 94.

Wilberforce voted for the degradation of Ward, Gladstone against. See *Ashwell's Life of Wilberforce*, Vol. I, p. 247.

own rooms. Otherwise he would have had to seek lodgings in the town, for the House was full to capacity.

The change from public school to University was much less marked in those days than at present. Dodgson was still in some danger of spending his time writing out impositions and indeed if he had been a little earlier might have had to bend over!

The arrangements in the great old Dining Hall, with its portraits of Henry VIII and Wolsey, whose Kitchen adjoins it, were feudal. The undergraduates were divided into Commoners, Gentlemen Commoners and Noblemen, or "Tufts," who ranked as Doctors by virtue of their blue blood, and occupied the High Table on the dais, while their tutors dined at the lower level.

Dodgson was a commoner. He dined in a mess of half a dozen men who had their own table. Dinner was served at five on pewter dishes and plates. He could have as much meat as he cared to cut off the joint for himself.

Attendance at chapel was compulsory but most undergraduates rose at the last moment and breakfasted after their devotions. Not so Charles Dodgson. He was in the habit of, "I will not say getting up, but of being called, at a quarter past six, and generally managing to be down soon after seven." He therefore breakfasted before chapel.

Moreover he worked late. One morning, having been up till after midnight the night before, he slept in and missed chapel

1. Thompson: "Life of Dean Liddell," pp. 135-137.

altogether. For this he expected an imposition, but the Prick-bills must have failed to notice his absence.

Nor was this surprising. "Old Christ Church men," says Thomson in his life of Liddell, "will remember the daily scene in Chapel in those ancient days; the choir cut off from the body of the Church by the heavy organ-screen; and within its narrow limits, the mob of undergraduates seated on rows of benches which faced westward, and crowded up against the altar rails; the high barrier of stalls concealing the view of the choir aisles; the 'Prick-bills' walking up and down pricking in the men on to their lists as they managed to identify them; the singing men and boys on 'surplice' prayer-days, bracketed out aloft under the shadow of the Norman arches, the men on one side, the boys on the other, the slovenly, undevotional service, whether English Prayers on Sundays and Holy Days or Latin Prayers on other occasions, when the sonorous tones of Lean Gaisford overpowered the responses of all other worshippers."

In a footnote Thomson adds: "Keys, the Dean's Verger, was stationed at the entrance to the choir, and kept a stout dog-whip, with which to belabour any dogs which - as not infrequently happened - followed their masters into Chapel. Keys lived in the south transept, and his beer store was in a cupboard just below the pew on the north side of the choir, in which the Deanery ladies sat." <sup>1</sup>

Big changes were due here and big changes were to take place, but not till Dodgson's undergraduate days were over.

A few days after he arrived at Christ Church, his mother died suddenly and Charles was called home to attend the funeral. This was a shattering blow at the outset of new and important experiences and though we have no record of the boy's feelings, none is really necessary. She was a charming and affectionate mother; home could never be the same again. There was nothing to do but work hard and carve out a career for himself.

The first rooms of his own were in Peckwater Quadrangle, "which," says Collingwood, "is annually the scene of a great bonfire on Guy Fawkes' Day, and generally speaking is not the best place for a reading man to live in."

Dodgson, however, was a reading man. In November of his second term at Oxford he won a Boulter Scholarship and the following year obtained First Class Honours in Mathematics and a second in Classical Moderations.

On Christmas Eve, 1852 he became a Student, on Dr Pusey's nomination. This meant that while he held the studentship he had to remain unmarried and that he would eventually take Holy Orders.

Morley tells us that in Gladstone's day, "the student-designate wrote a theme, read it out before the chapter, passed a nominal, or even farcical examination in Homer and Virgil, was elected as a matter of course by the Chapter, and after Chapel on the morning of Christmas Eve, having taken several

oaths, was formally admitted in the name of the Holy Trinity." <sup>4</sup>

As Dean Gaisford welcomed both Gladstone and Dodgson into their studentships, the ceremony was probably unchanged. Archdeacon Dodgson wrote his son a letter of congratulation in which he quotes Dr Pusey's letter to him.

"I have great pleasure in telling you that I have been enabled to recommend your son for a Studentship this Christmas. It must be so much more satisfactory to you that he should be nominated thus, in consequence of the recommendation of the College. One of the Censors brought me today five names; but in their minds it was plain that they thought your son on the whole the most eligible for the College. It has been very satisfactory to hear of your son's uniform, steady, and good conduct."

In any case it was Dr Pusey's turn to nominate a student; it was characteristic of the Archdeacon that he had written to Dr Pusey asking him not to nominate Charles unless he deserved it.

No particular work was expected of a Student, but he had certain duties including that of becoming a "prick-bill" in the Chapel. He had to prick his own name in in the mornings and one October morning in 1853 he forgot to do so. For this omission, he and his fellow prick-bills, seven in number, had to write out two hundred lines apiece.

Dodgson could scarcely be unaware of the important events

1. *Life of Gladstone*, Vol. I, p. 50.

which had taken place in the city and university so shortly before his time. No doubt he could have identified the spot where Ward measured his length in the snow when he emerged, "degraded," from the Sheldonian Theatre, "his papers flying in every direction." <sup>1.</sup>

And an event which took place in his first year at Oxford must have given an added zest to the celebrations on Guy Fawkes Day, when the bonfire was lit in Peckwater Quadrangle outside his rather unsuitable chambers. This was the so-called "Papal Aggression."

On 7th October, 1850, Dr Wiseman, newly created Cardinal and appointed Archbishop of Westminster, had issued his famous pastoral or manifesto in which he looked forward to the "restoration of Catholic England to its orbit in the ecclesiastical firmament."

The effect of this document when its contents became known in England, was like that of a declaration of war. By the time Wiseman reached England, the country had worked itself into a state in which his life was considered unsafe.

Like the Oxford Movement it excited everybody, as Purcell said, "from the Prime Minister and the Lord Chancellor down to the street-boy, who chalked up "No Popery" on the walls. "Punch featured a caricature of the Prime Minister as just such a street-boy who had chalked up "No Popery" and taken to his heels." <sup>2.</sup>

Lord John Russell's government introduced the Ecclesiastical

1. *Life and Letters of Dean Church*, pp. 55-57.

2. *Life of Manning*, Vol. I, p. 576.

Titles Bill to allay public anxiety and Gladstone made one of his most impressive speeches against it at its second reading in March 1851. He defended the earnest desire of the lay Catholics of this country for diocesan bishops as against vicars apostolic and was heard by a spell-bound house which nevertheless passed the bill by an overwhelming majority. <sup>4</sup>

A month later Henry Edward Manning, one of the remaining leaders of the High Church party and an old Oxford man seceded to the Church of Rome.

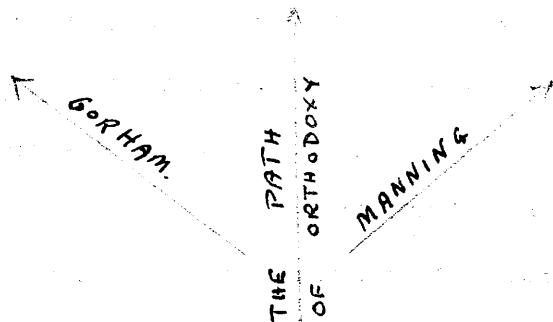
In the previous July, while Dodgson had been at home, a controversy had arisen which illustrates a tendency in the opposite direction. The Rev. G. C. Gorham had expressed disbelief in one of the principal High Church dogmas, namely "baptismal regeneration", and the Bishop of Exeter refused to instal him as vicar of Brampton Speke. The Privy Council overturned this decision and this assertion of the Crown's right to decide Church matters was resented not only by Manning but by the Rev. Charles Dodgson.

The latter preached against it at the time and again in 1852 when he defined his own and incidentally his son's attitude to extreme views on both sides.

"Instead of being drawn nearer to the rule of the Reformed Church, as the common and rightful arbiter of their differences the contending parties seemed simultaneously to take a step back

1. *Life of Gladstone*, Vol. I, p. 410.

from it; and thus necessarily to increase the distance from each other. "This mathematical illustration might well have been accompanied by a graph showing the Rev. Charles Dodgson in a central position and pursuing a straight course, while H. E. Manning diverged to the right and G. C. Gorham to the left.



"'Romanism' was the cry of one, 'must be cast out. Our church retains far too much of its principle.' 'Catholicism,' said the other, 'must be maintained. Our Church is far too little imbued with its spirit.'...

"Each desired in his own way to reform the Reformation. And when many on the one side had been drawn away from our communion with that of Rome, and many on the other had become Dissenters in all but the name, it was seen with how much more wisdom and foresight the Church had herself already determined the boundary lines, which they had, by the aid of their own judgment, sought to mark out afresh."

This sermon occasioned some comment and the Archdeacon found himself accused of the "Romeward tendencies," which had eventually taken Newman and Manning out of the Church of England altogether.



In his reply, an open "Letter to the Lord Bishop of Ripon," he defined his attitude to Baptism, Absolution and above all, Holy Communion; but the High Church doctrine of the Real Presence is not easily explained. We are not to take the words in their literal sense nor yet are we to regard them as figurative: "the language both of the Scripture and of the Church is to be regarded as purely mysterious, not as metaphorical."

These words are nonsensical.

Nevertheless, the Archdeacon knew what he meant by them.

Newman in Tract XC had found a weakness not merely in the Thirty-Nine Articles but in the whole fabric of common sense, on which had been founded the scientific and mathematical orthodoxy of the nineteenth century.

"The truth is, we do not at all know what is meant by distance or intervals absolutely, any more than we know what is meant by absolute time."

He was not by any means the first to express such doubts. The little problem of "Achilles and the Tortoise" raises the question of intervals and Berkeley in his "New Theory of Vision" (1709) had pointed out that we judge size mainly by the sense of touch: "the judgments we make of the magnitudes of objects by sight are altogether in reference to their tangible extension." He added that a pure intelligence, with a sense of vision but no sense of touch would be quite unable to imagine a solid object,

or to prove the congruence of triangles, or even, he thought, to imagine a plane figure since this too involves the idea of distance. In fact he questioned the absolute truth of Euclidean geometry.

Newman, in Tract XC, admittedly with an axe to grind, does exactly the same thing.

"Our measure of distance is our hand or our foot; but as an object a foot off is not called distant, though the interval is indefinitely divisible; neither need it be distant either, after it has been multiplied indefinitely. Why should the perceptions of our eyes or our ears be the standard of presence or distance?"

Like young Dodgson he questioned the nature of time and it is odd to find him grappling (unconvincingly it may be said) with "late discoveries in geology" which he thought "make it probable that time may under circumstances go indefinitely faster or slower than it does at present; or in other words, that indefinitely more may be accomplished in a given portion of it. What Moses calls a day, geologists wish to prove to be thousands of years."

He concluded that we might be "close to the throne of God, though we seem far from it, "and that in 'things spiritual' a transit through space was not a necessary condition of approach and presence." The condition is unknown. He gives as an example, the appearance of Christ to St. Paul on his conversion.

Another interesting idea Newman expressed was that man might have more than five senses. He pointed out that a fly might be near a building and yet the building would not be present to the fly because it could not see it, while it would be present to the man who could. Similarly, Newman thought, the soul might be capable of having Christ present to it by the stimulating of dormant, or the development of possible energies."

There is no doubt that the Archdeacon had read Tract XC; no doubt that he would be interested in these mathematical or quasi-mathematical ideas, some of which may well have been familiar to him already. There is also very little doubt that he would discuss these ideas with his eldest son, himself a mathematician of promise.

To a thoughtful person such questions are real, in a way more real than business or politics. Charles Dodgson the elder peered into this no-man's land between mathematics and religion but in the long run held to the doctrines, Articles and formularies of the Church of England, as his bishop said of him, "in their plain, obvious and grammatical sense."

Charles Dodgson, the younger, was extremely unlikely to do that and there is proof that later he had opinions of his own on all these matters. It is impossible to say just when he became interested - the time could have been as early as 1845 when he was thirteen or as late as 1852 when he was twenty. But it could

1. Tract XC, pp. 53-57.

scarcely be later than that.

Meantime he was a prick-bill in the "Chapel" and no doubt suitably impressed by the extraordinary powers of Dean Gaisford. The Christ Church "Chapel" was the cathedral of the diocese of Oxford but the Bishop of Oxford had no authority in it. Young Dodgson must often have seen Bishop Wilberforce slipping unobtrusively into his stall as if he were an interloper.

Nevertheless, though no match for Dean Gaisford, Samuel Wilberforce was a great churchman. It was "Soapy Sam" who revived the Convocation of the Clergy as a counterblast to the reforming House of Commons. His idea was to take the affairs of the Church out of the control of Parliament and set up a rival constitution with an upper and lower house of its own and despite all obstacles and setbacks that is what he did accomplish.

In 1852 Convocation met for the first time in a century and a half, and registered a protest against the recent Papal Aggression on the grounds that Cardinal Wiseman had denied the existence of the English branch of the Catholic Church. The public suspected nothing for the Bishop of Oxford took good care to "keep all asleep" until as he wrote in his diary, the stone he had so hardly rolled uphill had begun to roll over. <sup>1</sup>

What did they think of each other, these two intensely self-centred individuals? Could Dodgson as he pricked in the names know anything of the suave, ubiquitous, really formidable Wilberforce, with his seat in the House of Lords, his meetings

1. Daniel: "Bishop Wilberforce," h. 123.

with Gladstone and the pundits of the press, his genius for getting his own way. The Bishop could scarcely be expected to notice a slim, good-looking undergraduate with an anxious face and list of names in his hand.

For the next two years Dodgson worked hard but in view of the examination results of 1854 must have followed his mathematical bent almost to the exclusion of all other subjects.

It is true that for three weeks before "Greats" he slogged thirteen hours a day at philosophy (mainly Aristotle) and history and all night before the viva voce but these are the signs of neglect, not interest and he finished as might be expected in the third class.

How different was the result in the Final Mathematical School when he obtained First Class Honours and topped the list!

It was in preparation for this crucial test that Dodgson went to Whitby in the summer of 1854. The Rev. Bartholomew Price was in charge of this Mathematical Reading Party, when, according to Mr Walter de la Mare, who quotes Dr. Paget, (later Dean of Christ Church and a life-long friend of Dodgson's) the story of Alice's Adventures "was first 'incubated' by Dodgson, then only twenty-two, to amuse a circle of eager youngsters of both sexes."

Neither Mr Walter de la Mare nor I can find the source of this information but the hint is worth examining, were it no more than a guess, and I feel sure that it is much more. Price, author of a massive treatise on the Differential Calculus (published 1849)

1. Walter de la Mare: "Lewis Carroll," p. 49.

was then working at a still more monumental work on the Infinitesimal Calculus. No doubt he discussed with his students the Statics and Dynamics of Particles and other fascinating topics and it would be quite like at least one of his pupils to turn this material to account in its amusing aspects when entertaining children on the beach as it was his life-long habit to do.

If so, there is one part of Alice in Wonderland which may well date from as early as 1854, namely the Fall of Alice.

Dodgson says he sent his heroine down the rabbit-hole without the slightest idea of what was to become of her. It was, however, no ordinary rabbit-hole. It went straight on like a tunnel for some way and then dipped suddenly down.

"Down, down, down. Would the fall never come to an end? 'I wonder how many miles I've fallen by this time?' she said aloud. 'I must be getting somewhere near the centre of the earth. Let me see; that would be four thousand miles down, I think ..... yes, that's about the right distance - but then I wonder what latitude or longitude I've got to?'"

The story passes smoothly on, leaving this odd question unanswered.

"I wonder if I shall fall right through the earth! How funny it'll seem to come out among the people that walk with their heads downwards. The antipathies, I think - "

"Down, down, down."

It is, of course, not a real problem in dynamics, but it is suspiciously like one. If there were a shaft right through the centre of the earth and you, a small child on the beach at Whitby fell down it, what would happen to you? Would you stop at the centre and if so would you slow down or bounce to a standstill or would you go right on to the 'antipathies'?

Nonsense! There is no such well, could be no such fall, no happy landing at the centre - for that is where he decided Alice must end her fall unharmed: "thump! thump! down she came upon a heap of dry leaves, and the fall was over."

This part of the story is not really necessary at the place where it occurs. Alice could perfectly well have followed the White Rabbit down into the long low hall with its glass table, little curtained door and gold key, without falling or thinking of falling four thousand miles. But, as will be seen in due course, the Mad Hatter's Watch could not possibly be two days out unless she had accomplished this long and interesting descent.

It is at all events a reasonable conjecture that sometime during that Mathematical Reading Party, Dodgson found some children on the beach, perhaps digging a deep hole in the sand. He drew them into conversation and partly for his own amusement, partly for theirs, partly no doubt for that of his companions if any were present, bewildered and charmed them by questions and answers, which took them into a world of fantasy and make-belief, the more

fascinating because it was more than half serious.

In the following year Alice Liddell, arrived at Christ Church, but there is reason to believe that at least one of her adventures was there before her. And unknown to either story-teller or heroine, others were in preparation.

During this period of intense activity on planes of thought he received from three sons of the average undergraduate son of a clergyman and for Charles Dodgson. He was finished with examinations. And, wisely at first, but over an over-extended field, he became aware of the world in which he had to make his way.

On February 11th, 1880, he was made a sub-librarian of Christ Church. "This," he noted in his diary, "will add to my income, and much towards independence." On March 14th he was elected to the post. "The Dean and Canon have been pleased to elect me one of the Bodleian scholarships, said to be worth £40 a year, and I have nearly raised my income this year to independence."

October brought a new friend, Alice Liddell in whose



## CHAPTER II

### THE LITTLE LOW DOOR

The life of an undergraduate who takes examinations seriously is strange, under-surface, self-centred. He is conscious of the outside world but it has little reality for him. He is rather like the sick man in "The Convalescent" by Charles Lamb. "He understands not what the callings and occupations of mortals are; only he has a glimmering conceit of some such thing."

Now this period of intense activity on planes of thought far removed from those even of the average undergraduate was coming to an end for Charles Dodgson. He was finished with examinations. And, dimly at first, but over an ever-widening field, he became aware of the world in which he had to live and through which he had to make his way.

On February 13th, 1855, he was made a Sub-librarian of Christ Church. "This," he noted in his Diary, "will add £35 to my income; not much towards independence." On March 14th he was able to add, "The Dean and Canons have been pleased to give me one of the Bostock scholarships, said to be worth £20 a year - this very nearly raises my income this year to independence. Courage."

October brought a new Dean, Dean Liddell in whose honour Dodgson was made a Master of the House - that is, given the privileges of a Master of Arts within the walls of Christ Church

and by this time he was certain of a Lectureship in the following term and had already begun taking private pupils.

His thoughts in the closing hours of 1855 were as pleasant as any he ever had. "I am sitting alone in my bedroom," he wrote, "this last night of the old year, waiting for midnight. It has been the most eventful year of my life: I began it a poor bachelor student," (Bachelor of Arts, he meant) "with no definite plans or expectations; I end it a master and tutor in Ch. Ch., with an income of more than £300 a year, and the course of mathematical tuition marked out by God's providence for at least some years to come."

But the concluding sentence is rather odd: "Great mercies, great failings, time lost, talents misapplied - such has been the past year." Perhaps he was mentally "touching wood" in case fortune had been too good to him.

Apart from his oral invention on the beach at Whitby in 1854, if indeed this incident took place, Dodgson had apparently contributed a poem and a prose article to the "Whitby Gazette" and these, together with two lost poems in the "Oxonian Advertiser" were the first of a considerable number of such odd pieces which he sent to various periodicals in the next few years.

None of these is of much intrinsic value but several are of great interest. In 1855, Edmund Yates started the "Comic Times" one of the host of rivals which "Punch" though constantly said to

be not what it was, has somehow managed to survive. To this Dodgson contributed his "Tema con Variazioni," beginning,

"I never loved a dear gazelle

Nor anything that cost me much,"

which is as clever a piece of flippancy as even Oxford has ever produced. As in his footnotes to the "Rectory Umbrella," the humour consists in reading into the words of the original meanings not intended by the author.

In the same year he concocted the famous first verse of "Jabberwocky," and copied it into "Mischmasch" with explanations of the 'words' which differ considerably from those offered by Humpty Dumpty in "Through the Looking-glass." The title of the 1855 version is "Stanza of Anglo-Saxon Poetry" and the spelling is suitably archaic: "'Twas bryllig and ye slithy toves." Sometime later he added the remaining stanzas but the first verse had to wait sixteen years for publication.

Another of the poems in "Through the Looking-glass," the White Knight's mournful ballad, appeared in "The Train," which Yates started in 1856 as a successor to the "Comic Times." It was a parody on Wordsworth's "Resolution and Independence" and much closer to the original than the "Looking-glass" version. For the "Train" Dodgson produced his famous pseudonym, "Lewis Carroll" out of his own christian names, Charles Lutwidge.

Dodgson's best work at this time was of the nature of parody

and burlesque. As a serious poet, and some of his poems were serious, he was never more than a very minor romantic, whereas in "Tema con Variazioni" he achieves perfection with no apparent effort and in "'Twas bryllyg" had already composed his most original verse of poetry.

Two further parodies of 1856 deserve to be noticed. "The Three Voices," a parody on Tennyson's "The Two Voices," establishes his interest in that great man whom he was soon to meet and "Hiawatha's Photographing" caricatures his own experiences as an amateur photographer.

The publication in 1950 of "Lewis Carroll, Photographer" by Helmut Gernsheim renders it unnecessary here to say much about his expensive and at that time almost unknown hobby. He learned it from his Uncle Skeffington and from a fellow student at Christ Church, Reginald Southey but despite the heart-breaking difficulties and disappointments of the wet-plate collodion process soon left both his instructors far behind.<sup>1</sup> The very difficulties and complications appealed to him and it was characteristic of one who had earlier indulged in amateur conjuring that he should now be producing pictures out of a hooded rosewood box.

He used his camera as an introduction to two kinds of people whose acquaintance he valued, celebrities and children, approaching the former through the latter and prepared, if necessary to

1. Helmut Gernsheim: "Lewis Carroll, Photographer," pp. 35-37.

photograph undistinguished parents in order to obtain attractive children as models.

It was a period of trial and error, in prose and verse, as well as with collodion and silver-nitrate, for his early professional writings are by no means all successful. Some are adolescent, some trivial, some clever-clever. They were addressed to an adult public with which Dodgson was never entirely at home. Still, they were not time wasted or talents misapplied. He was learning how not to write.

Meantime, the new Dean had embarked upon that process of reconstruction which beginning with the Deanery was to transform the entire precincts of Christ Church. For the next twenty years, the "relentless reformer" as Dodgson called him was restoring the Cathedral, rebuilding the belfry and digging up the drains in Tom Quad.

Nor were his reforms entirely architectural. While still Headmaster of Westminster School, Liddell had been a member of the first University Commission which had recommended sweeping changes at Oxford and Cambridge. On behalf of Christ Church, Dean Gaisford had resisted the work of the Commission by the simple process of not replying to its communications. Now Liddell was Dean and the old order reluctantly gave way before him.

"I have done what I could towards retaining the old Christ Church," wrote Dr Pusey in 1858. "Fuit Ilium. The Commissioners with yourself and Dr Jacobson will be responsible for the new.

*1. Life of Liddell, p. 128.*

I shall be very glad if the Commissioners' plan should work better than I hope of it." <sup>1</sup>

And yet the Ordinance of 1858 beyond reducing the number of Canons from eight to six and abolishing the private nomination of studentships, changed little. It took a separate Act of Parliament, the Christ Church Oxford Act of 1867 to get the tufts out of the top table and admit the educational staff to a share in the administration of the House.

Long before that, however, the Dean had swept old Keys out of the Cathedral, dog whip, beer and all and, after extensively altering the building, reopened it to the general public. Dodgson scarcely knew what to make of it all. Many of the Dean's proposals were bound to improve his own standing at Christ Church and, when carried out, actually did so. But he had liked things slack and quaint, governed by use and wont rather than by reason. On the whole his sympathies were with the departed Dean Gaisford, with Dr Pusey and the old guard.

His political opinions after wavering slightly in the year 1856 set permanently conservative. He had been reading Charles Kingsley's "Alton Locke" and was briefly stirred by the social plight of the industrial masses and even by the possibility of doing something to improve matters. "If the book were but a little more definite," he wrote, "it might stir up many fellow-workers in the same good field of social improvement. Oh that God

*1. Life of Liddell, p. 143.*

in His good providence, may make me hereafter such a worker!. But alas, what are the means? Each one has his own nostrum to propound, and in the Babel of voices nothing is done. I would thankfully spend and be spent so long as I were sure of really effecting something by the sacrifice, and not merely lying down under the wheels of some irresistible Juggernaut."

Dodgson was not of the stuff of which reformers are made and in this he may have been a little unfortunate, for it was the Juggernaut of reform which was now irresistible and despite the Babel of voices (in which his own can occasionally be distinguished) ~~for~~ more was done than he could have wished.

He was, however, preoccupied with his own progress financial and academic, for he soon realised that there was no real future in free-lance journalism. His talent was not that of producing facile, readable articles and poems in bulk. On the contrary, everything he wrote bears the mark of careful workmanship and when success, commercial as well as artistic, did come with "Alice's Adventures," it came as the result of a long process of development, which can be traced in detail. In his first years of independence he was independent and no more.

It was in 1855 that his father had written him a letter full of sound, worldly-wise advice.

"I will just sketch for you a supposed case, applicable to your own circumstances, of a young man of twenty-three, making up

his mind to work for ten years, and living to do it, on an Income enabling him to save £150 a year - supposing him to appropriate it thus:-

Invested at 4 per cent .....	£ 100: -: -
Life Insurance of £1500 .....	29:15: -
Books besides those bought in ordinary course .....	<u>20: 5: -</u>
	£ 150: -: -

Suppose him at the end of the ten years to get a living enabling him to settle, what will be the result of his savings?

1. A nest egg of £1,200 ready money, for furnishing and other expenses.

2. A sum of £1,500 secured at his death, on payment of a very much smaller annual Premium than if he had then begun to insure it.

3. A useful library, worth more than £200, besides the books bought out of his current income during the period ... "

By a "living", the Archdeacon meant a Vicarage or Rectory like his own. That Dodgson did consider the Church as an eventual mode of earning a livelihood, to put it no higher than that, there is no doubt. The chief obstacle at this time, that is, in the later 1850's, was his stammer, and sometime between 1857 and 1859 he made an attempt to have this cured.

Greville Macdonald tells us that his father the Scottish novelist and poet, George Macdonald, met Dodgson through a



certain Dr. James Hunt, who had "some distinction as a philologist, but more as a curer of stammering" and that Dodgson was one of his patients." The attempt failed. To the end of his days Dodgson stammered though he learned to make his impediment give point to an anecdote.

There were other reasons why he was unwilling to embark upon the career. His talents were at once more specialised and less scholarly than those of his father and at this time it probably seemed to him that his future must be bound up with his best subject, namely mathematics.

Again there was a reluctance to commit himself to the very strict rule imposed by custom on those who took priest's orders. He liked the theatre, saw nothing wrong in play-going and was determined not to give it up.

It is also certain that his orthodoxy, derived from his father, was seriously undermined by doubts and speculations then very much in the minds of thinking people.

In 1857 he met Tennyson and probably in the same year George Macdonald each of whom beginning from a different orthodoxy had modified his religious views very considerably. Macdonald, starting from the plain Calvinism of the Congregational Church in Aberdeenshire had freed himself from much that was harsh and gloomy, and without losing his faith in God had won through to toleration and humour. When Dodgson met him he had published one long poem and a volume of short pieces. He was at work on

1. Greville Macdonald: "George Macdonald and his Wife," p. 301.

"Phantastes," the story of an allegorical and impossible quest, described in the sub-title as "A Faerie Romance for Men and Women." His later success came with his novels of Scottish life, beginning with "David Elginbrod" in 1862.

Tennyson, on the other hand, was like Dodgson himself the son of an English Church clergyman. As early as 1830 he had begun apologetically to express his doubts in the "Supposed Confessions of a Second-Rate Sensitive Mind," in which he stated his life-long belief: "It is man's privilege to doubt." Twelve years later he developed his ideas more adequately in the "Two Voices," which Dodgson parodied in his "Three Voices."<sup>2</sup>

The fullest expression which he gave to all the doubts and speculations of the age was in "In Memorium, A.H.H., 1850" which is in its very formlessness and incoherence the best reflection of a young man's mind in this period. It is clear that Tennyson was much impressed by what Newman had called "the recent discoveries in geology," and also by the "Vestiges of Creation" published anonymously by Robert Chambers in 1844. Of this forthright attack on the Book of Genesis, Tennyson wrote: "It seems to contain many speculations with which I have been familiar for years, and on which I have written more than one poem."<sup>1</sup>

Tennyson did not, however, abandon his Anglican beliefs. On the contrary after trying himself with all the philosophies, religions and scepticisms he found himself sadly but incurably

2. *The Train*, Vol. II, h.h. 278-84 (Nov. 1856).

1. Amy Cruse: "The Victorians and their Books," h. 87.

optimistic.

"I can but trust that good will fall  
At last - far off - at last to all  
And every winter change to spring."

Man might be a fallen angel or an ascending brute but the  
way lay upward:

"Arise and fly  
The reeling Fawn, the sensual feast;  
Move upward, working out the beast,  
And let the ape and tiger die."

Dodgson first met Tennyson in September 1857, at Tent Lodge, Coniston, where he called on the strength of having photographed the daughter of Tennyson's sister-in-law.<sup>1</sup> He readily obtained permission to photograph the children and eventually took the Laureate himself sitting bolt upright with a book on his knee. It is a sombre photograph. Nevertheless, Dodgson liked the "strange, shaggy-looking man," finding him "kind and friendly ... a dry, lurking humour in his style of talking."<sup>2</sup>

On one visit, the conversation turned upon the fall of Man and Tennyson remarked that the monkey's skull was not merely similar to the human, but showed a parallel development - downwards. A young monkey's skull, he said, is quite human in shape and gradually alters, while the human skull is at first more like

1. Helmut Gernsheim, *ib.* 41-42.

2. *Coll.* h.69.

the statues of the gods. Then, turning to Mrs Tennyson, he exclaimed: "There, that's the second original remark I've made this evening."

Some time later Dodgson found himself at Freshwater in the Isle of Wight - it must have been in the easter vacation of 1859 - and called upon Tennyson whom he found "mowing his lawn in a wideawake and spectacles." In a letter to his cousin William he found it necessary to defend himself against a charge of running after the Laureate and certainly Tennyson did not remember him.

However, young Hallam Tennyson did, and there were the photographs, framed and hanging on the wall. Invitations to tea, dinner and lunch followed and at one of these Dodgson heard the poet growl out to a shy, nervous clergyman that the clergy would do more good if they were less stuck-up. "'What they want,' he said, 'is force and geniality - geniality without force will, of course, do no good, but force without geniality will do very little.' All very sound theology to my thinking. This was up in the little smoking-room to which we had adjourned after tea and where we had about two hours' very interesting talk."

At dinner the following evening, Tennyson told them that he often dreamed long passages of poetry. 'You, I suppose,' he said turning to Dodgson, 'dream photographs.'<sup>2</sup> To a mathematical don and literary aspirant the apparent rudeness of that remark is

1. Coll. p. 71.

2. Handbook, p. 195.

breath-taking. Dodgson saw no harm in it, and probably Tennyson meant none for he sincerely admired Dodgson's photographs.

For Dodgson's part, he and his sisters knew "In Memoriam" better than most people, for in 1862 they published an index to it. To conclude from this that Dodgson shared Tennyson's doubts may be unsafe but the influence of the poet was in any case steadying rather than otherwise for he admitted that his doubts were no more than doubts. Like George MacDonald he accepted the fact that the human reason is limited.

"Behold we know not anything."

In view of Darwin's much more positive assertions, before whose impact the church reeled, it was comforting to remember that. It might be true that there was nothing completely new in the "Origin of Species" which was published in November, 1859, but unlike the "Vestiges of Creation" it could not be dismissed as unscientific and it was horribly convincing.

"Therefore a man should examine for himself the great piles of superimposed strata and watch the rivulets bringing down mud and the waves wearing away the sea-cliffs in order to comprehend something about the duration of past time, the monuments of which we see all about us." <sup>1</sup>

A monstrous vista of time opened up, time for all the varied species of earth to evolve, planlessly it seemed "by natural selection" from a common ancestor of the simplest possible

1. Darwin: *Origin*, p. 266.

description. There was not even room for Lamarck's "law of progressive development," nothing but blind chance and the struggle for survival.

"When we reflect on this struggle," said Darwin, "we may console ourselves with the full belief that the war of nature is not incessant, that no fear is felt, that death is generally prompt and that the vigorous, the healthy and the happy survive and multiply."

Among those who were not consoled by this reflection we must number Charles Lutwidge Dodgson and Samuel Wilberforce, Bishop of Oxford. Even thirty years later Dodgson could never refer to Darwin without bitterness but, while he never accepted "natural selection" there is good reason to believe that he did cautiously adapt his attitude to the lower animals to suit the probability that we and they have a common ancestry. So far from accepting a universe without God or the soul he came to believe like Bishop Eutler that animals have souls, and more that insects, even flowers have souls and are quite literally God's creatures.

The reactions of Bishop Wilberforce were quite different. He began by reviewing Darwin's book in the "Quarterly," picking out with skill as Darwin commented, all the most conjectural parts and bringing forward all the difficulties. Darwin in the "Origin" does no more than hint at the inclusion of man in his

evolutionary theory. "Much light," he said, "will be thrown on the origin of man and his history."<sup>1</sup> The hint, however, was taken and "evolution" and "natural selection" filled newspapers, political speeches; sermons and the conversation of all educated people.

Was man an ape or an angel? The Church in 1860, like Disraeli in 1864, was on the side of the angels, or, as Mitchell puts it in his life of Thomas Henry Huxley, "the accredited defenders of religion gathered every force of argument, of misrepresentation, conscious and unconscious, of respectability and of prejudice, to crush once for all the obnoxious doctrine and its obnoxious supporters."<sup>2</sup>

Darwin, himself, was disinclined for argument and Huxley took his defence upon himself. At the meeting of the British Association in Oxford, 1860, there occurred the memorable clash between Huxley and Wilberforce which Dodgson may have witnessed and of which he certainly heard much at the time.

The meeting was to have been held in a lecture-room but the audience was so large that it had to be transferred to the library of the Museum and this was crammed to the doors.

The bishop was up to time," says Francis Darwin, "and spoke for full half-an-hour with inimitable spirit, emptiness and unfairness. He ridiculed Darwin badly and Huxley savagely, but all in such dulcet tones, so persuasive a manner and in such

1. Griggin, h. 428. "The Descent of Man" appeared in 1871.

2. Life of T. H. Huxley, h. 120.

well-turned periods, that I, who had been inclined to blame the President for allowing a discussion that could serve no scientific purpose, now forgave him from the bottom of my heart."

He ended by a jibe which brought Huxley to his feet. He asked Huxley whether he was related to an ape on his grandfather's or his grandmother's side. Huxley replied that a man had no reason to be ashamed of having an ape for his grandfather. He would feel more shame if he were descended from a man who tried to distort the truth by mere rhetoric and appeals to religious prejudice.

Francis Darwin may be allowed to provide a Miltonic close.

"There was a crowded conversazione in the evening at the rooms of the hospitable and genial Professor of Botany, Dr. Daubeny, where almost the sole topic was the battle of the 'Origin' and I was much struck with the fair and unprejudiced way in which the black coats and white cravats of Oxford discussed the question and the frankness with which they offered their congratulations to the winners in the combat."

The battle, however, was only beginning. In the same year as the meeting of the British Association at Oxford there was published a volume of "Essays and Reviews" by seven distinguished men, of whom Jowett, Pattison and Baden-Powell were noted figures at Oxford and Temple the Rector of Dodgson's old school and later Archbishop of Canterbury.

1. Francis Darwin: "Life and letters of Charles Darwin,"  
Vol. II pp. 321-323.



Temple's essay on "The Education of the World" was not controversial, merely suggesting that the classics and in fact all knowledge must be admitted to a place in forming our opinions and shaping our lives. He suffered, however, by his association with the other essayists who were all in varying degrees further to the left.

Jowett began quietly, urging that the appeal should always be to the Bible itself and not to the commentators, but as he proceeded ventured to question the Mosaic chronology and referred openly to the Darwinian theory: "while it is possible, and may one day be known that mankind spread not from one but from many centres over the globe, or as others say, that the supply of links which are at present wanting in the chain of animal life may tend to new conclusions respecting the origin of man."

That this contradicted the doctrine of the "Verbal Inspiration" of the scriptures caused Jowett no alarm. The word was "but of yesterday" nor was there any warrant for the doctrine in the Gospels or Epistles.

But even these were mild opinions compared to Goodwin's merciless exposure of the Mosaic cosmogony or Baden-Powell on the miracles.

After referring to Darwin's "Origin" as "A work which must soon bring about an entire revolution of opinion in favour of the grand principle of the self-evolving powers of nature," Baden-

Powell demands:

"If the most numerous ship's company were all to asservate that they had seen a mermaid, would any rational persons at the present day believe them? That they saw something which they believed to be a mermaid would be easily conceded."

Miracles were once the mainstay of Christianity; now they were an obstacle to its acceptance.

Goodwin compared the attitude of the Church to the recent geological discoveries with that of the Church of Rome to the opinions of Galileo. He quoted Galileo's recantation with eerie effect.<sup>2.</sup>

Mark Pattison called the movement "Rationalism" and defined it as "the growth and gradual diffusion through all religious thinking of the supremacy of reason."<sup>3.</sup>

Strangely enough, or so it seems today, the essays which caused most consternation were those by Henry Bristow Wilson, Vicar of GreatStaughton and Roland Williams, Vice-Principal of St. David's College, Lampeter. These challenged the doctrine of eternal punishment, which at that time was held to be in store not merely for evil-doers but for the non-Christian and pre-Christian races.

Dodgson himself did not accept the doctrine of eternal punishment and was therefore against the authorities on this the greatest point at issue. He was, however, against the publication

1. E. and R., p. 141.

3. E. and R., p. 259.

2. E. and R., p. 207

of "Essays and Reviews" as can be seen in a pamphlet which he published in 1865, "The New Theory of Evaluation."

In 1860, the controversy was too new and bitter for such a balanced view as he then expressed, and in any case he had fish of his own to fry.

This year saw the publication of two mathematical works by Dodgson, "A Syllabus of Plane Algebraical Geometry" and some "Notes on the First Two Books of Euclid," and the appearance of these in print was certainly important to him.

He also contributed a number of poems to "College Rhymes" which he edited for a time during the next three years. He published a set of rules for a card game, "Court Circular" and was extremely busy with his camera, though the Prince of Wales who had come to Christ Church in the previous year would not sit for him. A list of 159 photographs dates from about this time.

In 1860, too, he gave a lecture to the Ashmolean Society on the "Hemispherical Problem" which had puzzled and amused the readers of the "Rectory Umbrella" ten years earlier. Unfortunately the Ashmolean Society was at a very low ebb at this time and kept no records. On the other hand, if it had not been at a low ebb, Dodgson's lecture might not have been given. The Society had to compete with the more powerful Royal Society whose origins are somehow mixed up with its own and Professor Price seems to have taken his brilliant young protege along to amuse rather than to

enlighten a small and no doubt informal gathering. The lecture was never printed and probably never written down in the form in which it was then delivered, which is a pity, since it would scarcely be identical with the "Rectory Umbrella" version. The fact that he gave this lecture is, however, significant as it proves that he had not forgotten the problem, which indeed, according to Collingwood "cast a gloom over many a pleasant party."

Strangest of all products of this very important year in his life is the poem "Faces in the Fire" which he copied into "Mischmasch" in January, 1860 and which was printed in "Phantasmagoria" and reprinted after his death in "Three Sunsets." The faces that he saw in the fire were all of one person.

'Tis now a little childish form -  
Red lips for kisses pouted warm -  
And elf-locks tangled in the storm.

'Tis now a grave and gentle maid,  
At her own beauty half afraid,  
Shrinking and willing to be stayed.  
Oh, Time was young and Life was warm,  
When first I saw that fairy-form,  
Her dark hair tossing in the storm.

And fast and free these pulses played  
When last I met that gentle maid -  
When last her hand in mine was laid.

Those locks of jet are turned to grey,  
And she is strange and far away,  
That might have been mine own today.

That might have been mine own, my dear,  
Through many and many a happy year -  
That might have sat beside me here.

The race is o'er I might have run:  
The deeds are past I might have done;  
And seer the wreath I might have won.

Sunk is the last faint flickering blaze:  
This vision of departed days  
Is vanished even as I gaze.

The pictures with their ruddy light  
Are changed to dust and ashes white,  
And I am left alone with night.

It is to this poem that Collingwood refers when he says of  
"Three Sunsets":

"One cannot read this little volume without feeling that

the shadow of some disappointment lay over Lewis Carroll's life. Such I believe to have been the case, and it was this that gave him his wonderful sympathy with all who suffered. But those who loved him would not wish to lift the veil from those dead sanctities, nor could any purpose be served by doing so."

This extraordinary poem cannot be taken literally, for in 1860 Dodgson was only twenty-eight years of age and at the beginning, not the end of a career. If it was a mere literary exercise, it was a very strange one, showing a young man already reconciled to loneliness and obscurity. If on the other hand it was a passing mood which he expressed, it was a mood which was to recur.

There is, according to Langford Reed who had access to Dodgson's diaries and private papers, no evidence at all that he was ever in love with anybody and, says Mr Reed, "the testimony of various friends with whom he occasionally discussed intimate and personal questions, and whom I have interviewed, is to the same effect."<sup>2</sup> Miss F. Manella Dodgson, who now has the surviving diaries, agrees. And yet Collingwood knew something and could have told it if he had wished.

The lady, la femme inconnue, if she existed cannot have been very old when Dodgson was twenty-eight. The poem was to some extent an anticipation. Then, he had known her as "a little

1. Coll., p. 355.

2. Langford Reed: Lewis Carroll, p. 90.

childish form." She had been one of his child-friends.

In 1860, there was only one, Alice Liddell, and the facts speak louder than any opinion that she and she alone was his lost love, the withered rose in his filing-cabinet, the little ghost that was to come crying in the night to the windows of his bachelor-rooms in Tom Quad.

Dean Liddell did not occupy the Deanery until extensive alterations had been completed, but sometime in 1856 Dodgson must have met Mrs Liddell and the children. There were four at that time, a son and three daughters, of whom Alice was the second daughter.

Dodgson seems to have made friends with them at once, probably the more readily because the Dean was absent for health reasons in the island of Madeira during much of the winters of 1856-57 and 1857-58. In any case he was bound to see a good deal of them since the deanery is part of the great Christ Church group of buildings in which he himself lived.

From the first he "fell in love" with Alice who was born on 4th May, 1852 and therefore four years of age in 1856 and about seven and a half in 1860.<sup>1</sup> Seven and a half is her age in "Through the Looking-glass" and the photograph which he mounted on the last page of the first draft of Alice's Adventures, the "Under Ground" version, was taken in 1859. In 1885 he wrote to Alice Liddell, by then Mrs Reginald Hargreaves: "I have had

<sup>also</sup>  
1. Private letter from Sir F.F. Liddell. See Cornhill

Mag., July, 1932: "Alice's Recollections" by Caryl Hargreaves.

scores of child-friends since your time, but they have been quite a different thing." In 1891 he referred to her as "one whom I can scarcely picture as more than seven years of age."

"The Theatre" of April 1887 contains an article by Lewis Carroll on "'Alice' on the Stage." Here he says that he printed in manuscript and illustrated with his own crude designs the original story of "Alice's Adventures" to please a child I loved."

She was indeed a beautiful child, dark, vivacious, 'loving as a dog,' as he put it long afterwards. He photographed her in 1858 as a beggar-child and Tennyson thought this the most beautiful photograph he had ever seen.

Yes, he loved her as a child, but in 1860, she was a child still. If the poem "Faces in the Fire" is about Alice Liddell, and I have no doubt that it is, all the events are imaginary, <sup>those of</sup> but not imaginary in the sense that <sup>a</sup> purely literary exercise would be imaginary. He was looking forward in 1860, into his own life and in a moment of clarity or despondency saw it exactly as it happened, perhaps as he made it happen, perhaps as the Dean, or Mrs Liddell or Alice herself made it happen.

The odds were against him in 1860. He was twenty years older than Alice, with no prospect whatever of being able to support as a wife the daughter of his aristocratic Dean. It seems fantastically unlikely that a man in his late twenties should



renounce all intention of marrying because of a child not yet out of the nursery. That, however, is the conclusion forced upon us by the facts. "Faces in the Fire" may not have been true when he wrote it but it "came true."

Another problem began to worry him about this time. He knew that sooner or later if he was to keep his studentship, he must take orders and actually he had postponed the step as long as he could without exciting remark. It was not that he had lost faith but he had a very different conception of the Christian religion from those who were most vocal on the subject.

By this time Wilberforce was in full cry after the Essayists and Reviewers, first reviewing the book in the Quarterly and pooh-poohing it as all perfectly familiar and already discredited. That step accomplished he arranged for the publication of a book of "Replies to Essays and Reviews," in the Preface to which he denounced the Rationalist Movement as "a daring claim for the unassisted human intellect to be able to measure and explain all things."

In both these respects Dodgson agreed with him, or at any rate came to agree with him. In the "New Theory" he proved mathematically that there was no "novelty" in "Essays and Reviews". As to the human intellect, his religious training by his father had convinced him that it had its limits and mathematics, the oldest of the sciences, has, in this, always added its voice.

Moreover there were new and startling developments in mathematics during Dodgson's lifetime which, for those who knew of them, made the universe not more mechanical as the geologists and botanists seemed to think it ought to be, but more mysterious.

Arthur Cayley, for example, in 1843 invented a geometry of any finite number of dimensions and on the continent there were coming into existence geometries in which parallel lines met, in which there were no parallel lines; straight lines which were really great circles; in which the sum of the angles in a triangle might be greater or smaller than two right-angles; and these new geometries were held to be as true as that of Euclid. The gap first detected by Berkeley in the old mathematical orthodoxy was being steadily widened.

Again, Dodgson had come up to Christ Church under old Tractarian auspices and Newman had demonstrated to him mathematically how easy it was to believe in the supernatural. Miracles and apparitions presented no such difficulties to him as to Goodwin.

Yet he certainly did hesitate for nearly two years and eventually compromised. Nor were his ostensible reasons for hesitation, his stammer and his visits to the theatre, entirely convincing. They were more of the nature of excuses.

Wilberforce whom he sounded through either Pusey or Liddon as to the obligations he would be incurring told him that as a

Deacon he could if he wished attend theatres and need not unless he felt able to do so undertake ministerial duties.

On December 22nd, 1861, he was ordained Deacon by the Bishop of Oxford, and he never proceeded to priest's orders, though he did occasionally preach to the College servants.

Two months previously he had contrary to his later practice and convictions "taken sides" against one of the Essayists and Reviewers. This was in the strange case of Jowett's salary.

Benjamin Jowett had already been in hot water over his book on the Epistles of St. Paul. Published in 1855, the year of his appointment as Regius Professor of Greek, this work raised the ire of the High Church party. When summoned before the Vice-Chancellor, however, Jowett simply demanded a pen.

"Mr Vice-Chancellor," he interrupted a solemn preliminary harangue, "I have come to sign the Articles."<sup>2</sup>

That was effective at the time, but it did not help him financially. The conditions upon which he held his chair were truly remarkable. A regius professor is appointed, nominally, by the Crown, but actually by the political party in power and Jowett owed his appointment to Palmerston in recognition of his work in the matter of University reform and of his Liberal views in politics.

His salary was £40 per annum, that being the stipend considered sufficient by Henry VIII who founded the Chair. It was paid by

1. Coll. M. 74-76.

2. Life of Jowett, Vol. I M. 238-239.

Christ Church and the appointment had formerly been held by Dean Gaisford. Liddell, who succeeded him as Dean, declined to accept the Greek Chair also.

Under Dean Gaisford, the post had been a sinecure for the taciturn Dean "never gave lectures" but Jowett's conception of a professor's duties was quite different and there was soon a movement to have his salary raised. In October 1861, Stanley carried a proposal in the Hebdomadal Council to endow the Greek Professorship from the University chest, but when submitted to Congregation, it was defeated by three votes. Among those who opposed it was Dodgson.

"Mr Dodgson," says Collingwood, "nothing if not a staunch Conservative, sided with the majority against him."

In his diary, he wrote: "November 20th - Promulgation in Congregation of the new Statute to endow Jowett. The speaking took up the whole afternoon, and the two points at issue, the endowing a Regius Professorship, and the countenancing Jowett's theological opinions got so inextricably mixed up that I rose to beg that they might be kept separate. Once on my feet, I said more than I at first meant, and defied them ever to tire the opposition by perpetually bringing the matter on. (Mem.: if I ever speak again, I will try to say no more than I had resolved before rising.) This was my first speech in Congregation." <sup>2</sup>

Collingwood, it will be observed alleges that Dodgson voted

1. Life of Liddell, Vol. I, p. 140

2. Coll., p. 91.

on political grounds, as a Conservative against a Liberal or against a Professor appointed by a Liberal government. Dodgson himself mentions Jowett's theological opinions but underlines the word Regius as if to show that he had voted on academic grounds against any kind of political interference in University affairs.

Whatever his motive, and all the logic in the world could not prevent confusion of principle and prejudice, he helped to keep Jowett's salary firmly pegged at £40 a year. There it remained for another four years while Stanley "perpetually brought the matter on," the Times correspondence columns argued the rights and wrongs of it and even Pusey, feeling uncomfortable, introduced a statute to multiply the salary of the professorship by ten while dissociating the University from Jowett's personal opinions in religious matters.

This proposal of Pusey's passed in Congregation but Convocation, the large body of "wild country parsons" which had tried Newman and Ward, rejected it and thereby renewed the heated correspondence in the Times.

In 1862 controversy was still further embittered by the trial and condemnation in the Court of the Arches of Williams and Wilson, the two Essayists and Reviewers who disapproved of eternal damnation. This led to an attempt to try Jowett, but fortunately for him the prosecution haled him before the

wrong body - the Chancellor's Court instead of the House of Congregation and the case was dropped. Pressure was also brought to bear on Temple, the least controversial of the Essayists, to dissociate himself from the others, but while the issue was in doubt he very properly refused to do so.

Dodgson had voted against increasing Jowett's salary in 1861, and probably to some extent because of Jowett's theological opinions, though even then he tried not to allow these to influence his judgment. But he was really disgusted with controversy and more and more coming to the opinion that these trials were totally at variance with the spirit of Christianity and also concerned with what seemed to him to be trivialities.

His own conception of christianity was, as he made abundantly plain later on, that it was a religion founded on love, not hate, love which resembled the love he felt for Alice Liddell and which she felt for him, "the heart-love of a child," or the love between dog and man, rather than the passionate love of men and women, for of that it seems quite certain he never knew anything.

Again, though he did not believe in eternal punishment, nor in the popular idea of heaven, for that matter, he did believe in the possibility of miracles and miraculous appearances, on grounds which were at least partly mathematical. For, if space has even one of the extra dimensions in which Arthur Cayley had

made it possible to calculate, there is no reason why superior beings should not exist all about us and only be perceived by us accidentally or at moments of their own choosing.

For this reason he always kept an open mind on the subject of spiritualism and later joined the Psychical Research Society. In 1862, however, no such society existed, for the technique of communicating with the spirits by means of rappings had only been discovered in 1848, and Dodgson's first contact with the spirit-world does not reveal him as a devotee, merely as not treating the matter as absurd.

"Mr Dodgson," says Collingwood, "took a great interest in occult phenomena and was for some time an enthusiastic member of the 'Psychical Society'." <sup>1</sup> (Actually from its inception in 1882 until the year before his death.) "It was his interest in ghosts that led to his meeting with the artist, Mr Heaphy, who had painted a picture of a ghost which he himself had seen."

Dodgson recorded that in 1862 he called upon Mr Heaphy, apparently uninvited, and they had "a very interesting talk about the ghost, which certainly is one of the most curious and inexplicable stories I ever heard. He showed me her picture (life size), and she must have been very lovely, if it is like her (or like it, which ever is the correct pronoun.)"

Some of his serious poems of 1861 and 1862 have a curious Pre-Raphaelite quality. "After Three Days" was suggested by

Holman Hunt's "The Finding of Christ in the Temple" and others like "Beatrice" and "Stolen Waters" are reminiscent of Christina Rossetti's hopeless (on religious grounds) passions though without the "lunar rainbow coloration" which made her succeed where he failed.

He may have met the Rossetti's by this time, for George Macdonald knew them, but it is more probable that he did not go to Tudor Lodge until the following year. Their work he certainly knew.

"Stolen Waters" seems to record a renunciation of the world, the flesh and the devil:

"Yea, take we pleasure while we may,"

I heard myself replying.

In the red sunset, far away,

My happier life was dying:

My heart was sad, my voice was gay.

And unawares, I knew not how,

I kissed her dainty finger-tips,

I kissed her on the lily brow,

I kissed her on the false, false lips -

That burning kiss, I feel it now!

"True love gives true love of the best;

Then take," I cried, "my heart to thee!



The very heart from out my breast

I plucked, I gave it willingly:

Her very heart she gave to me -

Then died the glory from the west.

In the gray light I saw her face,

And it was withered, old, and gray;

The flowers were fading in their place,

Were fading with the fading day.

Forth from her, like a hunted deer,

Through all that ghastly night I fled,

And still behind me seemed to hear

Her fierce unflagging tread;

And scarce drew breath for fear.

Yet marked I well how strangely seemed

The heart within my breast to sleep:

Silent it lay, or so I dreamed,

With never a throb or leap.

For hers was now my heart, she said,

The heart that once had been mine own:

And in my breast I bore instead

A cold, cold heart of stone.

So grew the morning overhead."

Now it is his voice that is sad, his heart, or rather her heart within his breast that is gay. It is the voice of a child that restores his own heart with the message:

"Be as a child -

So shalt thou sing for very joy of breath -

So shalt thou wait thy dying,

In holy transport lying -

So pass rejoicing through the gate of death,

In garment undefiled."

Then call me what they will, I know

That now my soul is glad:

If this be madness, better so,

Far better to be mad,

Weeping or smiling as I go.

For if I weep, it is that now

I see how deep a loss is mine,

And feel how brightly round my brow

The coronal might shine,

Had I but kept mine early vow:

And if I smile, it is that now

I see the promise of the years -

The garland waiting for my brow,

That must be won with tears,

With pain - with death - I care not how."

Into "Only a Woman's Hair" also written in 1862, Alice Liddell pushed her way more recognisably,

"Or fringing like a shadow, raven-black,  
The glory of a queen-like face,"

in company with other children and Mary Magdalene.

Outwardly who so placid as the Rev. C. L. Dodgson, M.A., Mathematical Lecturer and Tutor in Christ Church, Oxford, in his clerical blacks and white or black bow-tie? Inwardly he was fermenting with ideas, ideas for mathematical works, prestige publications we may call them, ideas for games that would amuse the young Liddells or the young Macdonalds; and more serious ideas too, ideas about God and the nature of the universe. Deeper still, obscure impulses struggled for mastery; the old Adam grappled with the chimera of celibacy. And all about him raged the battle of the books sermons, pamphlets and ecclesiastical courts of law.

There was also in 1862 a slight coolness between Dodgson and Mrs Liddell. Exactly what it was about, it seems impossible now to discover, but in view of later developments, such facts as there are must be stated.

The first relevant entry in the diary is that of May 25, 1862, when he has been talking "about the difficulty the College are in about the ball; the 2 parties cannot agree on the rules

and I am afraid much ill-feeling will result."

On Oct. 28, 1862 there is an entry to the effect that he has been out of Mrs Liddell's "good graces" since those difficulties arose. Nevertheless he has been seeing the children in between and on Nov. 21 received a message from Mrs Liddell asking whether he would go over to see them or whether they should come to him. /

The "ball" does not seem to have taken place. Perhaps the Liddells dropped it in view of disagreement about the rules, in which disagreement, Dodgson took a stand with others against the Dean or simply opposed the idea of having a ball.

At all events, during the very significant period in which it has always been believed that his relations with the Liddells were idyllic, a little cloud passed over Christ Church, a cloud no bigger than a man's hand, lost among the thunderheads of politics and theology. And yet its shadow cast a chill.

# 1. Private Letters from Miss F. Menecke Dodgson.

### CHAPTER III

#### Mr DODGSON IN WONDERLAND

In the summer of 1862 occurred one of those apparently trivial incidents which later he identified as the turning point of his life. Dodgson's diary for July 4th, 1862, bears the entry: "I made an expedition up the river to Godstow with the three Liddells; we had tea on the bank there, and did not reach Christ Church till half past eight."

On the opposite page, says Collingwood he added, "somewhat later," the words, "on which occasion I told them the fairy-tale of Alice's Adventures Underground, which I undertook to write out for Alice." /

The myth that he composed the whole of "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" on a single afternoon and wrote it down word for word afterwards is partly due to the poem which Dodgson himself prefixed to the published story and partly due to Collingwood's rather naive statement: "His memory was so good that I believe the story as he wrote it down was almost word for word the same that he had told in the boat. The whole idea came like an inspiration into his mind, and that sort of inspiration does not often come more than once in a lifetime."

Yet the poem was written as a prologue to the book and cannot be taken literally:

1. Coll., p. 93.
2. Coll., p. 106.

"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."

Certainly its quaint events were hammered out slowly, one by one, but not all on the same afternoon.

Alice Liddell, Mrs Reginald Hargreaves, at the time when Collingwood wrote his biography, was under the impression that the story was first told down-river - "one summer afternoon when the sun was so burning that we had landed in the meadows down the river, deserting the boat to take refuge in the only bit of shade to be found, which was under a new-made hayrick .... Another day, perhaps, the story would begin in the boat, and Mr Dodgson, in the middle of telling a thrilling adventure would pretend to go fast asleep to our great dismay." /

In April 1887, Dodgson himself contributed an account of the beginning to "The Theatre."

"Many a day had we rowed together on that quiet stream - the three little maidens and I - and many a fairy tale had been extemporised for their benefit - whether it were at times when the narrator was 'i' the vein', and fancies unsought came

crowding thick upon him, or at times when the jaded Muse was goaded into action, and plodded meekly on, more because she had to say something than that she had something to say - yet none of these many tales got written down: they lived and died, like summer midges, each in its own golden afternoon, until there came a day when as it chanced, one of my little listeners petitioned that the tale might be written out for her. That was many a year ago, but I distinctly remember now, as I write, how in a desperate attempt to strike out some new line of fairy-lore, I had sent my heroine straight down a rabbit-hole, to begin with, without the least idea what was to happen afterwards."

It is clear then that the trip to Godstow was not the first time he had taken the three young Liddells on the river. Alice tells us that they usually went out four or five times during the summer term, for afternoons, on which occasions they took a kettle and a basket of cakes. They made tea, which was a special treat for them, as "five o'clock tea" was not in those days a regular meal in households like the Deanery. (The Liddells had luncheon at one o'clock, dinner at seven, and as a general rule nothing in between).

On rarer occasions they made a whole day of it and took a more substantial meal with them. Sometimes they went down to Nuneham and picniced in one of the huts available to boating parties, borrowing crockery and cutlery from riverside cottages.

Sometimes Dodgson's younger brother Skeffington, who had evidently given up roaring and not been abolished - he had instead followed Charles to Christ Church - completed the party. Generally the fifth member was Mr Duckworth, later Canon in Westminster Abbey. Once two of Dodgson's sisters, rather stout and formidable, made it a party of seven and threatened to sink the boat. There were no songs or stories that day and the rain came on. The party had to go ashore at Ifley and after an attempt to dry out the two stolid Miss Dodgsons at a cottage fire, returned to Christ Church by road. This incident, transformed to fantasy appeared in the "Under Ground" version but was "improved" out of existence in the published story.

Nor were all his stories told on the river or during the summer. Alice in her "Recollections" remarks: "As it is, I think, many of my earlier adventures must be irretrievably lost to posterity, because Mr Dodgson told us many, many stories before the famous trip up-river to Godstow." She explains that when they went to be photographed in his rooms, he used to put them in a good mood by telling them stories, illustrating them as he spoke on odd pieces of paper and holding up the crisis by means of his stammer. Afterwards he let them go into the dark room. <sup>1.</sup>

The importance of the Godstow trip was that on it he told a particularly good story and Alice asked him to write it out for

1. Cornhill Mag., July, 1932.



her. This is confirmed by Canon Duckworth, who says: "I also well remember how, when we had conducted the three children back to the Deanery, Alice said, as she bade us goodnight, 'Oh, Mr Dodgson, I wish you would write out Alice's Adventures for me.' He said he should try, and he afterwards told me that he sat up nearly the whole night, committing to a MS. book his recollections of the drolleries with which he had enlivened the afternoon. He added illustrations of his own and presented the volume, which used often to be seen on the drawing-room table at the Deanery." <sup>1</sup>

The myth, you see, refuses to be explained away. Like the snake in Macbeth, she'll close and be herself in spite of us. However, there is the evidence of Dodgson's diary that he did not start the MS. book until Nov. 13, 1862, though the headings were written out in the train on his way to London on the day following the boating expedition.<sup>2</sup> No doubt he did write out that night the story he had told in the boat, but only in rough, so that he might not forget. Duckworth's account was written more than thirty years after the event.

Bearing all this in mind, then, let us reconstruct the boating-trip to Godstow on which the White Rabbit made his first appearance in this world and immediately ducked out of it into a very different one.

It began with the three young Liddells, Lorina, Alice and

1. *L. C. Picture Book*, p. 359.

2. *Private letter*, Miss F. Menella Dodgson.

Edith, dressed in white cotton frocks, white socks black shoes and shady hats, emerging from the Deanery into Tom Quad. With them was their governess, Miss Prickett, known as "Pricks" who conducted them along the gravel path now replaced by a stone pavement to the Old Library, now replaced by the Meadow Buildings. Here Mr Dodgson had his rooms at this time, and here the children were left in his charge for Miss Prickett was not to accompany them on the river.

He was waiting for them, dressed in white flannel trousers, black coat, black boots and white straw hat. With him, similarly attired, was Mr Duckworth. Picnic baskets, filled with cold chicken, salad and other delicacies were already packed. Presently the five water-wayfarers walked along the banks of the unsavoury Till Mill stream to Salter's, where they chose a large boat with plenty of cushions.

The three children were seated in the stern, where they made a charming nosegay. Lorina, aged twelve or thirteen had brown hair, Alice, who had secured the tiller ropes, almost black hair cut in a fringe across her forehead, while Edith the youngest had auburn curls.<sup>1</sup> Mr Dodgson rowed bow and Duckworth stroke so that Dodgson was looking over Duckworth's shoulder at the three little girls.<sup>2</sup>

As they moved upstream between the great meadow and the trees, Dodgson began to tell them a story. It was, he remembered

1. *Cornhill Mag.*, July, 1932.

2. *L.C. Picture Book*, p. 358.

in 1887, a "golden afternoon." "I can call it up almost as clearly as if it were yesterday - the cloudless blue above, the watery mirror below, the boat drifting idly on its way, the tinkle of the drops that fell from the oars, as they waved so sleepily to and fro, and (the one bright gleam of life in all the slumbrous scene) the three eager faces, hungry for news of fairy-land, and who could not have said 'Nay' to: from whose lips 'Tell us a story please' had all the stern immutability of Fate."

Duckworth informs us that he figured as the 'duck', Lorina was the 'lory', and Edith the 'eaglet' so that the story was by no means a monologue. The persons in the boat had parts or at least their names suggested characters in the adventures and their frequent interruptions, Alice says in her Recollections, "opened up fresh and undreamed of possibilities."

Nor should it be forgotten that there was an adult in the boat, Duckworth, in whose presence the story would not be quite as it would have been had the audience consisted only of children. At one point, Duckworth suddenly realised that something very unusual was happening and interjected a query:

"Dodgson, is this an extempore romance of yours?" to which Dodgson replied in the affirmative.

Sometimes he lapsed into silence, or pretended to fall asleep, "whereas, of course," says Mr Walter de la Mare, "he had actually come wide-awake." But they kept him at it.

"That's all till next time."

"Ah, but it is next time."

It began with a White Rabbit going down a burrow and Alice following it down into a long low hall with many doors and one very small curtained door to which the little gold key lay on a glass table. Beyond the little door lay an enchanted garden but when Alice was tall enough to reach the gold key on the glass table, she was too big to squeeze through the little door.

"Size and Tears," he called a poem on the disadvantages of stoutness which he contributed to College Rhymes in the following year. The poem was no doubt suggested by Alice's variations in size which led to her swimming about in a pool of her own tears.

Eventually she found her way out into the garden, met the card-characters, played croquet with the duchess, and was a witness in the trial of the Knave of Hearts.

Meantime the chicken and salad went the way of chicken and salad, the boat's head pointed downstream and as the children's bedtime approached, songs took the place of stories. They sang the popular songs and hymns of the day, "Star of the evening," "Twinkle, twinkle little star," "Will you walk into my parlour," and these Dodgson later parodied.

The boat was tied up, the empty baskets and the tired children returned to Christ Church. And then, according to Duckworth Alice asked Mr Dodgson to write out her adventures for

her. She had rather a habit of getting her own way, this darkly beautiful child. Dinah, the cat in the Adventures was really Lorina's but Alice somehow managed to appropriate her. Miss Prickett did not like Alice.

Dodgson went back to his rooms in the Old Library and fired by this at once cool and gratifying request began to write. "In writing it out," he said in his "Theatre" article of 1887, "I added many fresh ideas, which seemed to grow of themselves upon the original stock; and many more added themselves when, years afterwards, I wrote it all over again for publication."

The first version of the story which has been preserved is that called "Alice's Adventures Under Ground" and this he made available to the public in 1886 when he published it in facsimile.

It will be noted that even in the boat Dodgson was not creating the story out of nothing. The white rabbit, for instance, with his watch, gloves and fan are all conjuror's properties and Dodgson had been an amateur conjuror. The Lory had already amused the readers of the Rectory Umbrella and was recalled to him by Lorina's name. In 1860 he had published rules for a card game "Court Circular" and the year after the Godstow trip was to publish rules for "Croquet Castle" an elaborate form of croquet which he worked out with the Liddell children. Both these games supplied him with ideas and characters.

*l. Cornhill Mag., July, 1932.*

In writing the story out, he discovered other fruitful sources of "nonsense" and some of these are of great interest. One was the Fall of Alice to the centre of the earth, which may well have been told to some children on the beach at Whitby in 1854 and was certainly based on the dynamics of a particle. This he inserted immediately after Alice had followed the White Rabbit "under ground".

Another was the beautiful little mathematical puzzle which apparently he tried on Greville Macdonald who says that "he loved to question the very multiplication-table's veracity."

This is what he was doing when he made Alice say "Let me see: four times five is twelve, and four times six is thirteen, and four times seven is - oh dear! I shall never get to twenty at that rate."

Mathematicians will have no difficulty in recognising this as a problem based on scales of notation, but even the non-mathematical should make an effort to follow the explanation I propose to give, since this is proof positive that Dodgson was in some cases at least doing something quite different from what he was pretending to do in this apparently guileless story for children.

$$4 \times 5 = 12 \text{ (on the scale 18).}$$

On the scale 18, the numbers go 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, (10) (11) (12) (13) (14) (15) (16) (17) 10, 11, 12 (12

being really one-two and equivalent to 20 on the scale 10, which is the one we normally use).

$$4 \times 6 = 13 \text{ (on the scale 21).}$$

On this scale, the numbers go 1, 2, 3 .... 9, (10) (11) (12).. (20) 10, 11, 12, 13 (13 being really one-three and equivalent to 24 on the scale 10).

So it goes on.

$$4 \times 7 = 14 \text{ (on the scale 24)}$$

$$4 \times 8 = 15 \text{ (on the scale 27)}$$

till we reach

$$4 \times 12 = 19 \text{ (on the scale 39)}$$

but  $4 \times 13$  does not equal 20 on the scale 42, because on the scale 42, the numbers go 1, 2, 3 .... 9 (10) (11) (12) .... (41) 10, 11, 12 .... 19, 1 (10). On this scale the number which follows 19 (really one-nine) is not 20 (two, nothing) but 1 (10) (one-ten equivalent to 52 or  $4 \times 13$  on the scale 10).

"Oh dear!" said Alice, "I shall never get to twenty at that rate." And she never would, at that rate, that is if the scale of notation was increasing by three at each step and the product only by one. At that rate she could never get to 20 at all.

This was exactly the kind of problem to interest Dodgson. He could not use it as a problem to interest

Alice Liddell, aged ten, but he could and did use it to amuse and bewilder her - to give the effect of nonsense. So far as I am aware he has remained undetected, never told anybody what he had done and did not refer to it in his diary. Nevertheless, it can hardly be a coincidence; nor could he invent such a problem in a kind of day-dream, without knowing what he was doing. Nor is it the only case of the kind, though for those who can follow a mathematical explanation it is probably the most convincing.

Satire and allegory too, crept into the story. Even when telling it in the boat he must have been conscious that the little gold key, the little low door into the bright garden, the bottle and the little cake were all potential symbols, and as he wrote the story "many new ideas added themselves." It is, I think, a mistake to look, as Shane Leslie does, for a consistent allegory in "Alice's Adventures." The story grew out of separate bits and pieces, linked together more by the association of ideas than by cause and effect.

In "Lewis Carroll and the Oxford Movement," Shane Leslie<sup>1</sup> treats both the Alice books as a "Secret History of the Oxford Movement." "Alice," he says, "may be regarded as the simple freshman or Everyman, who wanders like a sweet and innocent undergraduate into the Wonderland of a Victorian Oxford, where everybody was religious in some way or other." "That is profoundly true but not in the sense that Dodgson wrote or even rewrote the

<sup>1</sup> London Mercury, 1933, p. 233.



book with that intention uppermost in his mind.

Rather did he accept gratefully all and any suggestions that came to him from the life of Oxford around him, from his mathematics or elsewhere and these he transformed with the object of amusing and bewildering. His gift was the opposite of the poet's. He could abstract airy nothings from their local habitations and dissociate them from their names. He could also render them pictorial and then use them as symbols.

Sometimes we can catch him in the act, but we cannot hope to identify all the originals of his caricatures, nor must we expect the same symbol always to have the same meaning. Meaning comes and goes like the colours in shot silk. When Alice first "looked along the passage into the loveliest garden you ever saw" no doubt the garden was a symbol of happiness or fulfilment. It was only later that he began to identify himself with Alice and turn it (as Shane Leslie suggests) into the Garden of Preferment, with the gardeners hard at work painting the roses red instead of white to please a queen who preferred red roses. No doubt the garden was also the Deanery garden at Christ Church into which Dodgson could see from the windows of the library as he catalogued the books. No doubt, beyond that, it was the garden of his boyhood at Croft, the garden of his childhood at Daresbury, the golden age of the poet, the maternal womb of psycho-analysis. All these explanations have been offered. But only the garden of

preferment theory satisfactorily accounts for the painting of the white roses red.

A moment later, however, we find the card-gardeners being used to illustrate another sort of truth. When they are lying face-downwards it is impossible to tell if they are crowned heads or plain numbers.

"Sceptre and crown  
Shall tumble down  
And in the dust he equal made  
With the poor crooked scythe and spade."

The bottle of medicine which tasted so pleasantly of all Alice's favourite dishes but which made her wonder if she would go out like a candle is like the apparently innocuous doctrine of the rationalists which led in the direction of pure materialism.

It will be remembered that Alice, after drinking, was small enough to pass through the little low door but had forgotten the gold key though she could still see it through the glass of the table.

The cake had to be swallowed in its entirety before it produced any effect, but then Alice opened out like a telescope and her head was out of touch with her feet. Dogma would produce the same effect in the theological world; all or nothing; and if all, then up in the clouds or very high church.

The Caterpillar, seated on a mushroom, smoking a hookah,

superior, intolerable but not unkindly is identified by Shane Leslie as Oxford Philosophy.

"One side will make you grow taller, and the other will make you grow shorter."

"One side of what? The other side of what?" thought Alice to herself.

"Of the mushroom," said the Caterpillar, just as if she had asked it aloud; and in another moment it was out of sight.

"Alice remained looking thoughtfully at the mushroom for a minute, trying to make out which were the two sides of it; and as it was perfectly round, she found this a very difficult question. However, at last she stretched her arms round it as far as they would go, and broke off a bit of the edge with each hand."

By nibbling these bits alternately she could make herself any size she pleased, thus illustrating most exquisitely the process, essential to all who were to succeed in the Oxford of those days, the process of acquiring a "balanced outlook."

"Our little systems have their day:

They have their day and cease to be:

They are but broken lights of thee,

And thou, O Lord, art more than they."

In her left hand, no doubt Alice held the "system" or attitude called rationalism, in her right the extreme high

church form of dogmatism. A discreet mixture of the two had led Dodgson himself to take Deacon's orders but not priest's orders, and he always held to the middle way; in his church attendance, perhaps a little to the right of centre; in his secret speculations perhaps a shade to the left; in no case far from the middle way.

In this, however, he was in advance of his time. Oxford, the English Church and the country as a whole were fiercely divided on the question of dogma and reason. The Cheshire Cat puts the case for one side; which is unimportant but let us take it as Shane Leslie does that Cat is a symbol for Catholic and Dog for Protestant or Dissenter.

"To begin with," said the Cat, a dog's not mad. You grant that?"

"I suppose so," said Alice.

"Well then," the Cat went on, "you see a dog growls when it's angry and wags its tail when it's pleased. Now I growl when I'm pleased, and wag my tail when I'm angry. Therefore I'm mad."

Those who claim that there is no moral in Lewis Carroll's stories might spend a moment here. To a dog, a cat is wrong or mad; to a cat, the opposite is the case. An impartial observer, however, will admit that both the cat and the dog method of expressing pleasure or anger may be right. Neither

need be considered mad.

It is a plea for toleration. The Cheshire Cat's "Therefore I'm made" is irony. The moral is Tennyson's "Force without geniality will do very little," but little heed is paid to that moral in Wonderland. Perhaps, after all, Alice was nearer the truth than she supposed when she thought she might land at the "Antipathies." Dodgson himself had landed there when he arrived at Oxford.

The Cheshire Cat, strange as it seems, was not one of the original characters. Not even its grin appeared in the Under Ground version though the threat of Dinah hung over the little creatures from time to time as later the moon-like Cat's Head in Wonderland.

All the changes of size were there, the White Rabbit and Bill the Lizard, the Pool of Tears, Terrier, Caterpillar and Father William, Pigeon, Procession and Croquet Match, Mock Turtle and Gryphon; but no Cheshire Cat, no Pig and Pepper, no Mad Tea Party and a very short trial of the Knave of Hearts.

"Now for the evidence," said the King, "and then the sentence!"

"No!" said the Queen, "first the sentence and then the evidence!"

In the early 1860's that was happening above as well as under ground.

Such was the first version of the story which he wrote between July 5 when he noted the chapter headings and February 10 when the text was finished. The actual words of the diary are "Text finished before Feb. 10, 1863," as if he had presented it to Alice on that day. If he did, he had not finished the illustrations for the pictures in the MS. were not finished until Sep. 13, 1864. Yet Henry Kingsley saw the MS. at the Deanery and according to Duckworth it was at his suggestion that Dodgson published it.

It seems then that Alice was first given the text to read in February, 1863. Henry Kingsley, whose brother Charles had just published his "Water Babies" saw Dodgson's MS. and recognised its merit. He urged Mrs. Liddell to persuade Dodgson to publish it. When she made the suggestion to Dodgson he wrote to Duckworth asking him to come and read the MS. and give a candid opinion as to the advisability of publishing, "as he himself felt very doubtful and could not afford to lose money over it."

Not content with Duckworth's opinion Dodgson approached his old friend George Macdonald, now established as a successful novelist. "It was about this time, but at Tudor Lodge," says Greville Macdonald, "that he asked my father's opinion upon a story he had written and named Alice's Adventures Underground illustrated with pen-and-ink sketches by himself and minutely penned in printing characters."

1. Private Letter, Miss F. Menella Dodgson.
2. L.C. Picture Book, L. 359.
3. Greville Macdonald: "George Macdonald and his Wife,"  
p. 342.

George Macdonald suggested that the story be tried on the family, Mrs Macdonald read it aloud and the response was enthusiastic.

Accordingly Dodgson retained the MS. and during the next year and a half completed the illustrations in it while re-writing the story for publication. He finished the illustrations <sup>"n</sup> the MS. on Sept. 13 (on which day he noted the important dates in connection with the book) but did not present it to Alice until Nov. 26, more than two months later.<sup>1</sup> By that time no doubt the re-writing was complete.

Meantime the "Essays and Reviews" controversy had not been forgotten. Early in 1863 Jowett was prosecuted but fortunately for him in the wrong court, the Vice-Chancellor's instead of the House of Congregation.

This brought from Dodgson's pen a College Rhyme or Oxford Idyll, "The Majesty of Justice." After describing the Vice-Chancellor's Court as 'A Court obscure' existing to punish undergraduates who do not pay their bills, he proceeds:

"A case I'm told was lately brought  
 Into that tiniest of places,  
 And justice in that case was sought -  
 As in most other cases.

1. Private Letter, Miss F. Menella Dodgson.

"Well! Justice as I hold, dear friend,

Is Justice, neither more than less:

I never dreamed it could depend

On ceremonial or dress.

I thought that the imperial sway

In Oxford surely would appear,

But all the papers seem to say

She's not majestic here."

The portly Don he made reply

With the most roguish of his glances,

"Perhaps she drops her Majesty

Under peculiar circumstances."

"But that's the point!" the young man cried,

"The puzzle that I wish to pen you in -

How are the public to decide

Which article is genuine?

Is't only when the Court is large

That we for 'Majesty' need hunt?

Would what is Justice in a barge

Be something different in a punt?

"Nay, nay!" the Don replied, amused,

"You're talking nonsense, sir! You know it!

Such arguments were never used

By any friend of Jowett."



Eventually he reached the conclusion:

"The Majesty of Justice, then,  
Is seated in the Wig."

On February 8th, 1864, Williams and Wilson who had appealed against their condemnation in the Court of the Arches were acquitted by the Privy Council. Stanley, the recently appointed Dean of Westminster, who was present in court, declared that the Church of England had made its position clear and that it no longer upheld the "Verbal Inspiration" of the Scriptures, nor the doctrine of "Eternity of Torment."

The Bishop of Oxford, however, did not agree with the findings of the Privy Council and used his carefully-nursed Convocation of the Clergy to promulgate his views. This Convocation must not be confused with the Oxford body of the same name. It was the Lower House he had revived, in an attempt to take Church affairs out of Parliament, without, however, bringing about the disestablishment of the Church of England.

When this antique body met in June 1864 Wilberforce asked its members to put on record their disagreement with the findings of the Privy Council in the form of a "synodical condemnation" of "Essays and Reviews." This they did though Stanley, once more on the spot, raged at them that they were flouting the authority of the supreme court of appeal.<sup>2</sup> The matter was raised in the House of Lords on 15th July, when Lord Westbury described

1. Life of Stanley, Vol. II, p. 43
2. Life of Stanley, Vol. II, p. 183.

the "synodical judgement" as "a well-lubricated set of words - a sentence so oily and saponaceous that no one can grasp it." With one exception, the Lords were convulsed, the exception being Soapy Sam himself. "Ribaldry," he said.

The Oxford Convocation also met about this time to consider the latest proposal to raise Jowett's salary and, as a reprisal for the Privy Council's action, once more turned it down. The correspondence columns of the Times waxed bitter on the subject.

It was while these things were happening that Dodgson was re-writing "Alice" for publication. He had also read Charles Kingsley's "Water Babies" by this time and found there all the questions of the day "wrapped up," as Kingsley said in a letter to Maurice, "in seeming Tom-Fooleries."

So far as it is intelligible, the story of the "Water-Babies" concerns a little chimney-sweeper who comes down the wrong chimney into the bedroom of the Squire's daughter. A hue and cry is raised and after eluding the pursuit, he finds his way over the moors to a dame's school in a valley, where he is treated kindly and given a bed in the hay-shed.

Distressed at his dirtiness, he gets up to wash and is drowned in the brook. Then, transformed into a sucking eft or naughty water-baby, 3.87902 inches long, he has to learn by living among the water-creatures. He swims down to the sea and saves a lobster from a pot, after which he is admitted to the

*1. Guy Kendall: "Charles Kingsley and his Ideas" (1947)*

*pp. 117-118.*

society of middling-good water-babies, where Discipline (Mrs. Be done by as you did) and Morality (Mrs. Do as you would be done by) both of whom are Mother Carey, who is Dame Nature, who is God, take him in hand.

To be worthy of Ellie, the Squire's daughter, a lady born and a good water-baby from the moment she dies (as she does from a fall among the rocks on the beach) he must go on a long adventurous journey and do the thing he does not like; in his case undertake the reclamation of Mr Grimes, his cruel master. He too is dead, having been drowned on a poaching expedition.

In Kingsley's after-life, the punishment fits the crime and Mr Grimes is stuck in a chimney. Tom, accompanied by a little water-dog, succeeds in reaching him and in earning for him the dubious promotion to a job on the cleaning of Mount Etna from the inside. Tom is then considered to have won his spurs.

Magically transported to St. Brandan's Isle he joins Ellie and apparently becomes the power responsible for social-amelioration-through-science on earth, while his faithful little sea-hound is translated to the stars.

The story floats along on a stream of genial sermonising. Evolution, spiritualism, materialism and other vexed questions of the day are faithfully dealt with and the whole is enlivened by eulogies of the landed gentry from whom Kingsley sprang and the joys of hunting, shooting and fishing. It is a mystery how

children pick out the story, but they do, and love it.

"I have tried," said Kingsley, "in all sorts of queer ways, to make children and grown folks understand that there is a quite miraculous and divine element underlying all physical nature; and that nobody knows anything about anything, in the sense in which they may know God in Christ, and right and wrong, and if I have wrapped up my parable in seeming Tom-fooleries, it is because so only could I get the pill swallowed by a generation who are not believing with anything like their whole heart, in the living God."

A copy of the "Water-Babies" was in Dodgson's Library and he had certainly read it before Alice was ready for publication. It probably encouraged him to introduce more allegory and satire but he wisely refrained from appearing in the story in person as Kingsley does in the Water-Babies.

One valuable suggestion was the caucus of hoodie crows by means of which Kingsley satirised the republicans or extreme radicals. Dodgson used this in his caucus-race, perhaps the most striking change, as opposed to addition, that he made. In the "Under Ground" story, the Dodo, the Lory, the Eaglet and the other characters did not dry themselves by running a caucus-race. They followed the water, "for the pool had by this time begun to flow out of the hall and the edge of it was fringed with rushes and forget-me-nots," till they came to a little

*l. Guy Kendall, p.p. 117-118.*

cottage:

"And there they sat snugly by the fire, wrapped up in blankets until the rest of the party had arrived and they were all dry again."

This was roughly what his sisters had done in the cottage at Ifley but while the general public could not have enjoyed the private joke there was no reason to change the story - that is, if he was interested only in pleasing children. It was simple, quaint and charming as it was.

A caucus-race is a much more sophisticated method of inducing dryness.

"There was no 'One, two, three and away,' but they began running when they liked and left off when they liked, so that it was not easy to know when the race was over."

Nor was it easy to see who had won, but all demanded and received prizes.

"Alice thought the whole thing very absurd, but they all looked so grave that she did not dare to laugh."

In a caucus - a meeting of wire-pullers, generally for the purpose of influencing an election - arguments run just that kind of race and those who compose a caucus usually want prizes. As Alice had to provide all the prizes, including her own, Dodgson probably meant her to represent the public in this particular little cartoon.

To prove that Dodgson had this view of 'caucuses' or 'cauci', whichever is the plural of that etymologically obscure word, it is only necessary to go forward two years and glance at his pamphlet of 1866, "The Elections to the Hebdomadal Council." In this fable, the cats are conservatives and the rats and mice 'radicals.'

"The Cats, it seems, were masters of the house  
 And held their own against the rat and mouse.  
 Of course, the others couldn't stand it long,  
 So held a caucus."

He was not, however, content to alter the "Under Ground" version as it stood. He added whole chapters and of these by far the most original and striking was "The Mad Tea Party." Alice without the Mad Hatter seems almost impossible, yet he, the March Hare and the Dormouse were afterthoughts, since they do not appear in the "Under Ground" version.

In the "Water Babies" Kingsley sent Tom swimming "to the centre of Creation (the hub, they call it there) which lies in latitude 42.21 south and longitude 108.56 east." Dodgson had independently sent Alice to the hub or centre of the earth, or at least made her wonder during her fall if she would arrive there, and if so what latitude and longitude she would then be in.

This is really a very remarkable coincidence and could not fail to strike him as he read the "Water Babies." Kingsley gave

fanciful co-ordinates for his hub but Dodgson's hub has no co-ordinates since the centre of the earth is in no latitude and no longitude. It is much further off the map than even a spot in the Indian Ocean and nobody knows what it is really like four thousand miles down.

Time, for example, would have quite a different meaning in no longitude.

Our time, clock time, depends entirely on longitude. Eastern American time is 'five hours back' because Washington is so many degrees of longitude west of Greenwich. When it is midday in Greenwich it is breakfast-time in Boston, Mass., and tea-time in Mid-Europe. But what time is it at the centre of the earth?

By the sun, it is all times or no time.

Consider the Mad Hatter's watch.

"Alice had been looking over his shoulder with some curiosity. 'What a funny watch!' she remarked. 'It tells the day of the month, and doesn't tell what o'clock it is!'

"'Why should it?' muttered the Hatter. 'Does your watch tell you what year it is?'

"'Of course not,' Alice replied very readily: 'but that's because it stays the same year for such a long time together.'

"'Which is just the case with mine,' said the Hatter.

"Alice felt dreadfully puzzled. The Hatter's remark

seemed to have no meaning in it, and yet it was certainly English. 'I don't quite understand,' she said, as politely as she could.

"The Dormouse is asleep again," said the Hatter, and he poured a little hot tea upon its nose."

The Hatter's remark has a great deal of meaning in it, including a characteristic Dodgson pun. The watch does not tell the time in hours because it stays the same hour for so long at the bottom of this very deep mine.

However, it tells the days of the month; of the month, be it noted. Even if it were possible to see the sun from the centre of the earth, it would be impossible to tell the time by it. It would always look the same, neither rise nor set, be neither higher nor lower in the sky. It would however be possible to measure time by the phases of the moon and this is the principle of the Mad Hatter's watch. It goes by the moon.

"What day of the month is it?" he said, turning to Alice: he had taken his watch out of his pocket, and was looking at it, uneasily, shaking it every now and then, and holding it to his ear.

"Alice considered a little and then said, 'The fourth.'

"Two days wrong!" sighed the Hatter. 'I told you butter wouldn't suit the works.'"

The bread-knife successfully draws our attention away from the fact that there is about two days difference between the



lunar and calendar months.

The "Fourth" was the "Fourth of May," (Alice's birthday), as we learn from the previous chapter: "the March Hare will be much the most interesting, and perhaps, as this is May, it won't be raving mad - at least not so mad as it was in March." On that memorable date, the Mad Hatter's watch would read "the Sixth"!

In the Hemispherical Problem, it will be remembered, it was the day which disappeared. It was always "today" and the Battle of Waterloo happened so many hours ago. In the case of the Mad Hatter's watch, it is the hour which has disappeared as a unit of time, and the day, which is retained is the lunar, not the solar day. In the Hemispherical Problem, there was a suggestion, finally rejected as unpracticable, that people might be allowed to choose what day it was for themselves. The Mad Hatter and the March Hare had to choose what hour it was and they chose tea-time: "It's always six o'clock now."

That was the hour the Deanery children would have chosen.

"That last game I had with my sweet cousin," says Lamb in 'Mrs Battle on Whist,' "- (dare I tell thee how foolish I am?) - I wished it might have lasted for ever, though we gained nothing and lost nothing, though it was a mere shade of play: I would be content to go on in that idle folly forever."

There are such moments, when "time seems to stand still,"

to use the familiar phrase, and one of them certainly occurred on another Fourth, 4th July, 1862, perhaps throughout that delightful boating expedition.

A bright idea came into Alice's head. "Is that the reason so many tea-things are put out here?" she asked.

"Yes, that's it," said the Hatter with a sigh: "It's always tea-time, and we've no time to wash the things between whiles."

"Then you keep moving round, I suppose?" said Alice.

"Exactly so," said the Hatter: "as the things get used up."

"But what happens when you come to the beginning again?"

Alice ventured to ask.

"Suppose we change the subject," the March Hare interrupted yawning. "I'm getting tired of this."

This is the reductio ad absurdum. The eternal Now dissolves in laughter and the clatter of picnic crockery. Time in our world does not stand still. Nevertheless there is in this maddest of mad tea-parties the delicious thrill of something imminent, something great and solemn which does not after all make its appearance.

Alice in her "Recollections" suggested that Dodgson added some of the other stories he had told them "to make the difference between 'Alice in Wonderland' and 'Alice's Adventures Under Ground.'" One such fragment which was left out of the "Under Ground" version

was the "Three Little Sisters" story which is told by the Dormouse. This was originally told in the boat on 4th July, 1862, when it was woven round the names of the three Liddell children, Elsie being invoked out of Lorina Charlotte's initials (L.C.), Lacie an anagram for Alice and Tilly, short for Matilda, Edith's pet name.

'Treacle' is significant and expressed his opinion of the popular songs and hymns of the day, for example,

"Twinkle, twinkle little star,

How I wonder what you are:

Up above the world so high,

Like a diamond in the sky."

Why like a diamond? Simply because it is bright and sparkling? Or does the value of a diamond in money enter into the comparison? In "Sylvia and Bruno" he aired his views on this subject (as on many others) quite openly: 'Look at the literature of Hymns, now. How cankered it is, through and through with selfishness! There are few human compositions more utterly degraded than some modern Hymns!' and he quotes the stanza:

'Whatever, Lord, we lend to Thee,

Repaid a thousandfold shall be,

Then gladly will we give to Thee,

Giver of all.'

In his parody of 'Twinkle, twinkle' he substituted 'bat' for star, no doubt because a 'bat' would be a natural inhabitant of a deep 'mine' and 'tea-tray' for diamond - a 'tea-tray' being an appropriate simile for those whose whole world consists of table and chairs, cups and saucers, milk, tea-pot, bread and butter; the world of tea. Such creatures might be expected to interpret the universe in terms of tea as Swift's Houyhnhnms interpreted it in terms of the stable.

"An effect," said Sir John Herschel in one of his Popular lectures on Scientific Subjects published about this time, "the precise parallel to the scintillation of the stars, might be produced, affecting the ear instead of the eye, by sounding together two strings, at first exactly in unison and then very slightly increasing and diminishing alternately the tension of one of them." <sup>1</sup> The squeak of a bat could perhaps be taken as an approximate twinkle.

Sometimes Dodgson seems to be thinking of the Mad Hatter and his friends as living at the bottom of a very deep mine or well; sometimes as inhabiting a transparent globe like gold-fish. It will be remembered that in the trial scene, the juryman fell out of their box. "And there they lay sprawling about, reminding her very much of a globe of gold-fish she had accidentally upset the week before.

"'Oh, I beg your pardon,' she exclaimed in a tone of great  
1. Sir John Herschel: *Popular lectures on Scientific Subjects*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. 1839.

dismay, and began picking them up again as quickly as she could, for the accident of the gold-fish kept running in her head and she had a vague sort of idea that they must be collected at once and be put back into the jury-box, or they would die."

Many of the characters were playing-cards, "oblong and flat, with their hands and feet at the corners" and Dodgson's own illustrations though technically far inferior to Tenniel's do insist on this flatness. His Queen of Hearts has a nightmarish quality no solid figure could ever have.

"Off with his head," she keeps saying, though nothing but a passing unpleasantness and anxiety ever comes of it. This was the attitude of the orthodox High Church party to all who dared to express views contravening the Thirty Nine Articles - for example Jowett of whom Dodgson wrote a year later: "In an earlier age of mathematics, J. (Jowett) would probably have been referred to rectangular axes, and divided into two unequal parts - a process of arbitrary elimination which is now considered not strictly legitimate." / How clever that is! And how much more vital and effective is the card queen with her four monosyllables!

Dodgson in his Theatre article of 1887 says he intended her as "a sort of embodiment of ungovernable passion - a blind and aimless fury," such, we may add, as animated the English Church at that time. I do not think any more particular identification

1. "New Theory of Evaluation according to T."

is possible.

What he meant by "pepper" in "Pig and Pepper" Dodgson for once actually does explain at the beginning of the Mock Turtle's Story.

"When I'm a Duchess," she said to herself (not in a very hopeful tone though), "I won't have any pepper in my kitchen at all. Soup does very well without - Maybe it's always pepper that makes people hot-tempered," she went on, very much pleased at having found out a new kind of rule, "and vinegar that makes them sour - and camomile that makes them bitter - and - and barley-sugar and such things that make children sweet-tempered."

The Duchess, the Cook and the Baby are certainly another of Dodgson's cartoons. Shane Leslie suggests Wilberforce as the Duchess who is calling the Baby (the Faithful) a pig - it turns into one - while the Cook who has made the soup too peppery and is throwing things at her mistress, he identifies as Stanley.

The latter put plenty of pepper in his sermons and threw many a verbal missile at the Bishop of Oxford whose plans he opposed at every turn.

The Cat, grinning at this smoky, peppery scene of discord, might well be Cardinal Wiseman amused at Anglican squabbles. The Archdeacon had put it in 1852, "When Rome, insidiously watching us, saw in our diversities of practice as well as of faith, a real point of weakness and taunted us with our want of

unity what should have been our course?" "Not throwing pepper or calling names. Yet here they were, more than ten years later, still at it.

It is tempting to accept the Wilberforce-Stanley situation as the original of the new chapter "Pig and Pepper." On the other hand, the Cook might be any Servant of the Church who threw things at her mistress, and the soup "Essays and Reviews" or Colenso on the Pentateuch or any "peppery" concoction of the kind. The general resemblance to the situation at Oxford and in the English Church is far too close to argue about.

"There's no sort of use in knocking," said the Footman, "and that for two reasons. First because I'm on the same side of the door as you are; secondly because they're making such a noise inside, no one could possibly hear you."

This caricatures the indifference of the Churchmen as to the effect their disputes were having on the people.

"He was looking up into the sky all the time he was speaking, and Alice thought this decidedly uncivil."

Was he looking perhaps for a reappearance of the Cheshire Cat's head there? If so its smiling presence inside becomes almost sinister. Nevertheless, I cannot agree with Shane Leslie that the Knave of Hearts is Newman, whose trial had taken place nearly twenty years earlier. It is much more likely that Dodgson was burlesquing all the trials from that of Newman to

1. "Ritual Worship."

that of Wilson and Williams; but if he was thinking of one in particular it would be the most recent.

"What trial is it?" Alice panted as she ran; but the Gryphon only answered "Come on!" and ran the faster, while more and more faintly came, carried on the breeze that followed them, the melancholy words:-

"Soo-oop of the e-e-vening,  
Beautiful, beautiful Soup!"

The trial was greatly extended in the published story and works up to a climax in two chapters of the most exquisite dialogue ever written.

"The judge, by the way, was the King; and as he wore his crown over the wig (look at the frontispiece if you want to see how he did it,) he did not look at all comfortable, and it was certainly not becoming."

Dodgson could not write these words in 1864 without thinking of the Erastian principle and the intervention of the Crown in the case of Wilson and Williams, where Lord Westbury represented Queen Victoria as Head of the English Church. Jowett also, the Majesty of Justice and the Wig made their contribution.

The King's question: "What are tarts made of?" has two different answers.

"Pepper, mostly," said the cook.



"Treacle," said a sleepy voice behind her.

Shane Leslie's view that the pepper was put into the 39 Articles to please protestants and the treacle to please catholics is convincing. Certainly people of all shades of opinion tended to see in the Articles just what pleased themselves. Those who liked protesting, arguing and theorising thought the tarts were composed of pepper. Those who wanted a more soothing type of religion thought they were made of treacle.

What did Dodgson think?

"Who cares for you?" said Alice, (she had grown to her full size by this time). "You're nothing but a pack of cards!"

At this the whole pack rose up into the air and came flying down upon her: she gave a little scream, half of fright and half of anger, and tried to beat them off and found herself lying on the bank, with her head in the lap of her sister, who was gently brushing away some dead leaves that had fluttered down from the trees upon her face."

It would, in my opinion, be quite wrong to regard "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" as an allegory or a satire. It is equally wrong to insist as so many children of uncertain age have insisted that it is a story for children of all ages.

Certainly it began as a story for children, the three Liddell children, though even then two out of the five persons in the boat were adults. Next it became a private and personal

matter between Dodgson and Alice Liddell and for inspiration he drew on his mathematics and anything else that would yield this fascinating new amalgam or distillation which he called nonsense. Lastly he re-wrote the story for a public which was to consist like Kingsley's of "children and grown folks." The mathematician and the statesman quote from Alice every time they open their mouths in public or try to explain to us the latest theory of space and time. In the dug-outs of the first World War ("How doth the little crocodile" in "Journey's End") or the Anderson shelters of the second ('remembering her own child-life, and the happy summer days' in "Mrs Minniver") it became the symbol of normality and sanity, good days gone by and better days, we hoped, ahead.

To call it a minor triumph or a 'tiny little masterpiece' is intolerable condescension. It will be read, and not by children only, when all its critics and commentators, their comments and criticisms, are dust.

## CHAPTER IV

### ALICE WAVES HER HANDKERCHIEF

As early as January 25, 1864, Dodgson had called on Tenniel to ask him to do the illustrations but the final agreement was not reached until April 5. One difficulty was to decide on Alice's appearance in these pictures, and it may be that Dean Liddell helped to settle this point, for "in January 1864 Dodgson was engaged in a rather disagreeable correspondence with the Dean over a point of business." "The Dean might well regard the publication of the Adventures with mixed feelings and insist that there be no obvious resemblance between the heroine of the book and his daughter. On the other hand the "business" may have been University business.

In any case, the Alice of the book had changed almost unnoticed from Alice Liddell to just Alice. No longer could she look like Alice Liddell. Something more piquant and less appealing was required and one day, in 1864, Dodgson saw in the rooms of a Mr Gray a photograph of Canon Badcock's daughter, Miss Mary Hilton Badcock, who had a snub nose, long thick, fair hair and a determined little mouth.

This he recommended to Tenniel, who eventually called on the Canon at Ripon and sketched Mary from life.<sup>2</sup> "As a rule," says Alice in her Recollections, "Tenniel used Mr Dodgson's drawings as the basis for his own illustrations and they held frequent consultations about them. "The first batch of proofs

1. Private letter: Mrs F. Manella Dodgson.

2. Famous incident in the Dodgson Hand-book.

reached Dodgson on Dec. 16,<sup>1</sup> when he and Duckworth dined over them.

On June 10, he had written to Tom Taylor about the title, "I just thought of 'Alice's Adventures Under Ground,' but that was pronounced too like a lesson book about mines." In a way and in part that is what it is. Incidentally, Dodgson himself is the only person who troubles to separate 'Under' from 'Ground,' but he does so invariably. He offered Tom Taylor a wide choice of names, but added: "Of all these I prefer 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland.'" <sup>2</sup> He had a habit of making up his own mind and then asking for the advice he wanted to be given.

The story of Dodgson's visit to Penmorfa in Llandudno during the summer of 1864 - his readings from Alice's Adventures while Sir William Richmond painted "The Three Graces," (Lorina, Alice and Edith) and the Dean sneezed over his lexicon - is almost too good to spoil. Mrs Lennon's evidence, however, is ultimately based on hearsay.<sup>3</sup> Nor did the Liddells occupy Penmorfa until 1865,<sup>4</sup> while the diary which Mrs Lennon thought had disappeared actually survives, covers both summers fully and does not mention the visit to Llandudno.<sup>5</sup> Dodgson spent both summers taking photographs, in London, Freshwater, Croft and other places, but not in Llandudno.<sup>6</sup>

Before Alice was published, two other little works of Dodgson's appeared in print. Early in 1865, the matter of Jowett's salary was at last settled, E. A. Freeman and Charles

1. *Private letter*: Miss F. Manella Dodgson.

2. F.M. in *Handbook*, p. 18.

3. See Florence Becker Lennon: *Lewis Carroll*, pp. 130-132.

4. Thompson, *Life of Liddell*, p. 252.

5. *Private letter*, Miss F. Manella Dodgson.

6. Helmut Gernsheim, pp. 54-60 (extracts from diary).

Elton having proved that Christ Church actually held lands granted by the founder for just the purpose which was now being systematically thwarted.

Christ Church then behaved very handsomely. After establishing that no legal obligation existed, the Dean and Chapter nevertheless raised Jowett's salary to £500.

Dodgson was moved to mirth and astonishment and in March 1865 published a pamphlet on the subject entitled "The New Method of Evaluation, as applied to  $\Pi$ " which ran through several editions. It began with a verbal cartoon:

"Little Jack Horner  
Sat in his corner  
Eating his Christmas pie."

The problem, Dodgson proceeds, hitherto regarded as arithmetical is really a problem in dynamics.

"The following are the main data of the problem: Let  $U$  = the University,  $G$  = Greek, and  $P$  = Professor. Then  $G.P.$  = Greek Professor; let this be reduced to its lowest terms, and call the result  $J.$ " (Jowett).

"Also let  $W$  = the work done,  $T$  = the Times,  $p$  = the given payment,  $\Pi$  the payment according to  $T$  and  $S$  = the sum required; so that  $\Pi = S$ .

"The problem is, to obtain a value for  $\Pi$  which shall be commensurable with  $W$ .

"In the early treatises on this subject, the mean value assigned to  $\Pi$  will be found to be 40:000,000. Later writers suspected that the decimal point had been accidentally shifted, and that the proper value was 400.00000."

He considers various methods of obtaining this result.

### 1. Rationalization.

"The peculiarity of this process consists in its affecting all quantities alike with a negative sign.

"To apply it, let H = High Church, and L = Low Church, then the geometric mean =  $\sqrt{HL}$ : call this "B" (Broad Church)

$$\therefore = HL = B^2$$

"Also let x and y represent unknown quantities.

"The process now requires the breaking up of U (the University) into its partial factions; of the two principal factions thus formed, that corresponding with P. presented no further difficulty" (being that of the rationalists, to which Jowett belonged by virtue of his essay in 'Essays and Reviews') "but it appeared hopeless to rationalize the other." (This was the extreme High Church party known as the Puseyites, though Pusey himself said they had gone far beyond old Tractarians like himself.)

"A reductio ad absurdum was therefore attempted, and it was asked 'why should  $\Pi$  not be evaluated?' The great difficulty now was to discover y ...

### II. The Method of Indifferences.

"Let  $E$  = Essays, and  $R$  = Reviews; then the Locus of  $(E + R)$ , referred to multilinear co-ordinates, will be found to be a superficies (i.e. a locus possessing length and breadth, but no depth). In other words, the writers of "Essays and Reviews" were superficial. They lived in a world of only two dimensions, a superficies, or surface. This is a more mathematical form of the same idea which he expressed in the trial of the Knave of Hearts, who it will be remembered could not swim, "being made entirely of cardboard."

"Let  $V$  = novelty, and assume  $(E + R)$  as a function of  $V$ ," and he proceeds to prove Bishop Wilberforce's contention that there was no novelty in Essays and Reviews.

"It was now necessary to investigate the locus of  $E B P$  (Essays - Broad Church - Professor, but these were also Dr Pusey's initials): this was found to be a species of Catenary, called a Patristic Catenary, which is usually defined as passing through Origen" (a pun on the Saint whom the Tractarians and their successors, the Ritualists were in the habit of quoting on points of doctrine) "and containing many multiple points."

The puns here crowd so thick upon us that we had better cut the Gordian knot. He means that those who were concerned with ancient church history and mere ceremony were as "superficial" as the rationalists. They were concerned only with the surface of things.

Section IV was the "Elimination of J." The suggestion that he should be referred to rectangular axes and divided into two unequal parts ("Off with his head!") being ruled out of court, Dodgson proceeds:

"It was proposed, therefore, to eliminate J. by an appeal to the principle known as "the permanence of equivalent formularies": this, however, failed on application, as J. became indeterminate." The reference here is no doubt to the abortive proceedings against Jowett in the Vice-Chancellor's Court.

"Some advocates of the process would have preferred that J. should be eliminated in toto. The classical scholar need hardly be reminded that toto is the ablative of tum tum, and that this beautiful and expressive phrase embodied the wish that J. should be eliminated by the compulsory religious examination."

J. was to be eliminated "in toto," that is to say, by making him subscribe to the 39 Articles in toto. And he did subscribe to the Articles in toto ("Mr Vice-Chancellor, I have come to sign the Articles") according to Dodgson, for the sake of his tum-tum.

It would be quite wrong to identify the little monster-slayer in Jabberwocky as Jowett, but the tum-tum tree by which he rested is certainly derived from its ablative toto.



"So rested he by the tum-tum tree

And stood awhile in thought."

The ideas which underlie "Through the Looking-glass" were already whirling nebulously in Dodgson's mind.

Meantime, the conclusion of the pamphlet:

#### V. Evaluation Under Pressure.

Of this last method it need only be noted that "by continually increasing E A F (E = Enlightened: A = Able: and F = a force acting equally in all directions, and varying inversely as T, the Times; also the initials of E. A. Freeman who proved the case for increasing Jowett's salary) the result was at last obtained.

II = S (the sum required) = 500\*00000.

"The result differs considerably from the anticipated value, namely 400\*00000: still there can be no doubt that the process has been correctly performed, and that the learned world may be congratulated on the final settlement of this most difficult problem."

In June 1865, appeared another pamphlet, the "Dynamics of a Parti-cle," in which the skit on Jowett's salary was reprinted as Chapter III. Chapter I consists of definitions, postulates and axioms, which parody those of Euclid. "Let it be granted that a controversy may be raised about any question, and at any

distance from that question."

Chapter II is the Dynamics of a Parti-cle and is a political squib. The occasion was the Gladstone-Gathorne-Hardy election at Oxford in 1865 when Gladstone, who had been Tory member for Oxford since 1847, lost his seat.

From the Tory point of view, and it must be remembered that throughout his life Dodgson was "nothing if not a staunch conservative," Gladstone had been behaving very oddly. His career had begun most promisingly with speeches against the Reform Bill and of scriptural sanction for slavery. He had married the daughter of a baronet, published a sound book on Church Principles and in 1843 as President of the Board of Trade, declared himself in favour of withdrawing the bill which provided education for children employed in factories.

Alas for misplaced confidence! In 1859 he had voted with the Government in support of a mild Reform Bill. On the Government's defeat Gladstone, again returned by the University, accepted office in Palmerston's Whig administration. In 1864 he spoke of enfranchising the working-class and in 1865, of disestablishing the Irish Church. He was also known to have agreed with Lord Westbury's findings in the Wilson and Williams case.

It was too much. The man was a radical. In July 1865 Parliament was dissolved and in the subsequent election Gladstone

was defeated.

"At last," he told South Lancashire which returned him immediately afterwards, "I can speak freely."

There was therefore some justification for Dodgson's witticisms such as : "A surd is a radical, whose meaning cannot be exactly ascertained. This class comprises a very large number of parti-cles."

More important than these wonderful puns and subtle innuendoes which lose all point when explained ("Particles are logically divided according to GENIUS and SPEECHES") is the little mathematical fantasy which serves as prologue.

"It was a lovely Autumn evening, and the glorious effects of chromatic aberration were beginning to show themselves in the atmosphere as the earth revolved away from the great western luminary, when two lines might have been observed, wending their way across a plane superficies."

Here is a "flatland" twenty years earlier than Edwin Abbott's.

"The elder of the two had by long practice acquired the art, so painful to young and impulsive loci, of lying evenly between his extreme points; but the younger, in her girlish impetuosity, was ever longing to diverge and become an hyperbola or some such romantic and boundless curve."

The staid, respectable, masculine line and the young,

romantic, feminine line suggest irresistibly himself and Alice Liddell. It would have been strange had all the excitement of the book in progress not made some impression on a girl of thirteen.

"They had lived and loved: fate and the intervening superficies had hitherto kept them asunder, but this was no longer to be: a line had intersected them, making the two interior angles together less than two right angles. It was a moment never to be forgotten, and as they journeyed on, a whisper thrilled along the superficies in isochronous waves of sound, 'Yes! We shall at length meet, if continually produced!'"

The line which intersected them was the story of Alice's Adventures, but they were not after all destined to meet. The superficies continued to intervene.

On July 4, 1865, the third anniversary of the boating trip to Godstow, Alice received the first presentation copy of her "Adventures." Princess Beatrice received the second. That was the right order, one feels, but none the less, a tremendous, a most flattering compliment. Moreover, the book was dedicated to Alice:

*1. Coll., p. 104.*

"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 wither'd wreath of flowers  
 Pluck'd in a far-off land."

The book was full of memories for her, private jokes and local associations, not all of which had been polished out, and though Dodgson himself always regarded as holy and apart the original MS. book with his own quaint pictures, there is something magical and heart-warming about print. The despised public was about to be interested in this, her book, written for her by special appointment, featuring her as heroine.

The public, however, was not after all given much chance to acquire copies of this new book for children. A fortnight after its appearance Dodgson had "heard from Tenniel who is dissatisfied with the printing of the pictures" and on Aug. 2 (W.) "Finally decided on the re-print of 'Alice' and that the first 2,000 shall be sold as waste paper. Wrote about it to Macmillan, Combe and Tenniel."

This was an extraordinary step to take, involving as it did six months further delay and a probable loss of £100.

He calculated the risk he was taking as follows:

1. Facsimile Page of Dodgson's Diary, Handbook, H. 1. 1.

Drawing Pictures .....	138
Cutting .....	142
Printing (by Clay) .....	240
Binding and advertising (say) ..	<u>80</u>
	600

L.e. 6/- a copy on the 2,000 - If I make £500 by sale, this will be a loss of £100 and the loss on the first 2,000 will probably be £100, leaving me £200 out of pocket.

"But if a second 2,000 could be sold it would cost £300, and bring in £500, thus squaring accounts: and any further sale would be a gain, but that I can hardly hope for."

About 48 copies of the "first issue of the first edition" had been given away before August 2, and Dodgson called in as many of these as he could. The remainder of the edition was sold by Macmillan to Messrs Appleton of New York and appeared there about the same time as the second edition ordered by Dodgson. On both sides of the Atlantic these editions were quickly sold out - as were the two larger editions of 1867. Thereafter Alice sold steadily though not as is the general impression phenomenally for the rest of his life. In 1881, for example, fifteen years after its first appearance, the book was in its 83rd thousand and it is calculated that 110,000 copies were sold in his lifetime.<sup>2</sup>

1. *Handbook*, 9p. p. 25.

2. S.H. Williams in the *Handbook* is the authority for book-collectors.

It was not, by modern standards, a best seller. Still, with his income from Christ Church, it put him far above mere independence and established him as a writer. Hitherto he had published mathematical works and contributed to periodicals. There was a quality about Alice which must have shaken up the Pre-Raphaelites who had welcomed him more for his rosewood camera than because they took him seriously. There is nothing like financial success to make people see merit in a work of art and whereas in 1862 Dodgson was ineffectually imitating Christina Rossetti, by 1874 she was avowedly imitating him (in "Speaking Likenesses") and to no better purpose.

In the year 1866 he enhanced his reputation as a mathematician by having a paper accepted by the Royal Society. George Macdonald in "Orts," throws a curious sidelight on the subject.

"The imagination of man," he writes, "is made in the image of the imagination of God .... our consciousness, in the resembling conditions, must afar off resemble his." Macdonald admits that "the facts of Nature are to be discovered only by observation and experiment. True. But how does the man of science come to think of his experiments? Does observation reach to the non-present, the possible, the yet unconceived? ... It is the far-seeing imagination which beholds what might be a form of things and says to the intellect 'try whether that may not be the form of these things' ... and the construction of any

hypothesis whatever is the work of the imagination."

In a footnote to the above, he adds: "This paper was already written, when, happening to mention the present subject to a mathematical friend, a lecturer at one of the universities, he gave us a corroborative instance. He had lately guessed that a certain algebraic process could be shortened exceedingly if the method which his imagination suggested should prove to be a true one - that is, an algebraic law. He put it to the test of experiment - committed the verification, that is, into the hands of his intellect - and found the method true. It has since been accepted by the Royal Society."

The friend was the Rev. C. L. Dodgson, M.A., Student of Christ Church, Oxford, whose "Condensation of Determinants," being a new and brief method for computing their arithmetical values was published by the Royal Society in its Proceedings, May 17th, 1866. Dodgson was, of course, unable to send this paper to the Royal Society himself. It was sent by his former tutor, Professor Price. Dodgson also published it separately and in the following year an expanded version called "An Elementary Treatise on Determinants."

Indeed in the year 1866, things were going almost suspiciously well. His mathematical work, though not really advanced, had achieved the distinction of being published by the Royal Society. In the University he was noted as a wit and he probably added to that reputation by publishing "The Elections and the



Hebdomadal Council" though there is more wit than humour in its eighteenth century couplets.

And, by the end of the year, he had already decided upon a sequel to Alice's Adventures since he had applied unsuccessfully to Tenniel and to Sir Noel Paton to do the illustrations for it, before writing on January 22nd, 1867, to Richard Doyle."

Referring to the "lost" stories - those never written down Alice says: "Much of 'Through the Looking Glass' is made up of them too, particularly the ones to do with chessmen, which are dated by the period when we were excitedly learning chess."

This period is fixed, though not exactly, by her remark: "About the time when the 'Alice' was told, we used to spend a good many happy hours in the Deanery garden trying to play croquet. Chess came later."<sup>2</sup>

In casting about for successors to his playing-card characters, Dodgson was bound to hit on chess, that most mathematical and picturesque of games. In his library was "Walker on Chess," Staunton's "Chess Players' Companion" and Staunton's "Chess Tournament"<sup>3</sup> and it is on record that he once mated Lionel Tennyson in six moves - not a difficult feat against a beginner but one that showed he knew something about the game.

One game they certainly played was the queening of a pawn, Alice taking the pawn and he the rest of the pieces. He showed her the powers of the knight and the queen and began to think

1. S. H. W. in *Handbook*, p. 238.

2. *Cornhill Mag.*, July, 1932.

3. *Catalogue*, Bodleian

about those powers in relation to the powers of a pawn. It was fascinating. Here was another undiscovered country, a little, strange world, with its own laws. No doubt Alice's reactions helped to provide the new world with a flora and fauna.

It was fortunate that he had lost no time in acquiring this new set of Alice's reactions, for the delightful relationship could not last. Exactly what happened is not clear, but the evidence is very strong that something did happen as a result of which there was estrangement and emotional tension.

In the first place, Mrs Skene, (Lorina Liddell, Alice's elder sister, known as Ina) told Mrs Florence Becker Lennon in the course of a brief conversation that there was a breach between Dodgson and the Liddell family, while Alice was growing up. This she said was due to Dodgson's extreme sensitiveness.

Then Alice herself in her "Recollections" says, "Unfortunately my mother tore up all the letters Mr Dodgson wrote to me when I was a small girl. I cannot remember what any of them were like, but it is an awful thought to contemplate what may have perished in the Deanery wastepaper-basket."

Again, there was Alice's fall from her pony and Dodgson's strange neglect of her during her long confinement to bed with a broken thigh. Unfortunately no exact date can be given even for this memorable incident for Caryl Hargreaves does not

know when it occurred and it is not mentioned in Dodgson's diary.<sup>2</sup> It was almost certainly after the publication of the first "Alice" and before the publication of the second.

This is confirmed by the age of the pony "Tommy" which was given to Alice's brother Harry soon after the Liddell family moved to Oxford, that is, about 1856. "When Tommy got too old," says Alice, "my father bought a bigger pony for us." That would happen about the critical period now being considered.

"One Boxing Day" (she remembered the day, but not the year) "this pony crossed its legs and came down with me on the Abingdon road."

Alice's thigh was broken and her father went to get help. Some strangers came along in a wagonette and proceeded to borrow, from a nearby farm, a feather-bed on which they conveyed Alice back to the Deanery. When shut, the door of the wagonette crushed her a little, causing her great pain, so that she was tearful and almost delirious by the time old Bultitude, the Deanery coachman, who had taught her to ride, carried her indoors.

"You won't let them hurt me any more, will you?" said Alice.

In telling the story afterwards, Bultitude used to say that he "nearly let Miss Alice drop."

Alice continues: "As it was, I was on my back for six

1. Private letter: Wing-Commander Caryl Hargreaves.

2. Private letter: Miss F. Menella Dodgson.

weeks with a broken thigh. During all these weeks Mr Dodgson never came to see me. If he had, perhaps the world might have known some more of Alice's adventures."

Had the "breach" been a mere quarrel between Dodgson and his "child-friend" who was no longer a child, he must surely have gone to see her. A broken thigh wipes off all scores of that nature. Something more fundamental is implied in his failure to condole.

Lastly there is the evidence of the diary,<sup>1</sup> which, however, was not of the modern uninhibited type. It was intended to help him remember what had happened and not to enable us to see into his life.

It appears that after each long vacation he found some difficulty in resuming friendly relations with the children. On April 29, 1863, he writes: "There is no variety in my life to record just now except meetings with the Liddells, the record of which has become almost continuous."

Then came the long vacation. It was the following December before Dodgson spent an evening at the Deanery. He says: "Mrs Liddell was with us part of the time. It is nearly 6 months since I have seen anything of them to speak of."

In January 1864 came that "rather disagreeable correspondence" with the Dean, and then nothing about the Liddells for more than a year.

1. What follows is based on a summary of Lewis Carroll's relations with the Liddells 1862-73 sent me by Miss F. Menella Dodgson.

The next scrap of evidence is on March 16, 1865: "Coming down Oriel Lane, I met Ina and Miss Prickett and had a short talk with them. It is long since we interchanged a word, but we met as if it had been yesterday."

On May 11 there is the interesting entry: 'Met Alice and Miss Prickett in the quadrangle. Alice seems changed a good deal." She would be changing. It was just a week after her thirteenth birthday.

Then, on Nov. 30, 1866, he had two invitations for the evening, one being to the Deanery. He chose the other one, giving no reason. Yet five days later he dined with the Liddells and had "one of the pleasantest evenings I have had there for a very long time." Ina sat beside him and he "had a good deal of talk with Mrs Liddell."

In 1867 there is no mention of Alice but two references to her parents. One day in April he had a "little talk" with the Dean and Mrs Liddell at the Museum and on May 18 he "paid a visit to Mrs Liddell and had a long chat with her, walking about the Deanery Garden, a thing I have not done for years."

In the diaries for 1868 and 1869 there are large gaps, those from Jan 24 to April 2, 1868, from Jan 28 - April 6, 1869, and from June 14 to Aug. 3, 1869 being the longest. There is no mention of the Liddell family at all for more than three

years after his long chat with Mrs Liddell in the Deanery Garden.

Suddenly on June 25, 1870 the silence is broken. It appears that the Liddells have not vanished from the earth. Mrs Liddell brought Ina and Alice to be photographed, which was, he says, "a wonderful thing to have happened - (the last occasion was /)." "

The next reference to the family is on Nov. 16, 1871. He was at a reception and "met the Deanery party - I took in Edith Liddell and found her (when the ice was broken) a v. pleasant neighbour. -" When the ice was broken - with the Eaglet! In the following year there is again no mention of the Liddells.

It was indeed a delicate situation, especially after the publication and resounding success of "Alice's Adventures" and there is every sign that it was handled with true Victorian firmness and discretion.

1867 was rather a bleak year for Dodgson, or any rate, for Lewis Carroll. In May appeared "The Deserted Parks" a skilful parody of Goldsmith's "Deserted Village," in which he once more hunted his bête noir, Jowett:

"A man he was to undergraduates dear,

And passing rich with forty pounds a year."

1. Space left blank.

Probably Jowett had to pay for the suffering inflicted on Dodgson himself by time and the Liddells.

That summer he spent two months travelling on the continent with Henry Parry Liddon, later Dean of St. Paul's. They went to Moscow, a considerable journey for those days, by Brussels, Cologne, Berlin, Königsberg and St. Petersburg, returning by Warsaw, Breslau, Dresden and Paris.

Liddon was acting as unofficial ambassador from Wilberforce to the Greek Orthodox Church and had conversations with Bishop Leonide and with Philaret, the Metropolitan. He was relieved to find that the English Church was recognised in Russia as a separate and 'valid' branch of the original church. They agreed that the Pope had no historical warrant for his claim to Supremacy. Liddon approved in general of the 'supernatural' aspects of Russian religion but had to refrain from joining in certain responses concerning the Virgin Mary.

Dodgson spoke German and French, though with difficulty, could follow the Greek service from the book and took the trouble to learn the Russian alphabet. He enjoyed the journey, but found the continental church services too gorgeous and the hotel cutlery none too clean.

He and Liddon had long conversations on religious and other matters. Liddon thought the clergy should voluntarily accept celibacy and though he had formerly enjoyed the theatre had not

*1. Life and Letters of Henry Parry Liddon, by J. O. Johnson*

been in one since 1852. On this last point, Dodgson disagreed with him and in Paris visited the "Theatre Vaudeville" and the "Opera Comique," (without Liddon).

He was susceptible to beauty and his Russian Journal contains many descriptions of religious paintings. He could have spent hours gazing at the Sistine Madonna and wept in Cologne Cathedral.

"Dodgson," says Liddon in his diary for July 15, "was overcome by the beauty of Cologne Cathedral. I found him leaning against the rails of the Choir, and sobbing like a child. When the verger came to show us over the chapels, he got out of the way. He said that he could not bear the harsh voice of the man in the presence of so much beauty."

He was also moved by the return across the Channel from Calais. He stood in the bow all the way, chatting to the sailor on the lookout and watching "the lights of the shoreward houses - till the faint white light behind them, that looked at first like a mist creeping along the horizon, was visible at last in the grey twilight as the cliffs of old England."

Behind those white cliffs, the English Church continued to explode at intervals and the latest development was called "Ritualism." In 1865, Jowett is described as greatly concerned about it and its spread "amongst the weaker undergraduates, some of whom got up the semblance of a chapel in their rooms,

1. "Russian Journal" by Lewis Carroll.



with vestments and incense."

Nor was it confined to undergraduates. "If you were to walk abroad," said Jowett in a letter of Dec. 26th, 1865, "you would be very much surprised to see the changes in our London churches. There is a sort of aesthetico-catholic revival among them. I wonder how many more spurious forms of Christianity are to appear in these latter days."

In this Dodgson would for once have agreed with him, though he would probably have felt indignant at having to do so. "My dear father, "he wrote a good deal later, "was what is called a 'High Churchman' and I naturally adopted those views, but have always felt repelled by the yet higher development called 'Ritualism.'"<sup>2</sup>

Later still, in "Sylvie and Bruno," 1889, he explains his attitude more fully.

The narrator and his friends have been to the village church, where:

"The service would have been pronounced by any modern aesthetic religionist - or religious aesthete, which is it? - to be crude and cold: to me, coming fresh from the ever advancing developments of a London Church under a soi-disant "Catholic" Rector, it was unspeakably refreshing.

"There was no theatrical procession of demure little choristers, trying their best not to simper under the admiring

1. *Life of Jowett*, vol I, p. 351

2. *Coll.*, p. 340

gaze of the congregation: the people's share in the service was taken by the people themselves, unaided, except that a few good voices, judiciously posted here and there among them, kept the singing from going too far astray.

"There was no murdering of the noble music, contained in the Bible and the Liturgy, by its recital in a dead monotone, with no more expression than a mechanical talking-doll.

No, the prayers were prayed, the lessons were read and - best of all - the sermons were talked.

'Yes,' said Arthur as if in answer to my thoughts, 'those "high" services are fast becoming pure formalism. And it's specially bad for the little boys.'

In the Preface to "Sylvie and Bruno Concluded," Dodgson mentions that "objections have been made to the severe language he has put into the mouth of Arthur on the subjects of sermons, church services and choristers. While protesting against the assumption that he, the author, is ready to endorse the opinions of characters in his story, he says, "But in these two instances, I admit that I am much in sympathy with Arthur ... "

Then, as to Choristers, "and all the other accessories of music, vestments, processions, etc. - which have come, along with them, into fashion - while freely admitting that the "Ritual" movement was sorely needed, and that it has effected a vast improvement in our Church Services, which had become

dead and dry to the last degree, I hold that, like many other desirable movements it has gone too far in the opposite direction and has introduced many new dangers."

This was the movement which in 1867 Parliament attempted to curb by legislation. Against this Wilberforce set his face, though his own Lower House of Convocation had in the previous year passed a resolution asking the Upper House to take steps for "clearing the doubts and allaying the anxieties that existed on the subject of Ritualism." On this occasion Stanley had also declared for toleration "on the general principle by which the Church of England tolerates all that it can include within the pale."

Lord Shaftesbury, however, had a bill ready, which if carried would make "the 58th Canon the absolute and sole rule of the Church of England as to ornaments, dresses, etc." He was known to have the backing of the Archbishop of Canterbury and most of the bishops.

Wilberforce got Gladstone to intervene with the suggestion of a Royal Commission and when Shaftesbury moved the second reading in May 1867 it was the Archbishop of Canterbury himself who proposed the amendment. The bill was not brought on again and when the Royal Commission was set up Wilberforce was on it.

Shaftesbury protested in the House of Lords that as he himself had refused to serve on it "as an extreme man,"

1. Daniel, pp. 178-179.

2. Life of Stanley, Vol. II, p. 210.

Wilberforce ought also to keep off it.

"It is very easy," said Wilberforce in reply, "for the Noble Lord to attack me, though he knows I have no extreme views, and though he confesses that he is himself an extreme man. I am not an extreme man. I am one who holds that middle position as to doctrine in the Church that Richard Hooker held."

The fate of the commission was sealed. Wilberforce dictated its policy and its recommendations were phrased in words vague enough to tolerate anything. "At the present day "ritual" still causes occasional breaches of the peace in London and elsewhere.

There seemed no end to these controversies. First there was the Oxford Movement which led to numerous secessions to the Church of Rome. Next came the intrusion of science in the form of "Essays and Reviews" and no sooner was that settled - if it ever was settled - than another drift to the right had begun, with more impassioned speeches and futile argument.

Perhaps most ridiculous of all was the case of John William Colenso, Bishop of Natal, who five years previously had published a "rationalist" work on the Pentateuch. His case was still dragging on. Now he was deposed, now he was invited to retract. The Privy Council supported him against the Bishop of Capetown. He returned to Natal only to be excommunicated "to be taken of the whole multitude of the faithful as a heathen man and a

publican. Stanley's impassioned speech on Colenso's behalf, in which he called upon Convocation to deal out to himself the same measure as was dealt to the Bishop of Natal, was published in Sept. 1867 during the Pan-Anglican Conference in Lambeth. Stanley also refused the abbey to the Conference for its final service because he feared that Wilberforce had turned the delegates against Colenso and the Privy Council.

Such controversies were entirely alien to Dodgson's conception of religion.

"Jabberwocky," which might be called the theme-song of "Through the Looking-glass" was probably complete by this time. Collingwood tells us that "Lewis Carroll composed this poem while staying with his cousins, the Misses Wilcox, at Whitburn, near Sunderland. To while away an evening, the whole party sat down to a game of verse-making, and 'Jabberwocky' was his contribution."

Collingwood gives no date for this game of verse-making nor does he say whether he is referring to the first stanza only or the rest of the poem. The first stanza, as we know appeared in Misch Masch, dated Croft, 1855, with the title "A Stanza of Anglo-Saxon Poetry." This looks more like the result of a game than the rest of the poem which cannot have been written before 1862 since only the first stanza appears in Misch-Masch and he was still keeping up that private anthology till then.

The first verse of "Jabberwocky" is, let us freely admit, pure nonsense. It has the sound without the sense of the first verse of any poem. Like the two mournful features of Charles Lamb's Dream Children, without speech it strangely impresses upon us the effects of speech. He invented pictures for it and explanations for the words, but it is better entirely unexplained. Then it does powerfully affect some region of the mind, akin to that which appreciates music.

The remainder of the poem was written to conform. In 1850 he had invented a monster for the readers of the Rectory Umbrella with no other purpose than to make their flesh creep. He called it "Horrors."

"Methought I walked a dismal place

Dim horrors all around.

The air was thick with many a face

And black as night the ground.

"I saw a monster come with speed,

Its face of grimmiest green,

On human beings used to feed,

Most dreadful to be seen.

"I could not speak, I could not fly,

I fell down in that place,

I saw the monster's horrid eye

Come leering in my face!"

And so to the inevitable awakening.

On this preliminary sketch, and on all monsters whatever, he based his Jabberwock which, its title shows, also acquired an allegorical significance. About 1884, the Fourth class of the Girl's Latin School at Boston, U.S., started a magazine and asked his permission to call it "The Jabberwock." He wrote in reply:

"Mr Lewis Carrol has much pleasure in giving to the editors of the proposed magazine permission to use the title they wish for. He finds that the Anglo-Saxon word "wocer" or "wocor" signifies "offspring" or "fruit". Taking "Jabber" in the ordinary acceptation of "excited and voluble discussion", this would give the meaning of "the result of much excited discussion."

That was very gracefully done. But the hideous monster which he must have encouraged Tenniel to draw for him suggests a different kind of excited discussion. It is, in fact, an embodiment of Controversy.

The little St. George with his vorpal sword is made very attractive in Tenniel's drawing and could not possibly galumph. In the poem the monster-slayer is burlesqued as well as the

monster.

The Tum-tum tree is certainly the Thirty-nine Articles which people like Jowett signed, according to Dodgson for the sake of their bread-and-butter (another of his recurrent symbols). It will be remembered that tum-tum is derived from its ablative toto or in toto, the manner in which the Thirty-nine Articles had to be accepted.

He may have written the poem without any precise meaning in mind, but the disgust he felt at the religious controversies around him and the apparent hopelessness of ending them by force ("Force without geniality," said Tennyson, "will do very little.") found their way into the poem.

So far with confidence. It seems to me, also, that the Jubjub bird has some affinity with the "treacle" of Alice's Adventures and the Bandersnatch with pepper. A jubjub, then as now, was sweet and soothing. Bandersnatch has a harsher sound. They might be the two opposite sides again, the Catholic and Protestant aspects of the English Church.

Vorpall seems to be concocted out of Verbal and Gospel by taking alternate letters from each and the poem vaguely burlesques the dragon-slayer of the Faerie Queen, whose sword was the word of God.

The last verse is a repetition of the first. Nothing has really changed. One Controversy has been slain (by the Church



or the University or the country), but the outgribing of the mome raths is as strident as ever.

"Somehow," said Alice, "it seems to fill my head with ideas - only I don't exactly know what they are!"

That was the effect he intended to achieve.

It seems incredible that the same pen and at about the same time could have produced "Bruno's Revenge" for Aunt Judy's Magazine, edited by Mrs Alfred Gatty. "Sylvie and Bruno" (1889) and "Sylvie and Bruno Concluded" (1893) had cast their shadow before.

The little sermon on revenge is not without interest. Bruno is a naughty little fairy who is spoiling Sylvie's garden because she makes him do his lessons. The narrator teaches him a better kind of revenge - to make the garden beautiful. There are side-glances at "honours" ("the various queer things we call 'an honour' in this world) and fox-hunting (Bruno liked snail-hunting). Bruno also gave an interesting account of the phases of the moon.

"The moon's face gets dirtier and dirtier every night, till it's black all across. And then, when it's dirty all over - so - (he passed his hand across his own rosy cheeks as he spoke) "then she washes it."

"Then it's all clean again, isn't it?"

"Not all in a moment," said Bruno. "What a deal of teach-

ing oo wants! She washes it little by little - only she begins at the other edge, oo know."

A most observant little fellow!

The narrator too has some curious notions - "for instance, I never could quite settle, supposing I were a moth, whether I would rather be kept out of the candle, or be allowed to fly straight in and get burnt." Compare "Looking-glass Insects": "I wonder if that's the reason insects are so fond of flying into candles - because they want to turn into Snap-dragon-flies!"

Lastly there is the rule about finding fairies: "that it must be a very hot day - that we may consider as settled: and you must be just a little sleepy - but not too sleepy to keep your eyes open, mind. Well, and you ought to feel a little - what one may call 'fairyish' - the Scotch call it 'eerie', and perhaps that's a prettier word." This is the state, a moment of trance, a falling from her, vanishing, which comes upon Alice as she stands musing before the looking-glass with the black kitten in her arms. But that was not written for Aunt Judy.

In 1866, Dodgson had printed an enigma, by Bishop Wilberforce and his own "explication" thereof. The answer was Man. In 1868 he produced two ciphers, a Telegraph-cipher and an Alphabet-cipher.

To 1868 also belongs "The Offer of the Clarendon Trustees"

with its priceless suggestion that the University should provide "a narrow strip of ground, railed off and carefully levelled, for investigating whether Parallel lines meet or not: for this purpose, it should stretch, to use the expressive language of Euclid, 'ever so far.'

"This last process of 'continually producing the lines' may require centuries or more; but such a period, though long in the life of an individual, is as nothing in the life of the University."

A more serious mathematical work appeared about the same time, "The Fifth Book of Euclid, treated algebraically, so far as it relates to commensurable magnitudes."

On June 21, 1868, his father died and this he said was the greatest blow that had ever befallen him.<sup>4</sup> There is no record of the conversations those two enjoyed at Croft or Ripon when Charles went home on vacation but his father probably understood him better than anybody.

First his mother, then Alice, now his father. There were still his brothers and sisters but the family was scattered and Croft Rectory with all its memories went with the living and like dreamy old Daresbury was trodden by the foot of the stranger. As if to emphasise the break with the past, he moved in November into his new and spacious rooms in Tom Quad.

By now "Through the Looking-glass" was beginning to take

shape and we find its ideas spilling over into his correspondence. In three letters to the children of Arthur Hughes, he produced a delightful little fantasy out of the Looking-glass symbols.

" - and that reminds me of a very curious thing that happened to me at half-past four yesterday. Three visitors came knocking at my door, begging me to let them in. And when I opened the door, who do you think they were? You'll never guess. Why, they were three cats! Wasn't it curious? However, they all looked so cross and disagreeable that I took up the first thing I could lay my hand on (which happened to be the rolling-pin) and knocked them all down, as flat as pan-cakes!" /

The next letter makes it plain what he meant by 'flat'.

"About the cats, you know. I didn't leave them lying flat on the ground like dried flowers. No, I picked them up, and I was as kind as I could be to them. I lent them the portfolio for a bed - they wouldn't have been comfortable in a real bed, you know: they were too thin - but they were quite happy between the sheets of blotting-paper - and each of them had a pen-wiper for a pillow."

And in the third letter:

"I gave them each a spoonful of ink as a treat; but they were ungrateful for that, and made dreadful faces. But of course, as it was given them as a treat, they had to drink it. One of

them has turned black since: it was a white cat to begin with."

Here are the cats, the blotting-paper out of which the White Knight was trying to cook his pudding, the idea of flatness again and the bottle of ink which was the only liquid Alice could find in Looking-glass House.

He was also preparing his poems for publication and presumably writing "Phantasmagoria," a piece of pure levity on the subject of ghosts which gave its title to the volume. He chose thirteen of his lighter poems and thirteen serious ones. All but seven had appeared in various periodicals.

"The Valley of the Shadow of Death" was written two months before the death of his father and has therefore no reference to it. Rather is it a confession of world weariness in which the idea of suicide is allowed to appear.

"I heard a whisper, cold and clear,  
That is the gate of Death.

O bitter is it to abide

In weariness alway:

At dawn to sigh for eventide,

At eventide for day.

Thy noon hath fled: thy sun hath shone:

The brightness of thy day is gone:

What need to lag and linger on

Till life be cold and gray?

"O well," it said, "beneath yon pool

In some still cavern deep,

The fevered brain might slumber cool,

The eyes forget to weep:

Within that goblet's mystic rim

Are draughts of healing, stored for him

Whose heart is sick, whose sight is dim,

Who prayeth but to sleep!"

He flies temptation, of course, and is restored to happiness by the sight of two children in a cottage reading the Bible. One he eventually marries, but she dies and leaves him alone again with his only son to whom on his death-bed he is confiding this long-kept secret.

"But if there be - O if there be

A truth in what they say,

That angel-forms we cannot see

Go with us on our way,

Then surely she is with me here,

I dimly feel her spirit near -

The morning-mists grow thin and clear,

And Death brings in the day."

The mood is significant.

More important, perhaps were some of the poems he left out

of this selection, for these were the ones he intended to use in "Through the Looking-glass."

One was the White Knight's ballad, which, as "Upon the Lonely Moor" had appeared in "The Train" in 1856. It was then offered as the original of Wordsworth's "Resolution and Independence," "painful as its appearance must be ... "

Like almost all Dodgson's parodies, however, it had a dual purpose - to imitate a well-known original and to express some definite idea of his own. Here are two voices both apparently talking nonsense.

The voices, however, are clearly distinguishable; it is impossible to mistake one for the other.

"He said, 'I look for soap-bubbles

That lie among the wheat

And bake them into mutton-pies

And sell them in the street ...

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;

But fourpence-halfpenny is all

They give me for my toil."

He said, "I hunt for haddock's 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 silver shine,  
 But for a copper halfpenny,  
 And that will purchase nine."

It is a humble, yet practical voice, the voice of commerce or applied science. The aged, aged man takes the wonders of nature, subjects them to some ridiculous process or other and gains some insignificant reward.

The other is an irritable but preoccupied voice, the voice of one who has suddenly noticed something inexplicable and is attempting to force an explanation from it while attending to more important matters.

"But I was thinking of a way

To multiply by ten,

And always in the answer get

The question back again.

I did not hear a word he said

But kicked that old man calm,

And said, "'Come tell me how you live!'

and pinched him in the arm.



But I was thinking of a plan  
 To paint one's gaiters green  
 So much the colour of the grass  
 That they could ne'er be seen.

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

Here we have mathematics, philosophy, pure science as opposed to their mercenary derivative with his low cunning and ingratiating manner.

"And that's the way" (he gave a wink)  
 "I get my living here,  
 And very gladly will I drink  
 Your honour's health in beer."

The last verse has something more profound to yield, a really startling idea from the borderland of mathematics and metaphysics.

"And now," says the voice of theory,  
 "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 a statement I aver,

Of which I am not sure,

I think of that strange wanderer

Upon the lonely moor."

In the Looking-glass version, the last verse is altered significantly. In place of:

"Or if a statement I aver

Of which I am not sure"

he introduced an illustration of the law of gravity:

Or if I drop upon my toe

A very heavy weight,"

and his aged, aged man was no longer "Upon a lonely moor," but "A-sitting on a gate." But he retained:

"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."

These lines contain two illustrations of a strange phenomenon, so obvious that we never notice it. It might be called "oppositeness," the difference and the resemblance between

our right and left hands, or feet or ears.

They seem to be identical in all respects, these pairs of opposites, and yet they cannot be proved identical. They are known as "mirror-images"; Kant called them "incongruent counterparts." The ancient world failed to notice the principle altogether.

Take a pair of triangles, oppositely situated one to another. It is easy to prove them congruent.

Apply the triangle ABC to the triangle DEF - lift it up, that is, take it out of its plane surface, in which it has lived all its life, turn it over in our space, of which it knows nothing, and lay it down so that it coincides with its counterpart or mirror-image.

Unfortunately we cannot use this method to prove the congruence of the spaces occupied by our hands - spaces such as might be left if we put them into glue and took them out again, or such as we leave when we take our feet out of our shoes.

Kant thought the fact that we cannot use "superposition" with such bodies as screws with left and right threads, pairs of hands and feet, and (simplest possible case) spherical triangles was due to the nature of our space, which lacked an additional dimension where the "turning over" of a left hand into a right hand could be performed.

I think it extremely probable that Dodgson had read or at

events heard discussed in some detail Kant's little pre-critical work "On the First Ground for the Distinctions of Regions in Space" (1768). In trying to make clear the nature of an asymmetrical body, Kant uses a written page.

"In a written page, for instance ... the very same writing becomes unrecognisable when seen in such a way that everything which formerly was from left to right is reversed and is viewed from right to left."

This, of course, is how all looking-glass books appear to Alice. She has to hold them up to a looking-glass to read them. Dodgson had a special block made with reversed type to illustrate this.

Again, he must have known about Pasteur's work on crystals which began in 1846 when he was studying tartaric and paratartaric acids. Pasteur knew that natural tartaric acid as found in wine polarised light to the right, whereas paratartaric acid made in the laboratory had no polarising effect on light whatever.

He examined the crystals of paratartaric acid and saw that they were of two kinds, identical except that they were what Kant would have called incongruent counterparts. These he separated by hand with the result that he could now make two substances, one polarising light to the left and the other to the right.

"His delight," says his son-in-law "was so great that he

1. Trans. John Handyside, pp. 21, 22.

quitted the laboratory abruptly." Hardly had he gone outside when he met the assistant of the physical professor. He embraced him, exclaiming, "My Dear Monsieur Bertrand, I have just made a great discovery! ... I am so happy, that a nervous tremulousness has taken possession of me, which prevents me from looking again through the polariscope. Let us go to the Luxembourg, and I will explain it all to you. "

The Academy of Sciences was excited but sceptical.

M. Biot insisted on having the experiment repeated. Pasteur was asked to prepare the crystals, whereupon M. Biot performed the rest of the experiment himself. Its success was complete.

Visibly moved, the old man seized Pasteur by the arm and said, "My dear child, I have loved science so well throughout my life that this makes my heart beat."

Pasteur on various occasions philosophised on his discovery. He noted that the universe as a whole is dissymmetric and thought that symmetry and dissymmetry might provide the long-sought distinction between animate and inanimate matter. His arguments were seized on by people who, as Professor Tyndall said, "dreading materialism were ready to welcome any generalisation which seemed to differentiate the living world from the dead."

Pasteur also thought that it might be possible to produce not only new substances, but new vegetable and animal species by replacing in the living cells, cellulose, albumen and so on

1. Lady Claud Hamilton: Life of Pasteur, pp. 18-20.

by synthetic substances with an opposite polarising effect on light. Microscopic plants he noticed preferred one form of tartaric acid to the other. <sup>1</sup>

"Perhaps," Alice mused, holding the kitten up to the looking-glass, "perhaps Looking-glass milk isn't good to drink - "

On December 1st, 1856 (the year of the White Knight's ballad) at the Anniversary Meeting of the Royal Society, the Rumford Medal was awarded to M. Pasteur "for his discovery of the nature of racemic acid and its relations to polarised light." In the absence of the Foreign Secretary, Dr Sharpey was asked to transmit the medal to M. Pasteur "in testimony of the value which we attach to his brilliant discovery."

A clear account of Pasteur's work in this field (not that for which he is now so universally known) was given by the President.

"The acid," said Lord Wrottesley "obtained from the right-handed crystals proved to be absolutely identical with tartaric acid in all its properties; that obtained from the left-handed crystals proved to be identical, so to speak, with the image of tartaric acid in a mirror." <sup>2</sup>

No doubt the Rev. Bartholomew Price, F.R.S., knew about Pasteur's discoveries long before 1856 and it was the kind of subject in which his young friend Dodgson could hardly fail to be interested.

1. *Lady C. H., Pasteur, pp. 29-38.*
2. *Proceedings, Royal Soc., Vol VIII pp. 254-256.*

It was a different Alice who first went through the looking-glass, Alice Raikes, a distant relative of Dodgson's, afterwards Mrs Wilson Fox. He was staying with his uncle in Onslow Square, South Kensington, when he overheard some children who were playing in the gardens, address one of their number as Alice.

Dodgson introduced himself to the party.

"So you are another Alice," he said to the little girl. "I am very fond of Alices. Will you come with me and see something which is rather puzzling?"

He took the whole party into his uncle's house and putting an orange into Alice's hand, said: "Which hand is that orange in?"

"My right hand," said the child.

"Now," he said, "go and look at the little girl in the glass over there and tell me which hand she is holding the orange in."

Alice surveyed her reflection gravely.

"She is holding it in her left hand," she said.

"How do you explain that?"

The reply, when it came, he regarded as a good one.

"Supposing I was on the other side of the glass," she said, "wouldn't the orange still be in my right hand?"

"Well done, little Alice," he exclaimed. "It's the best

answer I've had yet." /

Apparently he told friends afterwards that this incident suggested looking-glass land to him; but the anecdote itself proves that he was already thinking about the matter.

Another source of Looking-glass ideas was a scientific fantasy or paradox, propounded by Gustav Theodor Fechner. Fechner was Dodgson's counterpart at the University of Leipzig. In 1839, he had resigned his professorship of physics owing to an injury to his eyes but continued to give public lectures, published serious books under his own name and lighter work under a pseudonym, "Dr Mises."

It was in any case probable that Dodgson - Carroll would hear of Fechner - Mises but the presence of Max Müller at Christ Church made this inevitable. Professor Müller had been at School (1836-41) and University (1841-44) in Leipzig before coming to Oxford by way of Berlin, Paris and London. He probably corresponded with Fechner and there were books by Fechner in his library.

"Space Has Four Dimensions" was one of the "Vier Paradoxe" (Four Paradoxes) published by Fechner, as Dr Mises in 1846. It is a delightful mixture of science and satire, with asides very much after Dodgson's own manner.

Fechner proves that time is really a fourth dimension by the process now quite familiar of removing one of the other three.

1. *"A Selection from the Letters of Lewis Carroll to his Child Friends,"* ed. E.M. Hatch, pp. 8, 9.



He imagines a small coloured manikin running around on the paper in a camera obscura (Mickey Mouse in one of Walt Disney's Silly Symphonies would be a modern equivalent) and points out that such a being would know as little of the third as we of a fourth dimension. Yet the third exists for us.

What is this fourth dimension? Pass the silhouette or manikin of the surface through the third dimension along the beam of light. "As it comes into other areas of light, it will itself be altered thereby and perhaps at the end of the way it will appear pale and wrinkled, whereas at the beginning it was smooth and round."

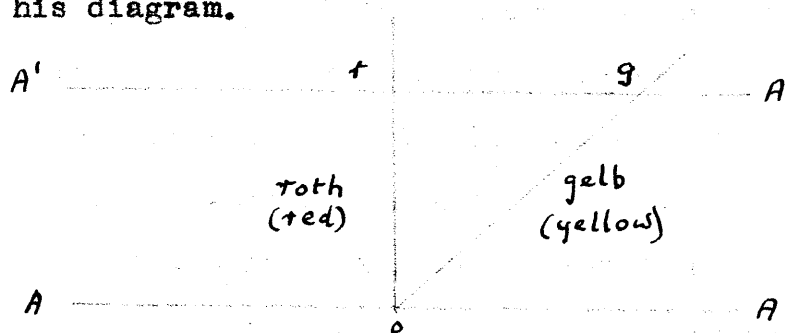
It cannot understand this, of course, but remarks rather pathetically: "There is something which I call time and in time everything changes, even I," which is exactly what we say ourselves.

This, says Fechner is due to the movement of our space of three dimensions through the fourth, of which movement we perceive only the passage of time and the consequent change. At each moment we have a cross-section of this larger reality, of which as a whole we know nothing, any more than, shall we say, Mickey Mouse, were he conscious, would know of the world beyond his screen.

There is no reason, says Fechner, in this following Plato, why time should not run back instead of forward and he imagines,

as Plato does the graves opening, and the whole history of the world in reverse. There is no golden age in Fechner's vision. All humanity returns to Adam, while Adam himself is crushed into clay and taken up with the earth, sea, sun and stars into the original Oneness of God.

Another wierd idea of Fechner's was that motion is an illusion. This he illustrated by means of beams of light. Here is his diagram.



A beam of red light and a beam of yellow light are focussed in one spot on a sheet of paper, producing an orange patch. If the paper is now passed along the red beam, the red spot will remain where it is in the centre of the paper, but the yellow spot will appear to travel across the sheet towards the edge and the more oblique the beam the more rapid will be the 'Movement' of the spot.

Movement in our world of three dimensions therefore is merely due to the movement of our universe along the fourth dimension. Mathematicians, he says, will have to face a new geometry of four dimensions (Arthur Cayley had already done so) but will no longer have to worry about the subject of dynamics.

The variable 't' will appear as the fourth co-ordinate of space.

As will be shown Dodgson used ideas identical to these in his White Queen who "lived backwards" and his Red Queen who made Alice run "faster, faster" in order to remain in the same place.

From the satirical asides, too he derived some valuable hints. Fechner distinguishes two classes of people who will be particularly difficult to convince of the existence of the Fourth Dimension; "naturalists" who believe only what they see and philosophers who see only what they believe."

They have in fact very little notion of the third dimension.

"Naturalists know only length and breadth - except, that is, for astronomers who spend all their time looking up, only to see everything the wrong way round in their telescopes. The fall of bodies forces them to recognise the third dimension at least as a hypothesis. But where, they ask, is the fourth dimension?"

From this Dodgson got further hints for his White Queen and White Knight while his Red Queen has affinities with Fechner's philosophers.

"Philosophers try to get as far as possible from reality so that it will not confuse them. They sit in an armchair until the pure concept of space comes to them. It comes, but it has four dimensions, and the door keeper will admit only three. Space leaves a dimension outside and the philosophers are satisfied."

Fechner was not proving a scientific theory. He was exploring possibilities of humour as well as of metaphysics and one of his humorous ideas was that of a world of one dimension - that along which people make progress. "All friends of progress, freedom and equality will recognise their ideal in this world of One Dimension." He wishes them joy of it: "How thin must be the sausage if the whole world is only as thick as a mathematical line."

When Dodgson became acquainted with Fechner's profound flippancies or frivolous profundities it is impossible to say. He had had some fleeting glimpses of flatland before the "Looking-glass" period, but these he could easily have obtained for himself direct from mathematics.

The same applies to the looking-glass idea which is strikingly illustrated in the subject of algebra.

$$a^2 + 1 = 0$$

$$a^2 = -1$$

"One" seems to have gone through the looking-glass into a mysterious country where everything is the wrong way round.

Again, if  $a^2$  equals minus one then  $a$  must equal the square root of minus one ( $a = \sqrt{-1}$ ) and that as a quantity is meaningless or as mathematicians say "imaginary."

The great adventurer in this imaginary world was Sir William Rowan Hamilton, born in Dublin in 1805, whose "Elements of

*unpublished translation by Mr D. Pearson, M.A. condensed by ...*  
*1. Condensed from an old translation by ...*

Quaternions" was published in 1866 and attracted the attention of mathematicians everywhere. I think it quite certain, however, that Dodgson had read his earlier work on the subject, the "Lectures on Quaternions" of 1852 where the words of the introduction chime in so remarkably with Dr Mises, his notion of time as a dimension and even his world of one dimension, progress.

Hamilton thought that expressions which had hitherto been regarded as "merely symbolical" might acquire reality and significance if Algebra were regarded not as a science of quantity but as "the Science of Order in Progression. It was however a part of this conception that the progression here spoken of was understood to be continuous and unidimensional, extending indefinitely forward and backward but not in any lateral direction. And although the successive states of such a progression might (no doubt) be represented by points upon a line, yet I thought that their simple successiveness was better <sup>ceived</sup> ~~concerned~~ by comparing them with moments of time, divested, however, of all reference to cause and effect; so that the "time" here considered might be said to be abstract, ideal or pure, like that "space" which is the object of geometry. In this manner I was led, many years ago, to regard algebra as the Science of Pure Time."

A chessboard is a squared surface, like a piece of graph-

paper. Its two dimensions need not be length and breadth. One of them, the length of the board might be time. In that case the other could represent any or all of the dimensions of our space. But mathematicians know of a time of two dimensions, to which they are led by the elliptic functions discovered by Abel in 1825 and made known to the mathematical world by Jacobi four years later. At the end of his charming little "quotation" about the lines that wended their way across the plane superficies, Dodgson wrote: "Jacobi's Course of Mathematics, Chap. I)." Now, Jacobi never published a course of mathematics, nor was Dodgson's fantasy a quotation from any of Jacobi's works. He was simply "showing off." He was the kind of mathematician to whom Jacobi meant something. We may take it that he knew about the elliptic functions.

In "Alice" he had had some fun with scales of notation and the dynamics of a particle. In "Through the Looking-glass" he needed quaternions, elliptic functions and multi-dimensional geometry! Fortunately, however, the use he made of them was purely imaginative, when it was not purely mischievous. He used them, or the ideas they suggested, to make a non-Euclidean world, peopled it with chessmen and nursery-rhyme grotesques and into it sent his lost Alice, wool-gathering.

"Still she haunts me, phantomwise,

Alice moving under skies,

Never seen by waking eyes."

He met her there - there the two lines could meet, though not for long.

"I'll see you safe to the end of the wood - and then I must go back, you know. That's the end of my move."

And when they parted, as Alice "turned away with an eager look" on the last stage of her pawn's progress to Queendom, he had to say - "But you'll stay and see me off first? I shan't be long. You'll wait and wave your handkerchief when I get to that turn in the wood? I think it'll encourage me you see."

So they shook hands and then the Knight rode slowly away into the forest ... and then she waved her handkerchief to him, and waited till he was out of sight."

## CHAPTER V

### THROUGH THE LOOKING-GLASS

The first chapter of "Through the Looking-glass" was sent to the press "a few days after the publication of 'Phantasmagoria,'"<sup>1</sup> which appeared in January 1869. Dodgson must therefore have been writing as opposed to jotting down ideas at least since his removal to Tod Quad. On 19th April, 1870, he wrote to Miss Mary Marshal, "I don't know when it will be finished."<sup>2</sup> It was published in December 1871. Fortunately Tenniel had relented and did supply the illustrations.

In "Alice's Adventures," Dodgson had ingeniously concealed certain amusing little problems and "leg-pulls." He deliberately cast "Through the Looking-glass" in the form of an enigma, a form which appealed to his love of innocent deception and which Kingsley had suggested in his "Water-Babies."

"Come read me a riddle

Each good little man:

If you cannot read it

No grown-up folks can."

"And if you will read this story nine times over, and then think for yourself, you will find out why. It is not good for little boys to be told everything, and never to be forced to use their wits." Compare with this the old sheep's remark: "I never

1. Coll., p. 138, *Handbook*, p. 236.

2. *Letters of Lewis Carroll*, ed. E. M. Hutton, p. 79.



put things into people's hands; that would never do. They must get them for themselves."

In 1888, he wrote to Nellie Knight from Eastbourne: "I'm rather puzzled which book to send to Sydney. He looks so young for 'Through the Looking-glass.' However, he found out one puzzle ... that I don't remember any one of his age ever guessing before, so I think it won't be too old a book for him."

What Sydney made of it as a puzzle is not recorded. No doubt he enjoyed it as a story.

It is not my intention to go through the book squeezing the last drop of meaning from every word. That would take a very long time - supposing it to be possible, which is by no means certain. As Dodgson said in a letter to a friend in America, "words mean more than we mean to express when we use them; so a whole book ought to mean a great deal more than the writer means."<sup>1</sup>

Let us, however, examine some of the ideas on which the book is based.

In the first place he used the time-honoured dream-machinery, that mediaeval framework for allegory and satire, but he used it with a difference.

How long does a dream last? By the clock, Alice's dream lasts hardly any time at all. When it begins, Dinah is washing her white kitten and she is still washing it when Alice awakes -

<sup>1</sup> Coll., p. 173.

if she has ever been asleep.

She has been in some kind of trance, like "the vision of the prophet Mahommed, in which he saw the whole wonders of heaven and hell, though the jar of water which fell when his ecstasy commenced had not spilled its contents when he returned to ordinary existence."

In "Bruno's Revenge" (1867) Dodgson had explained what he meant by the "eerie" state. Twenty-six years later, in the Preface to "Sylvie and Bruno Concluded" he elaborated his views.

"It may interest some of my Readers to know the theory on which this story is constructed. It is an attempt to show what might possibly happen, supposing that Fairies really existed; and that they were sometimes visible to us and we to them; and supposing also, that human beings might sometimes become conscious of what goes on in the Fairy-world - by actual transference of their immaterial essence, such as we meet with in 'Esoteric Buddhism.'

"I have supposed a Human Being to be capable of various psychic states, with varying degrees of consciousness, as follows:-

(a) the ordinary state, with no consciousness of the presence of Fairies;

(b) The 'eerie' state, in which, while conscious of actual surroundings, he is also conscious of the

presence of Fairies;

- (c) A form of trance, in which, while unconscious of actual surroundings and apparently asleep, he (i.e. his immaterial essence) migrates to other scenes, in the actual world, or in Fairyland, and is conscious of the presence of Fairies.

"I have also supposed a Fairy to be capable of migrating from Fairyland into the actual world, and of assuming at pleasure, a Human form: and also to be capable of various psychical states, viz.:

- (a) The ordinary state, with no consciousness of the presence of Human Beings.
- (b) A sort of "eerie" state, in which he is conscious if in the actual world, of the presence of actual Human Beings, if in Fairyland, of the presence of the immaterial essences of Human Beings.

"I will here tabulate the passages in both Volumes, where abnormal states occur."

And he does.

In "Through the Looking-glass," Alice is in the normal state at the beginning and the end of the story. She is "eerie" in Looking-glass House and once she has "entered the palace" just before she awakes. In the garden and on the chess-board she is in the trance state.

The chess-pieces too, have their various states. In Looking-glass house they are unconscious of Alice's presence; that is, they are in "the ordinary state, with no consciousness of the presence of Human Beings." But in the game they are conscious of the presence of Alice's immaterial essence.

Near the end of the game, the queens fall asleep and dream of Alice's world. They are presumably in the trance state then. The Red King is in the trance state throughout and the White Knight might be said to be permanently "eerie."

The rather irritating question "Which dreamed it?" with its Kantian or Berkeleyan overtones originated in Dodgson's original ending to "Alice's Adventures Under Ground."

"But her sister sat there some while longer, watching the setting sun, and thinking of little Alice and her adventures, till she, too, began dreaming after a fashion, and this was her dream.

"She saw an ancient city, and a quiet river winding near it along the plain, and up the stream went slowly gliding a boat with a merry party of children on board - she could hear the voices and laughter like music over the water - and among them was another little Alice, who sat listening with bright, eager eyes, to a tale that was being told, and she listened for the words of the tale, and lo, it was the dream of her own little sister."

Less original was the looking-glass idea. It cannot be a

coincidence that within a year of each other appeared "Through the Looking-glass" (1872) and "Erewhon" (1871) both about worlds where everything is the mirror-image of what we regard as normal. Yet it is as certain as anything can be that the books were written independently. Kingsley had used a similar idea in the "Water-Babies" where Tom found the Other-End-of-Nowhere much more like This-End-of-Somewhere than he had been in the habit of expecting. And before that there was the Taylor sisters' "Signor Topsy Turvey's Wonderful Magic Lantern; or The World Turned Upside Down" (1810). Yet Dodgson's use of the looking-glass idea was all his own.

The difference between "Erewhon" and "Through the Looking-glass" is profound. Butler begins realistically, as Swift did in "Gulliver's Travels," but soon throws aside all pretence and reveals his purpose as satirical. Dodgson pretends throughout to be writing "nonsense." He acknowledges no obligation to stick to one subject but slides from topic to topic by subtle associations of ideas.

Nevertheless, meaning is always there, flowing along like a deep, dark river, with the puns and patter as the play of light on the surface.

Again, Butler used his reversals to cast doubts on the moral and ethical standards of Victorian England. His looking-glass was the circle of stone figures at the head of the pass, six or

seven times larger than life, of great antiquity and ten in number, our tribal taboos, the Ten Commandments.

Dodgson's satire was directed, as on previous occasions, against controversy in religious matters, while his explorations were mainly in that no-man's-land between mathematics and theology into which he had already made some short expeditions.

Another basic idea was that of sending his heroine into a game of chess, and for this he had made, as we have seen, some preliminary sketches from life. Drawing from life was a matter of principle with him and he recommended it in the most explicit manner to all his illustrators, even over-ruling Tenniel, who said he no more needed a model in front of him than Dodgson needed a multiplication table.

Chess to Dodgson was something far more than a game. As a mathematician he saw the board like a sheet of graph-paper on which it is possible to represent almost anything and as a theologian he saw in the two sides a far more powerful means of expressing the opposing factions in Church and University than any he had previously hit upon.

Let us begin by examining the most striking and original episode in the whole book, the Red Queen running. Alice, it will be remembered, had met her - by walking away from her - in the garden of live flowers. With her, she went to the top of the Principal Mountain and saw all the world she was to enter spread

out beneath her in the form of a large chess-board.

"It's a great game of chess that's being played - all over the world - if this is the world at all you know."

Alice longed to join in and would have preferred to be a Queen, but at first she could only be the White Queen's Pawn, though the post held good prospects of eventual Queendom.

"Just at this moment, somehow or other they began to run.

"Alice never could quite make out, in thinking it over afterwards, how it was that they began: all she remembers is, that they were running hand in hand, and the Queen went so fast that it was all she could do to keep up with her: and still the Queen kept crying "Faster!"

Stranger still was the fact that "the trees and the other things round them never changed their places at all: however fast they went, they never seemed to pass anything."

No doubt many of the clever and profound things said of this running are perfectly true. It may anticipate Einstein. It may be a spiritual journey which leaves her where she started. But the basis of the running is a mathematical trick.

In our world speed is the ratio of distance to time:  
 $S = \frac{d}{t}$ . For a high speed, the distance is great and the time small; so many miles per hour. Through the Looking-glass, however, speed is the ratio of time to distance.  $S = \frac{t}{d}$ . For a high speed the time is great and the distance small. The

higher the speed, the smaller the distance covered. The faster Alice went in time, the more she stayed where she was in space.

"Now here, you see, it takes all the running you can do to keep in the same place."

This is Fechner's variable 't' which became the fourth co-ordinate of space.

"Are we nearly there?"

"Nearly there?" the Queen repeated. "Why we passed it ten minutes ago! Faster!"

They had left our space behind and were running in time.

The Queen propped her against a tree, and said kindly, "You may rest a little now."

Alice looked round her in great surprise. "Why I do believe we've been under this tree all the time! Everything's just as it was."

Note, "all the time."

No wonder the clock on the chimney piece had the face of a little old man and grinned at her!

The White Queen, too, was at home in this unfamiliar element, as her "living backwards" shows. In this, Dodgson was using an idea developed by Plato in the "Statesman" and by Fechner in his "Space Has Four Dimensions."

Plato's reversal of time involves an earth shaking convulsion, after which the dead rise from the earth and "live in the



opposite order." This he says was the fabled golden age. Fechner's is set in the future but is upon the same cosmic scale. "Growing old will cease," he says, "but all life will consist of rejuvenation." He goes further than Plato and returns us all to our grand ancestor Adam in the Garden of Eden, and Adam, with the whole earth and sea and the sun and the stars into the Oneness of God.

Dodgson's treatment of the idea is quite different, but certainly not less effective. In the simplest possible terms, he states and then illustrates the principle.

"It's a poor sort of memory that only works backwards," the Queen remarked.

"What sort of things do you remember best?" Alice ventured to ask.

"Oh, things that happened the week after next," the Queen replied in a careless tone.

This, of course, follows from the game of chess, as well as the looking-glass oppositeness. If the length of the board is time then one direction must be forwards and the other backwards. The King's Messenger, for instance, Hatta (the Mad Hatter) is "in prison now, being punished: and the trial doesn't even begin till next Wednesday: and of course the crime comes last of all."

All through this particular reductio ad absurdum, the

White Queen is plastering her finger. Then she screams that it is bleeding though she has not pricked it yet. She will - and does - when she fastens her shawl again.

"That accounts for the bleeding, you see," she said to Alice with a smile. "Now you understand the way things happen here."

"But why don't you scream now?" Alice asked, holding her hands ready to put over her ears again.

"Why, I've done all the screaming already," said the Queen. "What would be the good of having it all over again?"

Alice was a pawn.

"Let's pretend we're kings and queens," she had said to her sister, but a pawn she had to be. In time, we human beings are the merest pawns. We move in one direction, forwards from one moment to the next, as a pawn moves forward from one square to the next.

A pawn's world is Fechner's world of one dimension, pure progress, or Hamilton's abstract, ideal or pure time like that space which is the object of geometry. Nevertheless, the pawn's world is not a knife edge, a time-line. Alice does not appear to be able to see even the whole of one square all at once, yet she has some knowledge of the square on either side of her. Dodgson is no doubt conventionalising the taking move which does affect the square on either side one ahead. Alice is not

interested in "taking" anything, unless we count 'taking notice.' Or he may be thinking of the fact that pieces are not always set exactly in the centre of the square they occupy, but jostle each other a little and overlap into adjoining squares. "J'adoube."

At all events, Alice, when she is a pawn is continually meeting chess-men, red and white, and according to the key, they are always on the square next to her on one side or the other. To the right, she meets the Red Queen, the Red King, the Red Knight, the White Knight and, at the end of the board, the Red Queen again. To the left, she meets the White Queen, the White King and at the end of the board, the White Queen again.

Of what is happening in the other part of the board she has no knowledge. She sweeps a narrow track and events more than one square distant to either side, or behind or ahead of her are out of her world. A certain lack of coherence in her picture of the game is understandable, particularly as it is in an advanced stage when she begins to move.

"The chess framework," says the Handbook, "is full of absurdities and impossibilities and it is unfortunate that Dodgson did not display his usual dexterity by bringing the game, as a game, up to chess standard. He is known to have been a chess-player ... He might have searched for a printed problem to suit his story, or have made one. But he allows the White side to make nine consecutive moves (!) He allows Alice (a White Pawn) reaching the eighth square, and Alice becoming a

Queen to be two separate moves: he allows the White King to be checked without either side taking any notice of the fact: he allows two Queens to castle: he allows the White Queen to fly from the Red Knight when she would take it. Hardly a move has a sane purpose, from the point of view of chess."

There is also a mate for White at the fourth move (Dodgson's reckoning): W.Q. to K's 3rd instead of Q.B's 4th. Alice and the Red Queen are both out of the way and the Red King could not move out of check.

Dodgson's own words, in a preface written in 1887, in reply to criticism of this kind, are as follows:

"As the chess problem, given on a previous page has puzzled some of my readers, it may be well to explain that it is correctly worked out so far as the moves are concerned. The alternation of Red and White is perhaps not so strictly observed as it might be, and the "castling" of the three Queens is merely a way of saying that they entered the palace; but the "check" of the White King at move 6, the capture of the Red Knight at move 7, and the final "checkmate" of the Red King, will be found, by any one who will take the trouble to set the pieces and play the moves as directed, to be strictly in accordance with the laws of the game."

He was not interested in the game as a game, but in the implications of the moves. Dodgson could easily have "worked

out a problem." He spent a considerable part of his life doing that kind of thing. But in "Through the Looking-glass" he was otherwise engaged.

In the first place it would be illogical to expect logic in a game of chess dreamed by a child. It would be still more illogical to expect a pawn which can see only a small patch of the board to understand the meaning of her experiences. And there is a moral in that. This is a pawn's impression of chess, which is like a human being's impression of life.

Alice never grasps the purpose of the game at all and when she reaches the Eighth square tries to find out from the two queens if it is over. None of the pieces has the least idea what it is all about. The Red King is asleep. The White King has long ago abandoned any attempt to intervene. "You might as well try to catch a Bandersnatch." The Red Knight is quite justified in his battle-cry of "Ahoy! Ahoy! Check!" But the White Knight, too, leaps out of the wood, shouting "Ahoy! Ahoy! Check!" and he is not giving check at all but capturing the Red Knight. Neither of them has any control over the square on which Alice is situated, yet the Red Knight thinks he has captured her and the White Knight that he has rescued her. Alice cannot argue with either of them but is simply relieved to have the matter settled in a manner favourable to herself.

As for the queens, they "see" so much of the board that

they might be expected to know what is happening fairly well. But as will appear, their manner of "seeing" is so peculiar that they know less about it than anybody.

To understand one's part in a game of chess, one would have to be aware of the room and the unseen intelligence which is combining the pieces. Deprived of any such knowledge, the chessmen have to explain things as best they can.

Nor is this a game between two players. To have made it that would have been tantamount to a confession that he believed in two separate and opposite Powers above us. Dodgson deliberately avoided any such implication.

He based his story, not on a game of chess, but on a chess-lesson or demonstration of the moves such as he gave to Alice Liddell, a carefully worked out sequence of moves designed to illustrate the queening of a pawn, the relative powers of the pieces, the feeble king, the eccentric knight and the formidable queen whose powers include those of rook and bishop; finally, a checkmate.

That is to say he abstracted from the game exactly what he wanted for his design, and expressed that as a game between a child of seven-and-a-half who was to "be" a White Pawn and an older player (himself) who was to manipulate the other pieces.

Only the other day, it will be remembered, Alice had had quite a long argument with her sister about playing kings and

queens. Alice had been reduced at last to say, "Well, you can be one of them, then, and I'll be all the rest." Through the Looking-glass she was "one of them" and the Other Player "all the rest."

Perhaps that is how things are. Dodgson certainly hoped so.

Observe the Red Queen about to do her disappearing-trick.

"At the end of two yards," she said, putting in a peg to mark the distance, "I shall give you your directions - have another biscuit?"

The biscuit is deliberately used to distract our attention from the fact that these pegs mark out the stages of Alice's pawn-life.

"At the end of three yards I shall repeat them - for fear of your forgetting them. At the end of four, I shall say good-bye. And at the end of five, I shall go!"

"She had got all the pegs put in by this time, and Alice looked on with great interest as she returned to the tree, and then began slowly walking down the row.

"At the two-yard peg she faced round, and said, 'A pawn goes two squares in its first move.'" To demonstrate that she had walked two yards. As a pawn starts from the second square, that takes us to the fourth square on the board. The third peg marks the fifth square, the fourth the sixth and the fifth the seventh. There is still another square, the eighth, but



on that, Alice will no longer be a pawn. "In the Eighth Square we shall be Queens together, and It's all feasting and fun!"

The Red Queen had begun "slowly walking down the row." At the two yard peg she paused to give Alice her instructions. Alice got up, and curtsied, and sat down again. At the next peg the Queen jerked out some staccato remarks. She did not wait for Alice to curtsey this time, but "walked on quickly "to the next peg, where she turned to say goodbye and then "hurried" on to the last.

She was getting up speed. "How it happened, Alice never knew, but exactly as she came to the last peg, she was gone."

What happened we can represent but not really imagine. According to the key, the Red Queen moved away from Alice at an angle across the board (R.Q. to K.R's. 4th)



So long as the Red Queen was in the square next to her, Alice could see her and hear her, but when she steamed off in a direction which did not as yet exist for Alice, she simply vanished.

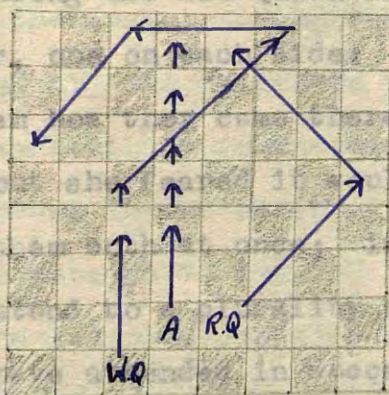
"Whether she vanished into the air, or ran quickly into



the wood ("and she can run very fast!" thought Alice), there was no way of guessing, but she was gone, and Alice began to remember that she was a pawn, and that it would soon be time to move."

The moves of the two queens are inexplicable to Alice because of a limitation in her powers. She is unable to conceive of such moves as R.Q. to K.R's. 4th or W.Q. to Q.B's. 4th. They can zig-zag about the board, sweep from end to end of it if they like, or from side to side. She must laboriously crawl from square to square, always in one direction, with a half-remembered promise to spur her on: "On the Eighth Square we'll be Queens together and it's all feasting and fun."

"Everything was happening so oddly that she didn't feel a bit surprised at finding the Red Queen and the White Queen sitting close to her on each side; she would have liked very much to ask them the names of the chess pieces, but she could not do so. She could see them, but she could not see the long psychology, could not see the impressions to which formerly she would have been subjected."



THE  
PATHS  
OF THE  
QUEENS

But if the length of the board is time, the breadth of the board must be time also, a kind of time known only to mathematicians, and mystics: the kind of time we call eternity.

The Red Queen said "That's a poor thin way of doing things."

"For was and is, and will be are but is;  
 And all creation is one act at once,  
 The birth of light: but we that are not all  
 As parts, can see but parts, now this now that,  
 And live, perforce from thought to thought and make  
 One act a phantom of succession; thus  
 Our weakness somehow shapes the Shadow, Time."

What Tennyson put in poetry, Dodgson represented on his chess-board. Alice as she trotted along could see but parts, now the Red King to her right, now the White Queen to her left, but once she became a Queen there was a change.

"Everything was happening so oddly that she didn't feel a bit surprised at finding the Red Queen and the White Queen sitting close to her, one on each side: she would have liked very much to ask them how they came there, "(We can follow their moves by the key)" but she feared it would not be quite civil."

She could see them both at once; in the language of psychology, could attend to a plurality of impressions to which formerly she would have attended in succession.

However, she was by no means sure of herself or her crown as yet, and the Queens put her through her paces.

"In our country," Alice remarked, "there's only one day at a time."

The Red Queen said "That's a poor thin way of doing things.



There Now here, we mostly have days and nights two or three at a time, and sometimes in the winter we take as many as five nights together - for warmth, you know."

"Are five nights warmer than one night, then?" Alice ventured to ask.

"Five times as warm, of course."

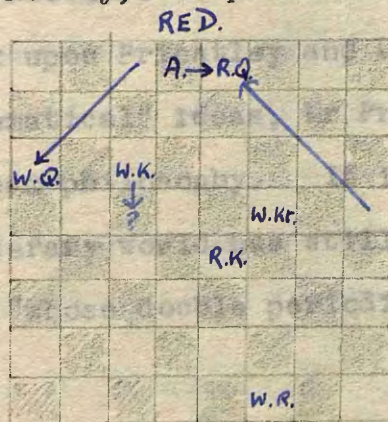
"But they should be five times as cold, by the same rule -"

"Just so!" said the Red Queen. "Five times as warm, and five times as cold - just as I'm five times as rich as you are, and five times as clever!" (Note clever and rich as opposites here.)

Alice sighed and gave it up. "It's exactly like a riddle with no answer!" she thought.

It is, however, the answer to the "chess-problem," or at any rate, one part of it, the checkmate which, Dodgson said in the 1887 Preface, was strictly in accordance with the laws of the game, while Mr Madan in the Handbook gives him the lie direct: "whereas there is no attempt at one."

According to the key, the position would appear to be:



"All sorts of things happened in a moment."

There is therefore something very like a checkmate and a fairly complicated one. The only objection is that the White King must have been in check while the White Queen moved to Q.R. 6th (soup) at Move 10. On the other hand, when Alice was on the Seventh Square she was still a pawn. The White King was behind her and if he had moved to Q.B. 5th she would not have known and he would not have been in check.

As to the succession of the moves, Dodgson admitted that was "perhaps not so strictly observed as it might be." When Alice reached the Eighth Square and became a Queen she naturally acquired new powers, but not all at once. She could now see from end to end of the board, but her sweep of vision from side to side was limited by the presence of the White Queen on one side and the Red Queen on the other. Whenever the White Queen moved to Q.R. 6th Alice had to wake up.

"I can't stand this any longer!" she cried and as the chess world collapsed in ruins she seized the Red Queen and accomplished the Checkmate.

Dr. Bell in a footnote to his "History of Mathematics" makes a two-fisted attack upon Priestley and Dunne for the use they have made of "mathematical" ideas, Mr Priestley in his time-plays, Mr Dunne in his dream-philosophy. It is a good thing, Dr. Bell thinks that the literary world has still not discovered the elliptic functions "whose double periodicity leads at once to a

two-dimensional time," expressed, says Dr. Bell "in the losenges of a skewed chess-board." On the other hand, he thinks there might be dollars in it.

Too late, Dr Bell! It has been done.

But Dodgson had other reasons for departing from the rules of chess and for avoiding a normal checkmate. These queens, whose powers in time are far more remarkable than those of the Time Traveller in the "scientific" romance by H. G. Wells are none the less flatlanders. They live - or think they live on a surface, a time-surface.

But the cream of the jest is that their world is no more flat than ours. Like the people of the middle ages, they are on a globe and do not know it.

When Alice went through the Looking-glass, she went into the room she had just left, the other way round. It was the drawing room and the door was open. She went along the passage, downstairs, and out by the "front-door" into the front-garden, reversed. In the game of chess she went down the length of the board and at the end came to a door.

By this time, she was a Queen and could look both ways, forward and back (in time). Which door had she come to, the front-door or the back-door?

"She was standing before an arched doorway, over which were the words "QUEEN ALICE" in large letters and on each side of it

there was a bell-handle; one marked 'Visitors' Bell,' and the other 'Servants' Bell'.

Visitors' Bell: the Front Door. Servants' Bell: the Back door.

Time had gone full circle, or rather, Alice had gone full circle on time which unknown to her was a little planet like that in "Sylvie and Bruno Concluded," on which "the vanquished army ran away at full speed, and in a very few minutes found themselves face-to-face with the victorious army, who were marching home again, and who were so frightened at finding themselves between two armies, that they surrendered at once."

Her front and back doors - the two ends of the board - were one and the same; in the words of Doyle,

"As east and west

In all flat maps (and I am one) are one."

In the "New Theory of Evaluation," Dodgson had shown that the University, like the Church of England and in a still wider sense, the whole country, was broken up into two "partial factions." One of these, the Rationalist faction, had as its locus a superficies and the other, the extreme High Church party had as its locus a catenary "known as the Patristic Catenary," which he defined as "passing through Origen and containing many multiple points."

A Catenary is a curve formed by a cord or chain suspended

at each end and acted upon only by gravity.

No doubt these notions, working in his mind helped him towards the idea of the two Queens, those mighty opposites in chess, living on a surface which was actually curved, and representing once more two partial factions in the University, the Church or the human mind.

"The Red Queen," said Dodgson, in his Theatre article of 1887, "I pictured as a Fury, but of another type: her passion must be cold and calm; she must be formal and strict, yet not unkindly; pedantic to the tenth degree," (I suspect that he wrote n-th here) "the concentrated essence of all governesses!"

Clearly, she is on the Dogmatic side. She lays down the law to Alice, stresses her title (Apostolic Succession) claims that all the walks belong to her, demands the use of French (Latin services?) and curtseying (genuflection). She is condescending, pats Alice on the head, and has "heard nonsense, compared with which that would be as sensible as a dictionary."

The biscuit, which the Red Queen offered Alice as a thirst-quencher might be dry on the looking-glass principle, simply as the opposite of a refreshing drink; or it might partake of the woody nature of visible, tangible chess-pieces and be made of sawdust; but over and above these meanings, its dryness must be similar to that of the passage read by the Mouse in "Alice." ("This is the driest thing I know. Silence all round, if you



please!") Shane Leslie suggests that the biscuits were sermons and it is true that the High Church sermons, regarded as of less importance than sacrament, were often perfunctory.

In his general view of the allegory, Shane Leslie is far off track. He identifies the Red Queen as Archbishop Manning and the White Queen as Dr Newman, both of whom were on the same side in everything of any significance. It is true that they had their disagreements but to regard the Queens as both representing Catholics reduces the allegory to triviality.

The grand opposites of Dodgson's day were Reason and Dogma, and to regard the two sides as anything less fundamental is to underestimate him. Besides he had already represented these great principles as they worked themselves out in Oxford over the serio-comic business of Jowett's salary, and represented them as superficial in mathematical terms.

"Lastly," said Dodgson in the "Theatre" of 1887, "the White Queen seemed to my dreaming fancy, gentle, stupid, fat and pale; helpless as an infant; and with a slow maundering, bewildered air about her just suggesting imbecility, but never quite passing into it; that would be, I think, fatal to any comic effect she might otherwise produce."

Dodgson repeatedly asserted that he was "no conscious imitator" in the Alice books, and so far as the general design is concerned, his claim was just. But certain resemblances to



passages in Swift's "Tale of a Tub," "Battle of the Books" and "Gulliver's Travels" are too close to be mere coincidence.

"Once upon a time," says Swift in 'A Tale of a Tub,'  
 "there was a Man who had Three sons by one Wife, and all at a Birth, neither could the Mid-Wife tell certainly which was the Eldest."

Wotton's footnote reads: "By these three sons, Peter, Martyn and Jack, Popery, the Church of England, and our Protestant Dissenters are designed," (Martyn: Martin Luther. Jack: John Calvin).

Each was left a new coat and a copy of the Will, containing instructions for wearing it. In "Through the Looking-glass" the coats become shawls; otherwise the White Queen is Jack, the Red Queen Peter.

The White Queen has trouble with her shawl, and Alice has to help her to put it on again while the White Queen looks at her in a helpless, frightened sort of way and whispers something that sounds like "Bread-and-butter, bread-and-butter." Compare this with Jowett signing the Articles for the sake of his tum-tum.

Again she has been "a-dressing" herself and "'Every single thing's crooked,'" Alice thought to herself, 'and she's all over pins!'"

These pins are no doubt the counterpart of the Red Queen's thorns. The latter was wearing a crown of thorns when Alice met her; only the thorns were turned outward. "She's one of

the thorny kind," said the Rose.

Because she was a-dressing herself, every single thing was crooked and she was all over pins, the White Queen must represent the side of the Church which argued, protested and tried to re-interpret religious ideas by the light of reason, the Protestant side of the Church of England and in particular the Rationalist "mode of thinking."

Alice herself does duty in the Allegory for Martin or the Church of England though she certainly does not represent the Church of England as it was in Dodgson's day. Rather she is the essential quality of the Christian religion, the one all the sects seemed to have forgotten, love.

She took the place of Lily, the White Queen's Imperial Kitten - no doubt the Imperial Church of England which might be expected to result from the first "Pan-Anglican" Conference at Lambeth in 1867. That was why Lily was too young to play and also the child of the King and Queen of Controversy. Alice was the True Church, hoping all things, believing all things, suffering long.

In the Theatre article, she was to be "loving as a dog" and "gentle as a fawn" courteous, "even as though she were herself a King's daughter and her clothing of wrought gold: then trustful, ready to accept the wildest impossibilities with all that utter trust that only dreamers know; and lastly curious -

and with the eager enjoyment of Life that comes only in the happy hours of childhood."

Compare with Dodgson's "even as though she were herself a King's daughter and her clothing of wrought gold" his father's words about his ideal church: "so did He prepare for His Church a covering, hidden within these ordinances for her spiritual nakedness, 'a clothing of wrought gold' (Ps.XIX. 13) rendering her meet to be brought into the Palace of the Heavenly King."

To have used a real chess-problem would have been fatal to the allegory, for it was by no means Dodgson's view that the opposition of the two sides Red and White, two aspects of the same church, sprang from the operations of two Hostile Players. On the contrary the two Queens are really two kittens who come from one Cat, Dinah, and Dinah in Tenniel's final illustration is both black and white.

The queens and Alice were used as mathematical symbols to illustrate certain ideas about time and space. They were also used satirically and allegorically as described above. In addition there are signs that he borrowed ideas for the appearance and nature of each character from real persons, and in Alice's case we know the original. It is true that the process of remaking her in accordance with his own ideas and attitude to life has gone far, but we can still recognise the first Alice in the last.

It has been suggested that Dodgson's own parents sat for the portraits of the chess queens,<sup>1</sup> but I think the Dean and Mrs Liddell much more likely models. Dodgson's relations with his father and mother were never anything but happy and normal, whereas a state of emotional tension, in which there was jealousy on both sides, the insolence of office on theirs and the pangs of despised love on his, existed between him and Alice's parents.

The Red Queen was tall, half a head taller than Alice, which was about the Dean's superiority in height to Dodgson. She had heard nonsense, compared to which "that would be as sensible as a dictionary" and it would be difficult for Dodgson or anybody at Christ Church to use the word 'dictionary' without thinking of Liddell and Scott. Her coldness, too, her pride and pedantry suggest the Dean.

There was emphatically no outward resemblance between the White Queen and Mrs Liddell, who, according to Sir William Richmond,<sup>2</sup> was dark and beautiful. But she was once pinning a dress on Alice when the Prince of Wales burst in unexpectedly and Alice fled. Mrs Liddell hid her agitation and the Prince did not add to it, until about to depart when he remarked,<sup>3</sup> "Tell Alice I saw her." If Dodgson knew the story it was the kind of thing to worry him, and may have suggested the situation through the Looking-glass, with the figures transposed and Alice pinning on the White Queen's shawl. The allegorical and mathematical ideas would coat the rather

1. F.B. Lennon : *Lewis Carroll*, pp. 174-175.

2. F.B. Lennon : *Lewis Carroll*, p. 131.

3. *Cornhill Mag.*, July, 1932.

dangerous and embarrassing idea of Alice incompletely dressed as mother-of-pearl coats some irritant within the oyster-shell.

Working as he did by associations of ideas there was no limit to the variety of topic he could introduce. His art was to keep variety from becoming chaotic, to make some unexpected departure lead back to the last remark but one. Why some topics appealed to him and others did not is an enquiry which would take us over the threshold of consciousness and into that dark region where ambiguous forms and uncouth hybrids loom and dwindle. Psycho-analysis, however, is no technique for amateurs. We must be content to follow those trains of thought in which we can perceive intention, and we shall lose little by this, for the intention is fundamental.

There is in existence a photograph just published (1950)<sup>1</sup> but taken by Dodgson in 1858. It shows two of his aunts, the Misses Lutwidge playing chess. One wears a dark dress and plays black against a dark background; the other a chequered or tartan dress, much lighter in tone, plays white against a pale background. The effect is of a battle of light and shade.

The disposition of the pieces bears no relation to that in the Looking-glass chess-problem, but the germ of the idea is there in the opposed forces. In the course of his chess-lessons to Alice, Dodgson transferred the conflict from the players and setting to the chess pieces, in particular to the two Queens.

1. Helmut Genselcin: Lewis Carroll, Photographs.

Their powers of movement brought in his mathematics; their opposition suggested the theological controversies of his time, and because he disliked controversy, the Queens also acquired some characteristics from his more personal antipathies.

In Fechner's "Space Has Four Dimensions," the opposites are the Naturalists who believe only what they see and the Philosophers who see only what they believe. The Naturalists, like Dodgson's White Queen, "know only length and breadth - except that is for the astronomers who are forced by the fall of bodies to recognise the third dimension, at least as a hypothesis."

In this respect, Fechner's astronomers resemble Dodgson's White Knight, whose ballad he re-wrote for "Through the Looking-glass," adding the lines,

"Or if I drop upon my toe

A very heavy weight,"

as an illustration of the fall of bodies.

Of all the chessmen, the Knight alone has the power of leaping. This is the symbolism of chess, the horseman's leap expressed by allowing the Knight to move two squares in any direction and one at right angles to that direction - a cross-section of a leap. Nevertheless, it makes no difference to the knight if the intervening squares are packed with friends or foes. He can leap to a vacant square, take an enemy piece or deliver check over their heads.

It is this third dimension which enables him to perform his little miracles, his sudden, unlooked-for interventions in the game.

"And really," said Alice, referring to the game she had played the previous day, on our side of the Looking-glass, "I might have won, if it hadn't been for that nasty knight that came wriggling down among my pieces."

In "Looking-glass House," he was sliding down the poker and balancing very badly. He represents a stage half-way between the Queens who are Flatlanders pure and simple, and Alice as a child or Human Being.

It is not necessary to relate the knight's powers to time-length and time-breadth as in the case of the queens. Probably Dodgson developed the ideas about the Knight quite separately and fitted them into the general pattern later. However, if it is desired to do so, then his third dimension was the whole of our space.

Of our world he has had only the most tantalising glimpses, enough to unfit him for his own, yet not enough to enable him to understand. Yet he is by no means contemptible, this knight in tin armour. He has seen wonders, has even brought back with him odd bits and pieces from his Wonderland, which is our common workaday world - beehives and mousetraps, carrots and fire-rings, outlandish bric-a-brac, whose true nature and purpose are eternally beyond him, but which he collects hopefully and about which he theorises happily.

He is Science.

By constantly falling on his head, he has grasped that things never fell upwards, you know, and his experience of rain has confirmed this. Accordingly he turns his box upside down,

so that the rain will not wet his things but, alas! his theory is incomplete. He has overlooked the possibility that his things might fall downwards and he has lost them.

Then he has thought of a brilliant scheme for turning himself over in our space - a thing, it is safe to say, no other chessman but a knight could think of doing.

"Now first I put my head on the top of the gate - then the head's high enough - then I stand on my head - then the feet are high enough, you see - then I'm over, you see."

"Yes, I suppose you'd be over when that was done," Alice said thoughtfully: "but don't you think it would be rather hard?" She meant the ground.

"I haven't tried it yet," the Knight said gravely: "so I can't tell for certain - but I'm afraid it would be a little hard." The charming simpleton is thinking only of the difficulty (for him) of the operation. The consequences to himself have never occurred to him.

Compared to the other inhabitants of the chess-world he is a genius, like Newton, voyaging through strange seas of thought alone.

His scheme for training hair upwards, like fruit trees might be impracticable, or it might not. Experiment would have settled the matter and he was a little dashed by Alice's lack of enthusiasm - but then so few of his schemes had ever met with an enthusiastic



reception. In the kingdom of the blind, the one-eyed man is thought to suffer from hallucinations.

The principle which eluded the White Knight was, of course, gravity. The word gravity is carefully avoided during the whole of this chapter, but he looked a little grave, and more than once he remarked gravely. The pun had no existence for himself or Alice.

His elevated and vertical position on horseback was extremely precarious. Even when sliding down the poker he balanced very badly. As a planesman or inhabitant of the surface "balance" was an idea he had failed to grasp. He was unbalanced. But his difficulties were due to no lack of practice. He had had plenty of practice - both of mounting and dismounting.

There is something sublime in his persistence and in his ability to rise above circumstance, to theorise from a head-downward position. Moreover he had realised that he would probably never be able to stay on horseback without some sort of support and invented a helmet in the form of a sugar-loaf. This was a conical mass of sugar displayed in confectioners' windows in our grandfathers' day. The White Knight's sugar-loaf helmet was like a large fool's cap and touched the ground all round him.

True he lost himself in it (as one is apt to do in a theory) and the other knight put it on, thinking that it was his helmet.

But his cleverest invention was a pudding - during the meat course. It was not cooked in time for the next course, or the next day. "In fact," he went on, holding his head down, and his voice getting lower and lower, "I don't believe that pudding ever was cooked! In fact, I don't believe that pudding ever will be cooked! And yet it was a very clever pudding to invent."

After the cone, the sphere. He was trying to frame the notion of a solid sphere but his world was flatland. It contained blotting-paper, which would be bent round into a cylinder, or twisted into a cone, but no matter how he stuck it together with sealing-wax, he could not make even a hollow sphere out of it, much less a solid one.

He even thought of blowing it to pieces with gunpowder and then re-assembling the minute fragments. Theoretically, if the fragments were small enough, the feat should be possible. Practically, he had almost abandoned hope of that pudding.

"It began with blotting-paper," the Knight answered with a groan.

"That wouldn't be very nice, I'm afraid -"

"Not very nice alone," he interrupted, quite eagerly: "but you've no idea what a difference it would make, mixing it with other things - such as gunpowder and sealing-wax. And here I must leave you."

The White Knight's appearance without his helmet is worth noting.

"'Now one can breathe more easily,' said the Knight, putting back his shaggy hair with both hands, and turning his gentle face and large mild eyes to Alice."

Does not this suggest a dog or a horse, rather than a man? The Knight is being compared to one of the higher animals which has some rudimentary intelligence; which is gentle, unselfish and uncomplaining. The equation may be stated: man attempting to reason about the universe is like one of the higher animals attempting to understand our world. Both collect data and frame theories. Neither has any chance of understanding the reality. And the symbol by means of which Dodgson demonstrated this profound truth was the knight in chess with his leap over the intervening squares, in the course of which he lost contact with the surface and, however briefly, glimpsed our world.

"Of all the strange things that Alice saw in her journey Through the Looking-glass, this was the one that she always remembered most clearly. Years afterwards she could bring the whole scene back again, as if it had been only yesterday - the mild blue eyes and kindly smile of the Knight - the setting sun gleaming through his hair and shining on his armour in a blaze of light that quite dazzled her - the horse quietly moving about, cropping the grass at her feet - and the black shadows of the

forest behind - all this she took in like a picture, as, with one hand shading her eyes, she leant against a tree, watching the strange pair, and listening in a half-dream, to the melancholy music of the song."

The song was "Upon the Lonely Moor," the parody of Wordsworth's "Resolution and Independence" Dodgson had sent to "The Train" in 1856, but partly rewritten and garnished with four new titles. Some of the changes are mere improvements in the verse.

He said 'I look for butterflies

That sleep among the wheat'

is much better than

He said 'I look for soap-bubbles

That lie among the wheat.'

Others seem, if anything, more nonsensical than what he had written at first.

"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."

However "A-sitting on a gate" is a significant attitude for his aged, aged man. If the White Knight's plan of standing on his head on the top bar was likely to prove 'hard,' it was at least original and showed a desire to go somewhere. Again the new lines,

"But I was thinking of a plan

To feed oneself on batter

And so go on from day to day

Getting a little fatter,"

suggests the White Knight trying another method of inventing, or at all events, producing the sphere, and Dodgson returned to this in his Spherical Professor (Sylvie and Bruno Concluded) who finally succeeded in making himself a perfect sphere and in acquiring sufficient momentum to fly off the Earth at a tangent.

But the main lines were already laid down in the 1856 version and it seems quite clear to me through all the nonsense that the White Knight is Pure Science and the Aged, Aged Man Applied Science.

The book, so far from having no moral is thus a new kind of Morality. The characters are all abstractions and we are prevented from realising this only by sheer verbal sleight-of-hand. The symbols are deceptively simple - but so are the properties of a great conjuror. It is the second-rate magician who requires elaborate scaffoldings of chromium-plated tubes and other complicated apparatus. Give Dodgson a ball of wool, a kitten, a rose, some chessmen, a looking-glass and a little girl out of the audience - and watch carefully.

With our suspicions aroused, let us go back Through the Looking-glass into the room, or as the chessmen would say "The Room," for our world is as mysterious to them as theirs to us.

Indeed, if the Queens with their astonishing powers of appearing and disappearing seemed Superior Beings to Alice as a pawn she herself as a Human Child was a Superior Being to them.

Right from the beginning Dodgson develops this system of analogies. The black kitten had been playing with a ball of wool - not a bad approximation by the way to a solid sphere - and had been "rolling it up and down till it had all come undone again, and there it was, spread over the hearthrug" - or surface - "all knots and tangles, with the kitten running after its own tail in the middle."

Alice demonstrated the vast superiority of her human intelligence by rolling up the ball, while

"Kitty sat very demurely on her knee, pretending to watch the progress of the winding, and now and then putting out one paw and gently touching the ball as if it would be glad to help if it might."

It could not, however, grasp the nature or purpose of a ball of wool. Alice presently snatched the kitten up out of its own familiar world of hearthrug and firelight, showed it its reflection in the looking-glass and tried to interest it in thoughts beyond the reaches of its soul.

Through the Looking-glass, it had its revenge, since the kittens became Chess Queens, and Alice only a pawn.

In Looking-glass House, however, Alice was still a Human

Being, something large and strange beyond the wildest dreams or speculations of the chessmen whom she found walking about down in the hearth among the cinders.

"I don't think they can hear me," she went on, as she put her head closer down, "and I'm nearly sure they can't see me. I feel as if I were invisible."

One of the chessmen had been overlooked and left on the table. It was Lily, the White pawn Alice was to replace, infant daughter of the White King and Queen, and hailed by the latter as "My precious Lily! My Imperial Kitten!"

Alice with the best intentions lifted the White Queen on to the table, forgetting that to the White Queen who had no knowledge of her existence, this experience would be very alarming and quite inexplicable. The White Queen in fact thought she had been blown up by a volcano and warned her consort to come up the regular way.

The regular way was to struggle up from bar to bar of the fender, and then, no doubt down to the hearth-rug and up the leg of a chair, keeping to the surface all the way. Alice lifted him too, dusted him carefully and when the shock was too much for him, "went round the room to see if she could find any water to throw over him. However she could find nothing but a bottle of ink and when she got back with it, she found he had recovered."

That was fortunate for him. However, Ink belongs to the

Allegory and we are at present studying the demonstration of, shall we say, Superiority.

"The horror of that moment," the King went on, "I shall never, never forget!"

"You will, though," the Queen said, "if you don't make a memorandum of it."

Accordingly Alice is able to demonstrate her superiority still further by taking hold of the end of the pencil and forcing the little king to write thoughts other than his own. The resemblance here to the automatic writing which had been in the news since 1850 is too close to be accidental. Alice is a Superior Being to the little white king; not God, but a powerful and invisible force clearly possessing intelligence.

In the game she is the humble, creeping pawn and even the kings are superior beings to her, not very formidable superior beings certainly, but not confined to one square nor to one direction. The Queens are great, mysterious creatures who appear and vanish at will and take their Tuesdays in sets.

However, as Alice frees herself from the trammels of sleep and the Queens succumb to its influence the position is once more reversed. Now it is their turn to dream of Alice's world and even the inanimate objects of our world are worthy of all reverence to mere creatures of the surface.

The leg of mutton is accordingly introduced to Alice and she



to it and despite her protests, the pudding also. Tenniel's leg-of-mutton is an approximation to a cone, or sugar-loaf, while the pudding was of the boiled-in-a-cloth variety - the solid sphere which the White Knight tried so hard to invent. Only in dreams and speculations could such wonders appear to the chessmen.

But the demonstration cannot really be separated from the allegory in this way. The two are indissolubly blended. The tangled wool on the hearthrug, for example shows what could happen to religious ideas when irresponsible little minds got at them. And the White Queen's shawl would no doubt be made of wool as would the Old Sheep's fleece in the chapter, "Wool and Water."

"Do you know what to-morrow is, Kitty?" Alice began. "You'd have guessed if you'd been up in the window with me - only Dinah was making you tidy, so you couldn't. I was watching the boys getting in sticks for the bonfire - and it wants plenty of sticks, Kitty! Only it got so cold, and it snowed so, they had to leave off." The very idea of the bonfire causes yards and yards of wool to get unwound again.

What day was 'tomorrow'? Was it Guy Fawkes Day? The snow, kissing the window all over outside and covering up the trees and fields with a white quilt suggests Christmas. Perhaps, by leaving it vague, he was suggesting that to some people it is

always Christmas, always peace and goodwill; to others always Guy Fawkes Day, with its old hatreds, its 'No Popery!' and 'off with his head!'

Saving up the kitten's punishments for Wednesday week is eternal damnation, the rock on which the Essayists and Reviewers came near to perishing, with Alice for the moment as God and the kitten as erring humanity. Going without fifty dinners at once provides the reductio ad absurdum.

It is for such ideas that we must look in Looking-glass House and beyond and we have already noticed one rather obvious symbol - Ink.

"Ink," says Swift in "The Battle of the Books," is the great missive weapon, in all the battles of the learned, which, convey'd thro' a sort of engine, called a quill, infinite numbers of these are darted at the enemy, by the valiant on each side, as if it were an engagement of porcupines. This malignant liquor was compounded by the engineer who invented it of two ingredients, which are gall and copperas, by its bitterness and venom to suit in some degree, as well as to foment the genius of the combatants."

Ink, then, was the only fluid Alice could find in Looking-glass House. It will be remembered also that Alice found (in Wonderland) a new kind of rule by which pepper made people bad-tempered, and vinegar made them sour - and camomile made them

bitter. And Kingsley had copied the prickliness of the porcupines in his "Water-Babies," where Tom, who had been naughty looked at himself and he was all over prickles, just like a sea-egg.

"Which was quite natural: for you must know and believe that people's souls make their bodies, just as a snail makes its shell (I am not joking, my little man, I am in serious solemn earnest). And therefore, when Tom's soul grew all prickly with naughty tempers, his body could not help growing prickly too, so that nobody would cuddle him, or play with him, or even like to look at him."

In "Sylvie and Bruno Concluded," Prince Uggug, a naughty and therefore ugly little spirit, "Loveless, loveless!" becomes more and more prickly and eventually turns into a porcupine.

That is why Dodgson's Red Queen is "thorny" and his White Queen "all over pins." The allegory in "Sylvie and Bruno" is transparent, and many of the ideas openly discussed. In "Through the Looking-glass" the ideas are roughly the same but they are cunningly hidden and "things flow about so," from Ink to the White King's memorandum-book, from that to the looking-glass book and thence back to Ink again.

"There was a book lying near Alice on the table and while she sat watching the White King (for she was still a little anxious about him, and had the ink all ready to throw over him in case he fainted again) she turned over the leaves."

And found Jabberwocky, which was Controversy. The little White King was the King of Controversy, or Protesting, and ink, as the chief missive weapon in all the battles of the learned, was the fluid best calculated to revive him. This nothing's, more than matter.

On the other hand, a deluge of Ink from a Superior Being like Alice might have changed his colour - if it was red ink, to red - just as the spoonful of ink in the letter to the Hughes children turned a white cat black. There was a point when Alice was about to put the black kitten out into the snow which would have turned it white, and it was the gentle snow which made the boys leave off building the bonfire. And the white kitten was called Snowdrop.

Like Alice on the looking-glass paths, we are walking in at the front door again.

"One thing was certain, that the white kitten had nothing to do with it: - it was the black kitten's fault entirely."

Through the Looking-glass, each of the kittens became a queen, and Dodgson is at great pains to make us believe that the black kitten became the Red Queen.

"And as for you," Alice went on, turning fiercely upon the Red Queen, whom she considered as the cause of all the mischief ... I'll shake you into a kitten, that I will."

The process occupies two short chapters, each with its illustration.

"Shaking" has two paragraphs and ends in the Red Queen's growing "shorter - and fatter - and softer - and rounder - and - "

"Waking" consists of the words - " - and it really was a kitten, after all."

Tenniel's illustration makes it the black kitten, but that was merely the kitten Alice had in her hands before and after the dream. The words, and the words demand the closest attention, are "a kitten."

Perhaps it is a small point - one kitten after all is very like another kitten - but it was the black kitten that unravelled the wool and spread it out in knots and tangles on the hearthrug, and it is the white side which represents the controversial or protestant side of the University or the Church or the human mind. It seems natural to suppose that "Through the Looking-glass" the black kitten became the White Queen.

The substitution of Red for Black in the other transformation is also curious. Chessmen are sometimes made in that colour and it was a more attractive colour than black, but the opposition of snow and bonfire must not be forgotten. Through the Looking-glass, I think the white kitten became the Red Queen (instead of the Black Queen) because of the association of ideas, set up by the bonfire. It was the dogmatic side after all which insisted, as was wittily said, on its right to eternal damnation, the Athanasian Creed and the everlasting bonfire.

At all events, while Alice is exploring the fantastic world

of chess and struggling with the mysteries of time, she is also passing ~~severely~~ through the Battle of the Books, Sermons and Speeches which raged about Dodgson himself during the 1860's.

Of this there is a general view on the Sixth Square, where Alice met the White King.

"The next moment, soldiers came running through the wood, at first in twos and threes, then ten or twenty together, and at last in such words that they seemed to fill the whole forest. Alice got behind a tree, for fear of being run over, and watched them go by.

"She thought that in all her life she had never seen soldiers so uncertain on their feet: they were always tripping over something or other, and whenever one went down, several more always fell over him, so that the ground was soon covered with little heaps of men."

Alice's attitude here is exactly that of Dodgson as he describes it himself in 1856. The awkward squad of soldiers replaces the Babel of voices in which nothing was done and the irresistible Juggernaut before which the young tutor saw no reason to prostrate himself. He too, "got behind a tree, for fear of being run over, and watched them go by."

In an open space Alice discovered the White King "seated on the ground and busily writing in his memorandum-book."

"I've sent them all!" the King cried in a tone of delight.

The combat of the Knights was typical of the "fighting," in which the Rules of Battle were not easy to discover.

"One Rule seems to be that, if one Knight hits the other, he knocks him off his horse, and if he misses, he tumbles off himself."

It is the age-old conflict of Science and Religion, of which Kant said in his coarse German fashion, "One side seems to be milking a he-goat and the other to be holding a sieve."

Nobody really won, of course.

"Another Rule of Battle, that Alice had not noticed, seemed to be that they always fell on their heads, and the battle ended with their both falling off in this way, side by side: when they got up again, they shook hands, and then the Red Knight mounted and galloped off."

Shane Leslie relates this combat to the clash at Oxford in 1860 of Wilberforce and Huxley and it is a tempting identification.

It would be wrong, however, to say that the White Knight was Huxley or the Red Knight Wilberforce. The allegory is more general than that. The combat may be abstracted from the Huxley-Wilberforce incident. It is certainly abstracted from the general controversy about science and religion.

Where were the soldiers going when Alice saw them running through the wood? They were going to put Humpty Dumpty together again - or to make the attempt.

The fall of Humpty-Dumpty ("at this moment a heavy crash shook the forest from end to end,") is the immediate occasion of the Battle of the Books. I think there can be no doubt that the Rev. Ronald Knox was right in suggesting to Shane Leslie that Humpty Dumpty represents Verbal Inspiration sitting on the wall of scripture, and his fall the acquittal of Wilson and Williams by the Privy Council in 1864.

"When I use a word," says Humpty Dumpty, "it means just what I choose it to mean - neither more or less." Verbal inspiration was the Protestant substitute for Catholic dogma. Every word of the Bible was true because directly inspired by God. The task of reconciling the Scriptures with common-sense or the most elementary principles of justice had just proved super-human.

In addition, Dodgson certainly owes something to Fechner here, for Fechner had said of philosophy: "But I consider the world as a fat hen of which philosophy in general is just a hollow egg (literally, a 'wind-egg')." "

Humpty-Dumpty was of course a riddle with the answer first: an egg.

However, the egg only got larger and larger, and more and more human: when she had come within a few yards of it, she saw that it had eyes and a nose and mouth; and when she had come close to it, she saw clearly that it was HUMPTY DUMPTY himself."



His shape - "and a good handsome shape it is too, " - is like that of the mushroom in Wonderland and after she woke up Alice asked "Tell me, Dinah, did you turn to Humpty Dumpty? I think you did - however, you'd better not mention it to your friends just yet, for I'm not sure." Dinah, as has been remarked, partook of the nature of both sides and so did the mushroom in Wonderland.

Again, there is the word "Impenetrability" which for a mathematician and a friend of the Rev. Bartholomew Price had a special significance.

"Matter," says Price, "exists in space and time; all matter, even the minutest particle occupies space. No two particles of matter and also, no two bodies can occupy the same space at the same time; this property of matter is called its impenetrability."

"Impenetrability! That's what I say!" said Humpty Dumpty.

And soon afterwards, a heavy crash shook the forest from end to end.

Not everything Humpty Dumpty said can be related to Verbal Inspiration or to allegory of any kind. Occasionally "Through the Looking-glass" is just what it was all intended to seem, bewildering and amusing. Ideas, successful with actual children are worked in, sometimes merged so skilfully with the mathematical-theological ideas that no line of demarcation can

be drawn, sometimes quite openly.

Humpty Dumpty's explanations of the "hard words" in the first verse of Jabberwocky are different from the "Mischmasch" explanations but most of them are still just clever and amusing. At one point Alice is made to speak quite out of character.

"And 'the wabe' is the grass plot round a sun-dial, I suppose?" said Alice, surprised (as well she might be) at her own ingenuity.

"Of course it is. It's called 'wabe,' you know, because it goes a long way before it, and a long way behind it -

"And a long way beyond it on each side," Alice added.

"Exactly so."

Alice seems to be brought in here merely to break up the explanation which has, however, a deeper significance than the others. A sundial marks 'the present moment.' The 'wabe' which extends before and behind that moment and beyond it on each side is the time-board across which Alice like Everyman has to travel.

Next moment we are back among the green pigs and live mops.

Humpty Dumpty's poem is a masterpiece of inconclusiveness, every action incomplete, unexplained, absurd, sentences broken off in the middle -

"And when I found the door was shut,

I tried to turn the handle, but -

There was a long pause.

"Is that all?" Alice timidly asked.

"That's all," said Humpty Dumpty. "Goodbye."

And yet Humpty Dumpty has a story to tell. It is all about a kettle of fish, "a pretty kettle of fish," more trouble, or perhaps the same old trouble in still another disguise, controversy again.

Humpty Dumpty went out of his way to stir up trouble. He filled the kettle at the pump, went to wake the sleeping fishes and created a scene.

Later, in the Eighth Square but before the three queens entered the palace, the White Queen referred to this incident. It was à propos of a thunderstorm they had had - one of the last sets of Tuesdays -

"Humpty Dumpty saw it too," the White Queen went on in a low voice, more as if she were talking to herself. "He came to the door with a corkscrew in his hand - "

"What for?" said the Red Queen.

"He said he would come in," the White Queen went on, "because he was looking for a hippopotamus .... "

"I know what he came for," said Alice, "he wanted to punish the fish, because - " /

Here the White Queen began again. "It was such a thunderstorm, you can't think!" ("She never could, you know," said the Red Queen). "And part of the roof came off, and ever  
*i. e. to punish them for the sake of punishing them:*  
 "I'll be judge, I'll be jury  
 Said cunning old Fury,"  
 "off with their heads!" etc.

so much thunder got in - and it went rolling round the room in great lumps - and knocking over the tables and things - till I was so frightened, I couldn't remember my own name!"

Why a hippopotamus?

In the "Water Babies," Kingsley had introduced a professor who was Huxley, thinly disguised. "He had even got up once at the British Association, and declared that apes had hippopotamus majors in their brains, just as men have, which was a shocking thing to say; for if that were so, what would become of the faith, hope and charity of immortal millions."

That looks like our hippopotamus, a malapropism for "hippocampus major" (part of the brain). If so, Humpty Dumpty was creating a scene over the intrusion of ideas taken from Darwin into English Church affairs; the Essays and Reviews controversy the thunderstorm where part of the roof came off and ever so much thunder got in.

On the other hand, there was a hippopotamus in "Wonderland," or at any rate Alice thought there was:

"Just then she heard something splashing about in the pool a little way off, and she swam nearer to make out what it was: at first she thought it must be a walrus or hippopotamus, but then she remembered how small she was now, and she soon made out that it was only a mouse that had slipped in like herself."

Perhaps Humpty Dumpty had made the same mistake and was

making a hippopotamus out of a mouse - a mountain out of a molehill. It would be idle to pretend that it is always possible to say exactly what Dodgson means. In the 'hyaline of drifting glooms,' meaning emerges as veiled allusion and loses itself in vague innuendo.

The general impression is more trustworthy than a too curious examination of the detail and one has a general impression that Dodgson regarded the church controversy of the time as a rather regrettable storm in a teacup.

There is a dreamy resemblance between the thunder rolling round the room in great lumps and the rolling about of the ball of wool by the black kitten. It is all, one feels, a matter of scale. To those involved in a controversy how large and serious everything looms; to the detached observer, how 'small and undistinguishable'!

It was the Old Sheep who set the egg upright on a shelf at the dark end of the little dark shop, and the Old Sheep had been the White Queen. That does come back to the ball of wool, which the black kitten had been unwinding on the hearthrug. The White Queen's shawl was the covering hidden within the ordinances of the church in Archdeacon Dodgson's sermon, or the coat of Swift's "Tale of a Tub."

The transformation of the White Queen into an old sheep cannot be described as an improvement, yet as her shawl becomes

a fleece, what was she saying?

"Oh, much better!" cried the Queen, her voice rising into a squeak as she went on. "Much be-etter! Be-etter! Be-e-e-etter! Be-e-ehh!" The last word ended in a long bleat, so like a sheep that Alice quite started.

"She looked at the Queen who seemed to have suddenly wrapped herself up in wool," just as the black kitten had done in the drawing-room before the dream began.

This is, for Dodgson, quite a savage caricature of the transformation that seemed to him to have come over the Protestant Church. The little dark shop is "a confusedly furnished second-hand symbol-shop" as the Athenaeum said of George MacDonald's "Phantastes." Alice could see nothing on any particular shelf though the others round it were crowded as full as they could hold. There was nothing in the jar labelled "Orange Marmalade" either.

The Old Sheep meantime was busily knitting with fourteen pairs of pins and Alice couldn't help looking at her in great astonishment.

"How can she knit with so many?" the puzzled child thought to herself. "She gets more and more like a porcupine every minute!"

The significance of porcupines in this kind of writing has already been demonstrated. The old sheep was loveless, loveless!

The water-scene into which and out of which the shop scene flows dreamily is made up chiefly of puns used by Dodgson himself when he was teaching Alice to row. In themselves they are not very amusing but they cloak such apparently casual asides as "the Sheep cried again, taking more needles" and "said the Sheep, sticking some of the needles into her hair, as her hands were full."

Tenniel's drawing shows the Old Sheep, her hair and hands bristling with needles, half-transformed into a porcupine. The shop he drew from one which can still be seen at 83 St. Aldate's, Oxford, reversing the position of door and window, no doubt on Dodgson's instructions.

Shane Leslie regards the Old Sheep as "Dr. Pusey knitting his interminable sermons and pamphlets in the Anglican shop" and it will be recalled that in the "New Theory," Pusey's Patristic Catenary contained "many multiple points." Probably he did sit, though not alone, for this portrait. It might be thought that as leader of the High Church party, his place was on the Red side, but as a Tractarian, he was indulging in argument, protesting. He belonged to the White or Protestant side.

It is noteworthy that all the articles in the little dark shop turned into separate trees, except the egg, which turned into Humpty Dumpty.

"Aren't you sometimes frightened at being planted out here," Alice asked the Live Flowers "with nobody to take care of you?"

"There's the tree in the middle," said the Rose. "What else is it good for?"

The tree is their church, and like the church in Dodgson's time it barked, it said, 'Bough-wough' and under it "the air seemed full of little shrill voices." The tree is one of Dodgson's recurrent symbols like bread-and-butter and "off with his head." When Alice found herself "back on earth" after her train journey she was sitting quietly under a tree. When Tweedledum and Tweedledee were about to fight and the Crow was flapping overhead, "Alice ran a little way into the wood, and stopped under a large tree. 'It can never get me here,' she thought." When all the king's soldiers came running through the wood, "Alice got behind a tree." She got behind a tree when the Red and White Knights joined battle. When the White Knight sang his song, "she leant against a tree." But on the Eighth Square, it was an old Frog who was sitting under a tree. Alice was a Queen and had got beyond the tree. She had got somewhere else, as the Red Queen said she would, if she moved fast enough.

The little dark shop turned into a whole forest. "Let me see, is this a chair? Why, it's got branches I declare! How very odd to find trees growing here!" I think he meant that



s/each non-conformist sect seized on some aspect of ~~of protestantism~~  
~~of the Church~~  
 A/or other, and made a separate church out of it.

Strife is the key note throughout, strife in and about the church, the spirit of Guy Fawkes Day symbolised in the first chapter by the bonfire of sticks, and the nursery-rhymes were chosen to fit into the strife-pattern. Humpty Dumpty's fall was the signal for the general engagement, and both Tweedledum and Tweedledee and the Lion and the Unicorn were already locked in combat before they found their way on to Dodgson's chess-board. They have of course no business there and like Humpty Dumpty are not really chess-pieces at all. They appear in the Dramatis Personae but not in the key to the chess-problem.

"They were standing under a tree, each with an arm round the other's neck, and Alice knew which was which in a moment, because one of them had 'Dum' embroidered on his collar and the other 'Lee.' "I suppose they've each got 'Tweedle' round at the back of the collar," she said to herself.

They were standing under a tree, that is, in the protection of the church. They lived in the same house and Shane Leslie is correct in identifying them as High Church and Low Church.

Compare them with Swift's caricature in "Gulliver's Travels."

"You are to understand that, for above seventy moons past, there have been two struggling parties in this empire, under the

name of Tramecksan and Slamecksan, from the high and low heels of their shoes, by which they distinguish themselves. It is alleged indeed, that the high heels are most agreeable to our ancient constitution; but, however this be, his Majesty hath determined to make use of only low heels in the administration of the government ..."

The High Heels are the High Church or Tory Party of Swift's day; Low Heels, Low Church or Whig. George I is the emperor who favoured the Low Heels and the heir to the throne with his High Heel leanings, the Prince of Wales. Swift's satire is direct, pungent and uncompromising.

Note that the names Tramecksan and Slamecksan, are identical but for the first syllable. Tweedledum and Tweedledee are identical but for the last. But Swift has definitely identified his imaginary parties with High and Low Church by means of the high and low heels of their shoes. Can the same be said of Dodgson?

It can, but as usual, he has been more ingenious in his efforts to cover his tracks.

"To Tweedle," says the Oxford Companion to Literature, "is to produce a succession of shrill musical sounds, to whistle or pipe. The original contest is between the sounds of high - and low-pitched musical instruments."

The original contest was between Handel and Buonocini in

the 1720's.

"Some say, compared to Buonocini  
That Mynheer Handel's but a ninny,  
Others aver that he to Handel  
Is scarcely fit to hold a candle.  
Strange all this difference should be  
Twixt tweedle-dum and tweedle-dee."

The lines have been attributed to various eighteenth century poets, including Swift and Pope.

Dodgson uses the familiar nursery rhyme, which he did not invent as it can be found in "The Nursery Rhymes of England," edited by Halliwell-Phillips (5th ed. 1853).

"Tweedledum and Tweedledee  
Agreed to have a battle  
For Tweedledum said Tweedledee  
Had spoiled his nice new rattle."

"Rattle" and "ritual" are almost the same word and unsympathetically regarded meant much the same thing. But it was Low Church which spoiled High Church's rattle or ritual (or wanted to spoil it) whereas the rattle seemed to belong to Tweedledum (low note). We are, of course, through the Looking-glass, where that kind of thing is to be expected.

The monstrous crow which ended their mock-heroics Shane Leslie regards as the threat of disestablishment which certainly

did cause the English Church to sink its differences.

"Just then flew down a monstrous crow,  
As black as a tar-barrel;  
Which frightened both the heroes so,  
They quite forgot their quarrel."

This chapter is full of most exquisite satire.

"We must have a bit of a fight, but I don't care about going on long," said Tweedledum. "What's the time now?"

Tweedledee looked at his watch, and said "Half-past four."

"Let's fight till six, and then have dinner," said Tweedledum.

The bolsters, blankets, hearthrugs, table-cloths, dish-covers and coal-scuttles are irrelevancies and the trouble they gave Alice in tying strings and fastening buttons - "Really they'll be more like bundles of old clothes than anything else by the time they're ready!" - once more recalls the coats in Swift's "Tale of a Tub." Tweedledee is greatly concerned in case his head is cut off and Tweedledum smiles with satisfaction as he remarks, "I don't suppose there'll be a tree left standing for ever so far round, by the time we're finished!"

"And all about a rattle!" said Alice, still hoping to make them a little ashamed of fighting for such a trifle."

This is an indulgent caricature, the theme of which is "Here we go round the mulberry bush," to which melody, played

"by the branches rubbing one across the other" Alice suddenly found herself dancing with the brothers. She didn't know when they began but it had been going on a long, long time. It had indeed.

The sword is probably the Sword of Scripture since they only had one. Tweedledum offers his brother the umbrella (of doctrine?) with the remark "It's quite as sharp." Tweedledee had folded himself up in that umbrella and earlier the brothers had stood under it when rain threatened.

"Tweedledum spread a large umbrella over himself and his brother, and looked up into it. "No, I don't think it is" he said: "at least - not under here. No how."

" But it may rain outside?"

"It may - if it chooses," said Tweedledee. "We've no objection. Contrariwise."

Probably Dodgson was thinking of the view complacently held by the English Church (apart from the Essayists, Reviewers, Dodgson and other heretics) that the heathen would all go to hell.

"Selfish things!" thought Alice, pointing the moral.

Just before the battle actually commenced, a thunderstorm seemed to be blowing up.

"It's the crow!" Tweedledum cried out in a shrill voice of alarm and the two brothers took to their heels and were out of sight in a moment.

*1. Children can enjoy this without understanding, but for adults, surely it adds depth and significance to realise that the 'branches' were branches of the church.*

"The Walrus and the Carpenter," the poem recited by Tweedledee with the full approval of his brother is to some extent a parody of Hood's "Eugene Aram," but like most of Dodgson's parodies has become a new poem in the same stanza.

According to Harry Furniss (whose evidence is not, however, completely reliable) Tenniel thought the Walrus and the Carpenter "a hopeless combination."<sup>1</sup> They are two of his happiest (and also unhappiest) Looking-glass figures and have passed into folk-lore.

So far as I know they are Dodgson's own invention. The walrus may be the one that the mouse in the pool of tears turned out not to be. The Carpenter as befits one who saws up wood, which comes from trees (tree being a Dodgson symbol for church) is the more materialistic and sceptical of the two but the tears and sobs of the walrus are certainly related to those of the crocodile.

We first meet these "very unpleasant characters" walking on the dry sand beside the wet sea. They are in a sad mood and the cause of their melancholy is the amount of sand they see around them.

"If seven maids with seven mops

Swept it for half a year,

Do you suppose," the Walrus said,

'That they would get it clear?'

'I doubt it,' said the Carpenter,

And shed a bitter tear."

1. Frances Sargant: Sir John Tenniel, p. 18

There were seven essayists and reviewers and this looks like an allusion to them.

Addressing themselves next to a bed of oysters, the Walrus and the Carpenter invited them to take a walk along the briny beach. A wily old oyster, rightly suspicious of their motives declined Stanley's invitation to preach in Westminster Abbey -

"But four young oysters hurried up

All eager for the treat,

Their coats were brushed, their faces washed

Their shoes were clean and neat."

These certainly look like the confiding young clergy led astray as Shane Leslie suggests by higher critics such as Stanley and Colenso.

As a variant reading to the last three lines of the famous verse:

"The time has come, the Walrus said"

Leslie suggests:

"Of Genesis and Kings

And whether hell is boiling hot

Or Angel-folks have wings."

I like the first and second of these but not the third. 'Whether pigs have wings' is, I think, the old query which Ferrovius expressed: "Have animals got souls or have they not?"

At all events, once a few oysters had been persuaded to

walk with the Walrus and the Carpenter, many more followed. Alas, they were being lured to their destruction. A grisly tone crept into the Walrus's voice as he mentioned bread, pepper and vinegar, while the Carpenter thought there was too much butter. These are all familiar Dodgson symbols.

"I like the Walrus best," said Alice, "because, you see, he was a little sorry for the poor oysters."

"He ate more than the Carpenter, though," said Tweedledee. "You see, he held his handkerchief in front so that the Carpenter couldn't count how many he took: contrariwise." The out-and-out sceptic, we may translate, (however loosely) does less harm to the faithful Anglican than the hypocritical churchman who is a sceptic or a Roman Catholic at heart.

In an attempt to justify the presence of Tweedledum and Tweedledee on the chessboard, Dodgson made them things in the Red King's dream, chimaeras like those in Breughel's "St. James and his Persecutors."

"If that there King was to wake," added Tweedledum, "You'd go out - bang! - just like a candle!"

"I shouldn't!" Alice exclaimed, indignantly. "Besides, if I'm only a sort of thing in his dream, what are you, I should like to know?"

"Ditto," said Tweedledum.

"Ditto, ditto!" cried Tweedledee.



They were only things in his dream, yet they claimed to know what he was dreaming about.

Alice said, "Nobody can guess that," and later, "I know they're talking nonsense," but she was worried about it even after she woke up.

"Now Kitty, let's consider who it was that dreamed it all. You see, Kitty, it must have been either me or the Red King. He was part of my dream, of course - but then I was part of his dream too."

It would be fatally easy to read into this all sorts of profundities culled from Berkeley, Hume and Kant and perhaps Dodgson meant them, but only as overtones.

"Isn't he a lovely sight?" said Tweedledum.

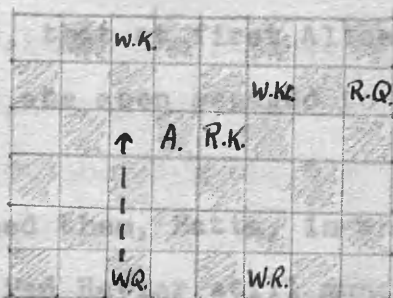
Alice couldn't say honestly that he was. He had a tall red night-cap on, with a tassel, and he was lying crumpled up into a sort of untidy heap, and snoring loud - "fit to snore his head off!" as Tweedledum remarked.

Perhaps he was "sunk in dogmatic slumber," like Kant before he read Hume. Perhaps his tall red night-cap was a flame of the everlasting bonfire on which his party insisted.

"I'm afraid he'll catch cold with lying on the wet grass," said Alice who was a very thoughtful little girl.

Alice has no suspicion of the danger she is in, yet if that there king was to wake, she would certainly leave the board. This is probably the root idea: by virtue of his chess-situation,

the Red King cannot wake. Unknown to Alice, she passes him under the protection of the White Knight, who hands her over to the White Queen. The Red King's Powers are dormant, pressed on in silence, till they came in sight of a great crowd in the middle of which the Lion and Unicorn were fighting. They were in such



One last group of conflicting figures remains to be noticed, the White King, the Lion and the Unicorn. The bread-and-butter: "The Lion and the Unicorn were fighting for the crown; is eventually. The Lion beat the Unicorn all round the town. been in prison. Some gave them white bread and some gave them brown; not committed. Some gave them plum-cake and drummed them out of town." The White King was not asleep. On the contrary he was overly busily engaged in sending his troops into action. He had two messengers, one to come and one to go, Haigha, the March Hare, and Hatter, the Mad Hatter. Hatter carried round on trays but it was Haigha is tricked out in antique costume and striking Anglo-Saxon attitudes like those of the Primitive Church ritual so dear to the hearts of soi-disant Catholic rectors. He gives the White King a ham-sandwich (a good, meaty argument?) and

then has nothing to offer but hay (dry stuff at the best of times).

"Alice had no more breath for talking, so they trotted on in silence, till they came in sight of a great crowd in the middle of which the Lion and Unicorn were fighting. They were in such a cloud of dust, that at first Alice could not make out which was which: but she soon managed to distinguish the Unicorn by his horn."

Hatta joined them, Hatta, in whom we can just recognise our old friend the Mad Hatter still munching his bread-and-butter and drinking his tea (twinkling, or weak, with cream in it?). He too, has been Anglo-~~ex~~onised, is eating a bit of the bread-and-butter that the Lion and the Unicorn are to be offered and is eventually sent to start the drums beating. He has also been in prison, sentenced before his trial for a crime he has not committed and is probably the Essayists and Reviewers again whose arguments were proved not to contain the element of novelty (in the "New Theory"). Hence the antique garb, to match Haigha's.

In the "Ten minutes allowed for refreshments" Alice tried the bread which Haigha and Hatta carried round on trays but it was very dry. Then Hatta bounded away to start the drums and while Alice was watching him she suddenly saw the White Queen "running across the country!"

As the White King explained how useless it was to do anything

but make a memorandum about her, the Unicorn "sauntered by them, with his hands in his pockets." He had always thought children to be fabulous monsters, but agreed to believe in Alice if she would believe in him.

The Lion took charge of the situation.

"Then hand round the plum-cake Monster," the Lion said, lying down and putting his chin on his paws. "And sit down both of you," (to the King and the Unicorn): "fair play with the cake, you know!"

His idea of fair play is well known, but his attitude is also significant: "his chin on his paws." Compare Alice with "her chin pressed so closely against her foot that there was hardly room to open her mouth." This is a very materialistic attitude.

Seated between the two great creatures, the King represents the Erastian principle with the Unicorn as Convocation and the Lion as Parliament.

"What a fight we might have for the crown now!" the Unicorn said, looking slyly up at the crown, which the poor King was nearly shaking off his head, he trembled so much."

Tenniel made the Unicorn resemble Disraeli and the Lion Gladstone which would suggest political strife and no doubt Dodgson intended that meaning also, for he did not believe in party-politics and thought the idea of an opposition farcical.

"All round the town?" said the White King. "That's a good long way. Did you go by the old bridge, or the market place? You get the best view by the old bridge."

The market-place is commerce, one way to power and reward; the old bridge, I suggest, the Asses' Bridge from public school to university. But it no longer made any difference. Either way, "there was too much dust to see anything."

It is astonishing how the eye can pass smoothly over the little devices by which Dodgson kept the atmosphere of strife alive. The words throb with strife as an impressionist sky throbs with heat. Look once more at "the Crown, which the poor King was nearly shaking off his head." "Off his head" is no accident. If Humpty Dumpty had smiled any more his mouth might have met behind and "then I don't know what would happen to his head! I'm afraid it would come off!" The Red King was snoring loud - "fit to snore his head off!" as Tweedledum remarked. The crowning - or perhaps one should say uncrowning - example occurs when the two Queens fall asleep and "first one round head, and then the other, rolled down from her shoulder, and lay like a heavy lump in her lap."

There is no doubt whatever that he is fooling us to the top of our bent. It is a little late to be expressing our appreciation, but better late than never.

Brown bread and white bread (copper and silver?) are rewards

like the comfits after the caucus-race. Alice tried a bit herself, but it was very dry. The Lion and the Unicorn wanted something better - plum-cake. A 'plum' has meant an important, lucrative position at least since the days of Henry VIII when the original Sir John Horner pulled his plum out of the dissolution of the monasteries. Dodgson had used the symbol in his caricature of Jowett pulling £500 a year out of the Oxford pie. The Lion and the Unicorn were as churchmen and statesmen, seeking power and wealth, as Church and State fighting for the power and the glory which properly belonged to the King.

And so it goes on, metaphor, pun and leg-pull, all subdued to the looking-glass lapse and flow.

"Alice had seated herself on the bank of a little brook, with the great dish on her knees and was sawing away diligently with the knife.

"'It's very provoking!' she said, in reply to the Lion (she was getting quite used to being called 'the Monster'). 'I've cut off several slices already, but they will always join on again!'"

"'You don't know how to manage Looking-glass cakes,' the Unicorn remarked. 'Hand it round first and cut it afterwards.'"

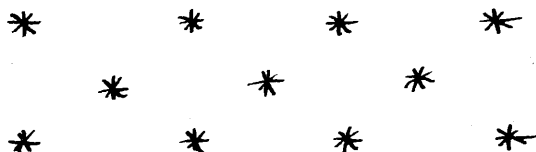
It sounded nonsense, but it worked, and it often happens that rewards are shared out in advance. This is an improvement on the Caucus-race.

"Now cut it up," said the Lion, as she returned to her place with the empty dish.

"She's kept none for herself, anyhow," commented the Lion a moment later. "Do you like plum-cake, Monster?"

But before Alice could answer him, the drums began.

"Where the noise came from, she couldn't make out; the air seemed full of it and it rang through and through her head till she felt quite deafened. She started to her feet, and in her terror, she sprang across



the brook and had just time to see the Lion and Unicorn rise to their feet with angry looks at being interrupted in their feast, before she dropped to her knees, and put her hands over her ears, vainly trying to shut out the dreadful uproar.

There is a faint suggestion of divine retribution in the drums. Notice that Alice "dropped to her knees" another significant attitude. Yet the drums are started by the orders of the little King of Controversy so perhaps it is only the Battle that is commencing - and that certainly will not drive the Lion and the Unicorn out of town.

Tenniel's drawing consists of shadowy drums, hands and drumsticks, with Alice on her knees and beside her an empty

plate and knife. Dodgson does not mention the knife again, but the dish was there and was promptly 'collected' by the White Knight in case they found any plum-cake. To do him justice, he was not looking for plum-cake.

On the other hand, his collecting an empty dish ought to remind us of the King's Messenger, Hatta, who, while in prison, was fed on oyster-shells, empty dishes.

"First the fish must be caught!

That is easy: a baby, I think, could have caught it,

'Next, the fish must be bought.'

That is easy: a penny, I think, would have bought it.

'Now cook me the fish!'

That is easy, and will not take more than a minute.

'Let it lie in the dish!'

That is easy, because it already is in it.

'Bring it here! Let me sup!'

It is easy to set such a dish on the table.

'Take the dish-cover up!'

Ah, that is so hard that I fear I'm unable!

For it holds it like glue -

Holds the lid to the dish, while it lies in the middle,

Which is easiest to do,

Un-dish-cover the fish, or dishcover the riddle!"



Answer (given in the 1904 edition of the poems): an oyster.

Yes, the oyster-shells were empty dishes, shibboleths, the shells of outworn faiths, on which the King's Messenger (rationalist) subsisted and which the White Knight (Science) was solemnly adding to his collection.

It is a kind of metaphor Dodgson is using, a metaphor so elaborate and far-fetched that if found in the work of Donne or Herrick, it would be called 'conceit.' And this is the truth of the matter. In his serious verse, Dodgson was a minor nineteenth-century romantic, but in his prose he was the latest, and greatest, of the metaphysical poets.

The book is not so much an allegory as a kind of plastic fable or parable, the same symbols, even Alice, being used in different ways at different times as a phrase is used in music, or an expression in algebra.

Alice herself is our observer throughout. We see and hear by means of her eyes and ears and judge by her childish and, in important matters, trustworthy standards. Such details as her relative size at any particular moment, we are left to infer, and Dodgson makes great play with relative sizes. In the Wonderland story he told us Alice's size each time it changed, and only once left us to make a deduction from it. When Alice approached the house of the March Hare,

"She thought it must be the right house, because the

chimneys were shaped like ears and the roof was thatched with fur. It was so large a house, that she did not like to go nearer till she had nibbled some more of the left-hand bit of mushroom, and raised herself to about two feet high: even then she walked up towards it rather timidly, saying to herself, 'Suppose it should be raving mad after all!'

"It" was the March Hare which she had mistaken for a house when she was nine inches high.

In "Through the Looking-glass" it is assumed that we are familiar with such obvious changes in the point of view as must follow a reduction or increase in our own (or Alice's) stature. More subtle variations are in store for us. The Red Queen, we are told was three inches in height and in the garden, Alice half-a-head shorter.

That no doubt was why Humpty Dumpty looked so large to her (though he was only an egg after all)" when she had come close to it," whereas, "when she had come within a few yards of it" she could just distinguish the eyes, nose and mouth. A few yards is a considerable distance if you are only a couple of inches in length.

But why then did she see the bees "a mile off" the size of elephants and the flowers "something like cottages with the roofs taken off, and stalks put to them"? Perspective too, seems to be reversed and things appear larger the further away they are—

or perhaps we are in a "world before perspective" like that Lamb saw in a china tea-cup. "Those little, lawless azure-tinctured grotesques .... whom distance cannot diminish ... a cow and rabbit couchant and apparently co-extensive .... thus objects show seen through the lucid atmosphere of fine Cathay."

Apparently Dodgson meant her to go down among the insects for Alice decided to go down the other way, which would take her towards them. But at this point Tenniel rebelled and refused to draw a wasp wearing a wig.

"Don't think me brutal," he wrote on June 1, 1870, "but I am bound to say that the 'wasp' chapter doesn't interest me in the least, and I can't see my way to a picture. If you want to shorten the book, I can't help thinking - with all submission - that there is your opportunity."

A wasp wearing a wig, in view of the recent church-trials, was surely not entirely without interest. However, a curiously submissive Dodgson cut out the chapter and adopted Tenniel's further suggestion that Alice should seize the Goat's beard "instead of the old lady's hair," when the train jumped the brook between the third and fourth squares. Alice "seizing the old lady's hair" in a moment of emergency must surely have been intended to correspond in some way with the White Queen's action at the very end of the game.

"Take care of yourself!" screamed the White Queen, seizing

1. Coll., p. 148 (facsimile of Tenniel's letter, dated June 1, 1870).

Alice's hair with both her hands. "Something's going to happen."

Tenniel's reactions reminded Dodgson that most of his subtleties would be absolutely lost on his readers and it must have been with an almost cynical shrug that he made the alterations Tenniel suggested.

The train journey symbolises Alice's rapid transit through the third square in "a pawn's first move" and at the same time casts doubt on the reality of progress.

"You're travelling the wrong way," says the Guard.

Ideas derived from Alice's extraordinary smallness as a pawn and extraordinary largeness as a Human Being are mixed up with ideas about the city and real train journeys. The tickets are the same size as the people and even the smoke is worth a thousand pounds a puff. The guard has to look at her through a telescope, a microscope and a pair of binoculars, yet one of the passengers suggests that she should draw the train the rest of the way herself, as Gulliver did the enemy fleet.

Back on the board, Alice's size becomes more stable again, for the gnat is "about the size of a chicken" which is how that mournful insect with his sorrowful jokes would appear to a chess pawn.

It does not matter that Alice understands nothing of what is happening to her. She "keeps her head," whereas the people she meets seem in danger of losing theirs in one way or another.

Even in the wood where things have no names, she remains herself, though she thinks her name begins with an L. "L, I know it begins with L!"

Love begins with L.

Sometimes the book seems to be of the stuff of fable or parable. At other times it might be a lyric by Blake or one of Donne's metaphysical rhapsodies. Alice's meeting with the Fawn in the wood where things have no names is poetry which rhyme or rhythm would only spoil.

"Just then a Fawn came wandering by: it looked at Alice with its large gentle eyes, but didn't seem at all frightened. "Here then! Here then!" Alice said, as she held out her hand and tried to stroke it; but it only started back a little and then stood looking at her again.

"What do you call yourself?" the Fawn said at last. Such a soft sweet voice it had!

"I wish I knew!" thought poor Alice. She answered, rather sadly, 'Nothing, just now.'

"Think again," it said: 'that won't do.'

"Alice thought, but nothing came of it. 'Please would you tell me what you call yourself?' she said timidly. 'I think that might help a little.'

"I'll tell you if you'll come a little further on," the Fawn said. 'I can't remember here.'

"So they walked together through the wood, Alice with her

arms clasped lovingly round the soft neck of the Fawn, till they came out into another open field, and here the Fawn gave a sudden bound into the air, and shook itself free from Alice's arms. 'I'm a Fawn!' it cried out in a voice of delight. 'And dear me, you're a human child!' A sudden look of alarm came into its beautiful brown eyes and in another moment it had darted away at full speed."

Blake's 'Piping down the valleys wild' is no more perfect. The dialogue with the Gnat, on the other hand, in which Alice is warned about the wood, is loaded.

"What sort of insects do you rejoice in, where you come from?" the Gnat inquired.

"I don't rejoice in insects at all," Alice explained, "because I'm rather afraid of them - at least the large kinds. But I can tell you the names of some of them."

"Of course they answer to their names?" the Gnat remarked carelessly.

"I never knew them do it."

"What's the use of their having names," the Gnat said, "if they won't answer to them?"

"No use to them," said Alice; "but it's useful to the people that name them, I suppose. If not, why do things have names at all?"

"I can't say," said the Gnat. "In the wood down there,

they've got no names - however, go on with your list of insects."

It is because these words are informed with meaning that they produce in the receptive mind a feeling of exquisite pleasure. We join for the moment with Dodgson in glorious revolt against the whole wearisome business of classification and nomenclature.

And then he switches to Looking-glass insects, "insects" being another surreptitious pun which I think Shane Leslie has missed, though he identifies the "sects" more definitely than I care to do. The Rocking-horse fly, for example, which he takes as a "methodist on circuit" may "swing itself from branch to branch" because it has changed over to suit the religious temper of the times. It has just been repainted, like the roses in the garden of preferment, and lives on sap and sawdust (symbols as obvious as pepper and treacle but derived from trees). Its brightness and stickiness refer, I think, to the bonfire, as well as to the paint. The Snap-dragon fly, a creature made of plum-pudding, (rewards) holly-leaves (prickliness) and a raisin burning in brandy he regards as "the extinct two-bottle Orthodox" and he may be right, though it seems to me there is a touch of rationalism about the "raisin."

My own favourite is the Bread-and-butter-fly whose wings are "thin slices of bread-and-butter, its body is a crust, and its head a lump of sugar."

"And what does it live on?"

"Weak tea with cream in it."

A new difficulty came into Alice's head. "Supposing it couldn't find any?" she suggested.

"Then it would die, of course."

"But that must happen very often," Alice remarked thoughtfully.

"It always happens," said the Gnat.

After this, Alice was silent for a minute or two, pondering. We all know the bread-and-butter-fly.

Sometimes the thought is turgid, the words packed with many meanings, sometimes it flows blandly along like good conversation.

Alice is sometimes a human child, sometimes a pawn, sometimes the quality of love or faith, sometimes all three. Inevitably Dodgson wrote himself into Alice, pushed Alice Liddell out, as it were, and took her place, but inevitably also he wrote himself into the White Knight and for a moment Alice Liddell returned to wave him goodbye.

"I hope it encouraged him," she said, as she turned to run down the hill: "and now for the last brook, and to be a Queen! How grand it sounds!"

For some squares now her powers have been developing. On square six, for example she sees the White Queen, "running across the country," and the White Queen is on the eighth rank. At the beginning of square seven she has a momentary glimpse behind her,



of the Lion and Unicorn rising with angry looks - on square six. A more sinister development is the little scream of laughter she gives as the White Knight falls off his horse while explaining the art of staying on. The White Queen's screams sound like the whistle of a steam engine. Not Alice, surely! Yet Alice could not escape entirely the consequences of chess-life. White she is, and shrill she is becoming.

But at the end of square seven, she is nearing the end of her journey. The sun is setting - or rising - who can say which? She has to go "down the hill" and across the last brook. If he had wished to do so, Dodgson could not have avoided symbolism here, and he had no wish to avoid it. Eagerly, Alice leaps across, into the unknown.

The end of the game is another point at which it seems to me Shane Leslie has gone very wide of the mark. He thinks that Alice's becoming a Queen denotes her conversion to Roman Catholicism.

Dodgson's "grand finale" is much more subtle and magnificent than that. All the ideas mingle and merge in one glorious crescendo; chess and theology flow together towards the climax.

To the queens, all solid objects, are of equal importance and of equal importance with Alice herself. To the Red Queen, all are supernatural, just as to the ritualist even church vestments and other externals were supernatural. To the White Queen,

*London Mercury, 1933.*

none are supernatural, as to the rationalist there were no miracles and (almost) no Superior Being.

"You ought to return thanks in a neat speech," the Red Queen said, frowning at Alice as she spoke. Despite her whispered protest the Queen insisted upon supporting her.

("And they did push so!" she said afterwards, when she was telling her sister the history of the feast. "You would have thought they wanted to squeeze me flat!")

They wanted to reduce her to their own level, which was that of the surface.

"I rise to return thanks - " Alice began: and she really did rise as she spoke, several inches.

"Take care of yourself!" screamed the White Queen, "seizing Alice's hair with both her hands. "Something's going to happen!"

The end of the game is going to happen.

To the Chessmen, it is the end of the world. A new world is breaking in on them, a world of which they know nothing, in which they are "less than nothing and dreams."

a | "And then, (as Alice afterwards described it) ~~A~~ll sorts of things happened in a moment. The candles all grew up to the ceiling, looking something like a bed of rushes with fireworks at the top. As to the bottles, they each took a pair of plates which they hastily fitted on as wings, and so, with forks for legs, went fluttering about: "and very like birds they look,"

Alice thought to herself, as well as she could in the dreadful confusion that was beginning.

After Judgment Day ("Examination") Kingdom Come - or Creation. It is the Twilight of the Chessmen, the last confusion. The Leg of Mutton sits in the Queen's chair and even the Soup ladle comes "walking up the table to Alice and signing to her to get out of its way." Matter is triumphing over mind. The last shall be first, with a vengeance!

The White Queen vanishes into the soup. "In the soup" means trouble again, just as her last words to Alice were "Take care of yourself" - the motto of the self-seeker. Alice pulls the table-cloth and brings "plates, dishes, guests and candles crashing in a heap on the floor," which looks like the end of a good many things dear to the heart of the catholic.

Alice, you see, is a White Queen now, and like Hamlet in the last act, an instrument of fate. She has just brought about the downfall of the catholic style of service. Now she turns on the Red Queen:

"And as for you - " but the Red Queen had suddenly dwindled down to the size of a little doll and was now on the table, merrily running round after her own shawl, which was trailing behind her."

But it is nothing very terrible Alice intends towards the Red Queen:

"I'll shake you into a kitten, that I will!" She will shake some softness and roundness into it.

The text of "Through the Looking-glass" will be found in "Maud" where the poet is said to be

"Dowered with the hate of hate, the scorn of scorn,  
The love of love."

When Alice begins to move, the game is nearly over. White is all over the board and Red, though still smouldering, doomed to extinction. Red is reduced to three pieces, none of which intervenes effectively. The Red Queen vanishes before Alice makes her first move as a pawn and only reappears to be captured. The Red Knight is quickly disposed of.

Most of the satire is directed against the Protestant aspect of the Church, by means of White and the various chimeras and fabulous monsters brought in to augment the chessmen and to represent various subtle shades of non-conformist and Anglo-Catholic opinion.

Alice starts off, as Dodgson himself had done, very much under the influence of dogma (Red Queen) but in the game she is made to belong to the White side. She meets two things in the Red King's dream, Tweedledum and Tweedledee, who are High Church and Low Church. In the poem they warn her against Broad Church. Presently she meets the White Queen and is helpful to that flustered and dishevelled lady, though declining to think of

1. Lines which Dodgson asked Tennyson to interpret.

See Coll., p. 71.

herself as her servant.

Meantime the White Queen or Protestant aspect of the church has turned into an old sheep and almost into a porcupine, that it has become both woolly and prickly. She has also laid an egg, which is Verbal Inspiration or Protestant Orthodoxy (Humpty Dumpty). It is the shattering of this orthodoxy which has produced as it has been produced by the battle of the books, through which, and so far as possible remaining neutral, Alice, in all her different "meanings," must make her way towards Queendom.

The Red Knight who is Blind Faith claims to have captured her and the White Knight, who is Science or Pure Reason, to have set her free, but it is noticeable that she is of much more help to the White Knight than he to her.

She is gentle, patient, unselfish, does everything that is asked of her cheerfully and to the best of her ability and sure enough, her empty plate turns into a queenly crown.

How can such work be assessed? Resemblances to different branches of art and literature have been noted. It is a form of caricature, contains satire and burlesque, wisdom and speculation and mischief. In some ways it resembles Gulliver or Erewhon, in others the fables of Aesop or the parables of Jesus. It is the nothing that is more than matter on the lips of distracted Ophelia, the assumed madness of Hamlet or Edgar,

the professional madness of the court fool. It is entirely unlike the contemporary nonsense of Edward Lear; nor is it in the least Gilbertian. It has more in common with the theories of non-Euclidean geometry or with the poetry of Donne or Blake.

But in the aggregate it is unlike anything else, a separate and distinct form of art. It is not mere ingenuity, for of that we would tire, and we never tire of it. It is as "full of quotations" as Hamlet or the Bible. Familiarity with its symbols is expected of educated people, though the literary convention is to misapply and the parliamentary tradition to misquote. It has provided countless books with titles and illumined the profundities of modern physics at least for those who write them. One meets Alice wandering, puzzled but not downhearted, through sermons, treatises on relativity or psychology, examination papers - and invariably one experiences a sudden lifting of the load as at the sight of a known face in a strange city,

"A white sail on a windy sea, a green tree in a solitary place."

For such a book, Tenniel was the ideal illustrator. His method, too, was a form of metaphor, of which the famous "Dropping the Pilot" cartoon to mark the dismissal of Bismarck is a good example. Nevertheless, Tenniel was not a great and

original artist like Dodgson. He was an illustrator and few of the ideas even in his Punch cartoons were his own. On the contrary he was given his ideas to illustrate at the Wednesday Punch conferences in which he took little part, his political opinions being mildly conservative whereas the policy of Punch at that time was mildly liberal. <sup>1</sup>

Altogether, Tenniel did ninety-two illustrations for Dodgson and Harry Furniss's story that the only one Dodgson liked was Humpty Dumpty is quite incredible. According to Furniss, "Tenniel could not tolerate 'that conceited old don' any more." He quotes Tenniel as saying: "I'll give you a week, old chap. You will never put up with that fellow a day longer." <sup>2</sup>

There was undoubtedly constant well-bred friction between Dodgson and Tenniel. The latter tried hard to dodge illustrating "Through the Looking-glass" at all, and when Dodgson wrote to him about a later book ("The Hunting of the Snark"?) declined in the following terms:

"It is a curious fact that with 'Through the Looking-glass,' the faculty of making drawings for book illustration departed from me and notwithstanding all sorts of tempting inducements, I have done nothing in that direction since."

Dodgson himself had a pictorial mind and never gave up the practice of making preliminary sketches for his illustrator to copy. He had pictures in his mind which his own hand had not the skill to capture on paper. Tenniel was to do that and

1. *Frances Sargant: Sir John Tenniel*, p. 31.

2. *Harry Furniss: Recollections of Lewis Carroll*, *Stand Mag.*, Jan. 1908.

3. *Coll.*, p. 146.

the sketches were intended to assist Tenniel.

The trouble was that Tenniel brought an alien intelligence to bear on the problem. Of Dodgson's real purposes he had not the smallest inkling but he saw wonderful opportunities of a quite different kind in Dodgson's queer dream-characters, and from his point of view, rightly and properly imparted to them his own style of drollery which he had developed in his work for "Punch," his illustrations for "Aesop's Fables" and other books. The details of the story were less important to him than the artist's duty to make a good picture at all costs and the pictures he produced were so good in themselves that Dodgson often had to compromise.

Thus Tenniel's White Knight was nowhere near Dodgson's idea of the White Knight. "The White Knight must not have whiskers," wrote Dodgson. "He must not be made to look old." /  
Tenniel paid no attention. "Wait till he sees the finished picture," we may imagine him saying. We know what the White Knight looks like now, not as Dodgson saw him but as Tenniel saw him, old and with whiskers, bearing as his Punch colleagues were quick to detect a considerable resemblance to one of their number, 'Ponny' Mayhew; Tenniel would not admit that this was intentional.

When Tenniel made the drawing of Alice as a Queen, he not unnaturally gave Alice a corrugated chess-dress like those of

1. Frances Tazano : *See John Tenniel*, p. 17.

2. For this and other of Tenniel's originals, see F.S. : *See John Tenniel*, p. 21.



the other queens. Dodgson made him change that. Alice was not of the nature of the chessmen at all and in the drawing as published appears in her best party frock with only the chess crown to mark her new status.

Perhaps if Dodgson had taken Tenniel into his confidence there would have been less friction. As it was, Dodgson had no reason to be dissatisfied. Tenniel tried his best to reconcile the demands of his author with those of his medium, and it must be remembered that to him many of Dodgson's requirements must have seemed capricious and unreasonable. Only very occasionally did he kick over the traces, as in the case of the 'wasp in a wig' which he declared was 'beyond the appliances of art.'

There have been, as Frances Sarzano declares in her study of "Sir John Tenniel," better drawings but no better illustrations. In fact they are simply the illustrations to the Alice books and nobody else need try.

1. See Tenniel's original sketch in Frances Sarzano's

"Sir John Tenniel," 1.68.

## CHAPTER VI

### CHASMS and CRAGS

It was a greatly changed Dodgson who emerged from the writing and publication of "Through the Looking-glass." In that work he had made it clear to himself, if to nobody else, that his God was a God of Love and a God of Mystery, the world vastly stranger than the churchmen or the scientists realised, the great controversies infinitely petty and ridiculous.

He was not understood, nor had he meant to be. Nevertheless, the publication of the book in December, 1871, brought him a measure of adult appreciation and "Jabberwocky" was at once recognised as a new and original use of language.

Another important consequence was that Macmillan and Company could not keep pace with the orders from the booksellers.<sup>1</sup> Dodgson did not worship money. He was liberal in his gifts to hospitals and other charities. But he rejoiced in his power to earn money by his pen and there is no doubt that he benefited enormously in the freedom and independence which his secure financial position gave him.

This is clearly seen in the new batch of skits on local affairs which flowed from his pen in the next three years. In these, the chief quarry he hunts is no longer Jowett but the Dean of Christ Church himself. Dodgson hated his surroundings

*1. Coll., p. 143. See also Handbooks, h. 240.*

to be disturbed. Once he was used to a place it was impossible to improve it for him. He wanted it left alone. No doubt it disturbed his thoughts to find the skyline of Christ Church altering, the very quadrangle quaking and erupting and he found nothing edifying in the sight of the tall, austere Liddell emerging from a drain<sup>1</sup> or balanced precariously on the Cathedral roof.

But Liddell pressed on with the alterations, in the course of which he found it necessary to pull down the old belfry in which Great Tom was housed and as a temporary measure, intended to protect the bell from the elements, to house it in a plain wooden box.<sup>2</sup> This drove Dodgson nearly frantic, as did the new entrance to the Cathedral from Tom Quad and the excavations in the quadrangle itself.

In the "New Belfry" (1872) and the "Vision of the Three T's" (1873) he gave vent to his irritation and with much wit but less humour ridiculed the Dean's efforts to put the House in order.

The best thing in the "New Belfry" is the burlesque on Shakespeare with the Great Bell as poor Tom: "Do poor Tom some charity. Tom's a-cold." The Dean is now Lear, now Hamlet: "Dean (as King Lear): The little dons and all, Tutor, Reader, Lecturer - see they bark at me!

Censor: His wits begin to unsettle.

Dean (as Hamlet): Do you see yonder box, that's almost  
in the shape of a tea-caddy?

1. *Life of Liddell*, p. 196.

2. I. *Life of* photograph this, Dodgson himself climbed the roof. *Helmut Gensheim*, p. 66.

Censor: By its mass, it is like a tea-caddy, indeed.

Dean: Methinks it is like a clothes-horse.

Censor: It is backed like a clothes-horse.

Dean: Or like a tub.

Censor: Very like a tub.

Dean: They fool me to the top of my bent."

But there is no real sting in that. Not so harmless was the suggestion that the Dean had embarked on a scheme of reconstruction without due regard to the cost. Dodgson's opinion, put into the mouth of the Professor of Logic, was that "when people thus commit a fatal blunder in child-like confidence that money will be forthcoming to enable them to set it right, in ten cases out of nine, the money is not forthcoming. This is a large percentage."

In the sequel it is clear that the money had been forthcoming and Dodgson, no doubt nettled at being proved wrong, was not content to let sleeping dogs lie. The "Three T's" parodies Walton's "Compleat Angler" and Piscator's remarks become indiscreetly topical.

"I will now say somewhat of the Nobler kinds, and chiefly of Gold-fish, which is a species highly thought of, and much sought after in these parts, not only by men, but by divers birds, as for example, the King-fishers: and note that wheresoever you shall see those birds assemble, and but few insects about, there shall you ever find the Gold-fish most lively and richest

in flavour; but wheresoever you perceive swarms of a certain gray fly, called the Dun-fly, there the Gold-fish are ever poorer in quality, and the King-fishers seldom seen."

This hints obscurely at Liddell's friendship with the Prince of Wales and at the methods by which the money was obtained to complete the building programme.

Dodgson's chagrin at the contrast between the salaries of University lecturers and the emoluments of Church dignitaries also expressed itself in terms of fish.

"A good Perch may sometimes be found hereabouts: but for a good fat Plaice (which is indeed but a magnified Perch) you may search these waters in vain. They that love such dainties must needs betake them to some distant Sea."

The "Three T's" were the Tea-chest (or temporary bell-housing) the Tunnel (or new entrance to the Cathedral with its odd double doorway) and the Trench (or excavations in the quadrangle).

Offence was taken at the Deanery<sup>"</sup> but there was not much the Dean could do about it.

To take action would have been to admit that the cap fitted and the Dean knew well enough that his reforming policy was unpopular with a majority of his Chapter and educational staff. Dodgson's views ran counter to those of the age, but not to those of the Christ Church common-room. He may have gone farther

than others were prepared to go, but on the whole he was their mouthpiece."

In May 1873 he came out into the open with some "objections," which he submitted to "the Governing Body of Christ Church, Oxford" and printed for private circulation. He objected in this case to the lowering and narrowing of the terrace and the proposed replacement of a wall by a grass slope. On the last point, his objection was sustained and he may therefore claim a place, though an unwilling one, among those who have made Christ Church architecturally what it is.

As to the Dean's approval or disapproval, Dodgson showed his indifference by bringing out in the following year a collected edition of "Notes by an Oxford Chiel": "Evaluation," "Dynamics," "Three T's" and "The Blank Cheque, a Fable." The last of these which appeared separately earlier in 1874, concerned proposals for building new "schools" (examination halls) before any estimate had been obtained or plans drawn. Mrs Nivers (the U-NIVERS-ITY) and John (probably the professors, since he has his feet tucked well under his chair) have empowered Susan, the maid, to find a new school for Angela. "Susan" was the Committee of nine appointed by Convocation on Nov. 28, 1873, to arrange for the building of the "schools" and armed with powers which Dodgson thought excessive. The parable had some effect and the terms of reference were revised.

During this period, apart from the "Notes," Dodgson published nothing but mathematical text-books for undergraduates and a series of "Discussions" on the best method of taking votes in elections. Nevertheless he had already begun collecting material for another nonsense book and we can once more trace the process from the beginning.

Dodgson had met Lord Salisbury in 1870 when the Marquis had come to Oxford to be installed as Lord Chancellor. He photographed him in his robes of office along with his two sons and partly on this account, partly, no doubt on account of his growing reputation, was invited to Hatfield at the end of 1872.

There was a large party of children and Dodgson, perhaps in response to a suggestion, perhaps on his own initiative, told them the story of "Bruno's Revenge" which he had contributed in 1867 to "Aunt Judy's Magazine." It was not a success. Lady Salisbury came in during the telling with "some new toy or game to amuse her little guests, who with the usual thoughtlessness of children, all rushed off and left Mr Dodgson."

All but one. Princess Alice, with truly royal good manners sat down again by his side, at which he was pleased and touched. And yet, it was almost a pity. But for that charming gesture he might have taken the hint, accepted the omen, let well alone. As it was he spent the next twenty years elaborating that harmless trifle into an eccentric novel in two large volumes.

In the Preface to "Sylvie and Bruno Concluded" (1893) he wrote, correcting his earlier impression that the idea of expanding the story originated in 1874:

"It was in 1873 as I now believe, that the idea first occurred to me that a little fairy-tale, (written in 1867 for 'Aunt Judy's Magazine,' under the title 'Bruno's Revenge') might serve as the nucleus for a longer story. This I surmise, from having found the original draft of the last paragraph of Vol. II, dated 1873. So this paragraph has been waiting 20 years for its chance of emerging into print - more than twice the period so cautiously recommended by Horace for 'repressing' one's literary efforts."

Here it is:

"Sylvie's sweet lips shaped themselves to reply, but her voice sounded faint and very far away. The vision was fast slipping from my eager gaze: but it seemed to me, in that last bewildering moment that not Sylvie but an angel was looking out through those trustful brown eyes, and that not Sylvie's but an angel's voice was whispering:

'It is Love.'

Alice, it will be remembered, was to be 'gentle as a fawn and loving as a dog;' then trustful, ready to accept the wildest impossibilities with all that eager trust that only dreamers know." And in the wood where things had no names she thought her name began with L.



There was no break in the sequence of ideas, merely a progressive idealisation of the child Alice, while Alice Liddell herself had come of age.

The barrier between Alice and her adopted uncle became more impassable as the discrepancy in their ages became relatively less important. Many men have married girls twenty years younger than themselves and while the gap between thirty-two and twelve is the same as that between forty-two and twenty-two, it does not seem the same. It is a difficulty, but with goodwill on both sides, surmountable. Socially and financially also, the gap had narrowed. On his part there was diffidence and perhaps reluctance to alter his mode of living, his now ingrained celibacy; fear not only of rebuttal but of acceptance. On hers the probability is that she never thought of him as a possible husband, had no feeling of that kind towards him.

Moreover, her future husband, Reginald Hargreaves was by then in residence at Christ Church, having come there from Eton in 1870 or 1871.<sup>1</sup> Against this handsome youth of exactly her own age, with his impeccable county background, the middle-aged Dodgson with his stammer and his queer notions had no chance at all.

When hounds met near Oxford, Alice used to ride to the meet. She was not allowed to hunt but she may have seen young Hargreaves there, immaculate in top-boots and pink. And even at the Deanery,

<sup>1</sup> See : F.B. Lennon : Lewis Carroll, Appendix D (p. 231) which gives information published in the *Sewanee Review*, April-June, 1940.

an old Etonian, with prospects, was more certain of a welcome than a member of the college staff who had publicly accused the Dean of bad taste in architecture and finance.

If, in his innocence, Dodgson had imagined that Alice treasured as he did the love which once undoubtedly existed between them, that she would deprive herself of all that this world had to offer her, wait for him as Charles Cayley waited for Christina Rossetti until the shadow-show was over and the great reality began; he was to be disillusioned. She was no dream-child but a healthy young woman, fully conscious of her beauty and her social position. She fell in love, and in due time, went the way of the world.

There was, actually, a formal leave-taking, of the kind he had envisaged in "Faces in the Fire" and it is preserved in a photograph of 1874, the last he ever took of Alice Liddell, though she remained at Christ Church for other six years. Alice's expression is extremely sad and in our day of instantaneous photographs the significance of this expression is apt to be overlooked. The wet-plate process demanded a time-exposure which was long enough to be rather trying for the sitter, so that older people usually had to adopt a restful pose, and even in this photograph, Alice's hands rest on a cushion on her lap. Her melancholy pose was deliberately chosen, and the probability is chosen by Dodgson. He wanted a sad photograph of her to

1. Lewis Carroll Picture Books; also in F. B. Lennon's "Lewis Carroll."

match his own nostalgia for "childhood and the happy summer days."

There were now two Alices, therefore, one, beautiful but sad, in her early twenties, soon to be called Lady Muriel Orme and one, henceforward to be thought of as Sylvie, abstracted from the gentle, lovable side of the child Alice. There was also the wayward, but, in Dodgson's intention, also lovable little boy-spirit, Bruno and a benign, elderly gentleman to do the story-telling and mental tidying up.

Next came the hideous and loveless Uggug - abstracted from all school bullies and spoilt children, his foolish and scheming parents and an allegorical Warden who was allotted to Sylvie and Bruno as Father.

The story of Prince Uggug was written by the end of 1874 when on another visit to Hatfield he told it to the children, with what success, Collingwood does not say.

"As the years went on," says Dodgson in the 1889 Preface, "I jotted down, at odd moments, all sorts of odd ideas and fragments of dialogue, that occurred to me - who knows how? - with a transitory suddenness that left me no choice but either to record them then and there or to abandon them to oblivion. Sometimes one could trace to their source these random flashes of thought - as being suggested by the book one was reading, or struck out from the "flint" of one's own mind by the "steel" of a friend's chance remark - but they had also a way of their own, of occurring, à propos of nothing - specimens of that hopelessly

illogical phenomenon, "an effect without a cause."

One such phenomenon refused to be absorbed into the larger work and achieved separate publication. This was "The Hunting of the Snark" in which for the last time his powers were fused. Again, though not until the book was far advanced, there was the stimulus of a young female personality. Again there was violent reaction to the circumstances of his time. Again there was an illustrator whose hand was to supply the deficiencies of his own.

"I was walking on a hillside," he tells us in the "Theatre" article of 1887, "one bright summer day, when suddenly there came into my head one line of verse - one solitary line - 'For the Snark was a Boojum, you see.' I knew not what it meant, then: I know not what it means, now; but I wrote it down and, some time afterwards, the rest of the stanza occurred to me, that being its last line: and so by degrees, at odd moments during the next year or two, the rest of the poem pieced itself together, that being its last stanza. And since then, periodically I have received courteous letters from strangers, begging to know whether "The Hunting of the Snark" is an allegory, or contains some hidden moral, or is a political satire: and for all such questions I have but one answer, 'I don't know.'"

In the Preface (to the "Snark") he points out further that "this poem is to some extent connected with the lay of the

Jabberwock." In it he uses the vocabulary he invented for "Jabberwocky"; the Jubjub Bird and the Bandersnatch haunt those chasms and crags; and the Snark itself was conjured into existence (or non-existence) on the portmanteau-principle since Dodgson told Beatrice Hatch that it was compounded of 'snail' and 'shark'.

We may imagine him on his solitary walk juggling with letters and syllables, reversing, transposing almost multiplying and dividing them until he hit on a combination that pleased him: snark; boojum -

"For the Snark was a Boojum, you see!"

The line has no meaning but like music, it expresses a mood; not, in this case, a happy one. It is an alphabetical shrug.

The Snark has been identified with Fortune, Social Advancement, Popularity and the Absolute, to mention only a few.

"The best I've seen," wrote Dodgson himself, "is by a lady (she published it in a letter to a newspaper), that the whole book is an allegory on the search after happiness. I think this fits in beautifully in many ways - particularly about the bathing-machines: when the people get weary of life, and can't find happiness in towns or in books, then they rush off to the seaside, to see what bathing-machines will do for them."

So he won't help us; but the mood in which he is so pointedly unhelpful is again ironical; on the surface, the patter is as amusing and whimsical as ever but 'weary of life' 'can't find happiness' "rush off" suggest that his own amusement is sardonic, or rueful.

The "bathing-machines" occur in the Bellman's Speech, when he is recounting

"The five unmistakeable marks

By which you may know, wheresoever you go,

The warranted, genuine Snarks."

Of these,

"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 first three are the taste ("Which is meagre and hollow but crisp") its habit of getting up late and slowness in taking a jest.

"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."

Like "Jabberwocky" it fills our heads with ideas - only we don't exactly know what they are. The 'ones which have feathers and bite' seem to be Jubjubs, abstracted no doubt

from militant females with their feather boas since the Butcher in his lesson on Natural History has this to say:

"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 bribe:

And in charity-meetings it stands at the door,

And collects - though it does not subscribe."

Those that have whiskers and scratch are Bandersnatches one of which is described in action against the Banker.

"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."

However the Bandersnatches and Jubjubs are less to be feared than the Boojums, since the Jubjub is merely heard screaming in the distance and "the Bandersnatch fled when the others appeared."

The Boojums were certainly the worst.

Henry Holiday, the illustrator, had no theory, but supplies some very interesting information in an article he wrote for "The Academy," Jan. 29, 1898. He first received three "fits" to illustrate and the remainder separately at intervals. The poem, he says, was intended to form part of "Sylvie and Bruno," but as that work was not to be ready for some time and as the poem had grown far beyond the length originally contemplated for it, Dodgson decided to publish it at once. It was published on March 29th, 1876.

One of Holiday's drawings, and according to himself, one of his best drawings, was of the Boojum. "Mr Dodgson wrote that it was a delightful monster, but that it was inadmissable. All his descriptions of the Boojum were quite unimaginable, and he wanted the creature to remain so." To this Holiday reluctantly consented.

The picture which seems to catch the spirit of the poem most hauntingly is that of the search, in which Hope and Care accompany the Bellman and his crew. Holiday tells us:

'When I sent Mr Dodgson the sketch of the hunting, in which I had personified Hope and Care -

'They sought it with thimbles, they sought it with care,

They pursued it with forks and hope' -

he wrote that he admired the figures, but that they interfered



with the point, which consisted in the mixing up of two meanings of the word 'with'. I replied, 'Precisely, and I intended to add a third - "in company with" - and so develop the point.' This view he cordially accepted, and the ladies were admitted."

Dodgson himself realised the added depth given to his strange group of careful, hopeful searchers for something they knew not what and when he wanted cover designs for back and front, he wrote to Holiday: "As 'Alice' and the 'Looking-Glass' have both got grotesque figures outside, I should like these to be pretty, as a contrast, and I don't think we can do better than to take the head of 'Hope' for the first side and 'Care' for the second; and as these are associated with 'forks' and 'thimbles' in the poem, what do you think of surrounding them, one with a border of interlaced forks, the other with a shower of thimbles? And what do you think of putting a bell at each corner of the cover, instead of a single line?"

The Chestnuts, Guildford, January 15th, 1876.

Care and hope are the two qualities displayed by the bewildered band - hope leading to care. We can see the association of care and thimbles but if hope is associated with forks, it must be hope of food, a selfish kind of hope reminiscent of "Bread-and-butter" and the Tumtum tree.

It may be taken as axiomatic that whatever Dodgson was consciously thinking and feeling found its way into his "nonsense". Now we owe it to his new confidence in his opinions that we can

tell what he was thinking and feeling at the time when the "Hunting" was being composed - or composing itself, as he wants us to believe.

He was far from happy about the way of the world, and the trigger which released his views was a letter in the "Spectator" of February, 1875 on the subject of Vivisection. In the following week a long letter by Dodgson appeared in the "Pall Mall Gazette", referring to this under the significant title, "Vivisection as a Sign of the Times."

This letter is by no means confined to the subject of vivisection. Its real subject is the new secular education brought into existence, or at least made possible by the Education Act of 1870, and incidentally by the University Tests Act of the following year.

"How far," asks Dodgson, "may Vivisection be regarded as a sign of the times, and a fair specimen of that higher civilisation which a purely secular State education is to give us?"

"In that much-vaunted panacea for all human ills we are promised not only increase of knowledge, but also a higher moral character ... May we, then, regard the practice of vivisection as a legitimate fruit, or as an abnormal development, of this higher moral character? Is the anatomist, who can contemplate unmoved the agonies he is inflicting for no higher purpose than to gratify a scientific curiosity, or to illustrate some well-established truth, a being higher or lower, in the scale of

humanity, then the ignorant boor whose very soul would sicken at the horrid sight?"

Dodgson himself had taken up the study of anatomy (from text-books) in 1872 after looking on helplessly at a man in a fit,<sup>6</sup> and he is referring to this when he proceeds: "Can the man who has once realised by minute study what the nerves are, what the brain is, and what waves of agony the one can convey to the other, go forth and wantonly inflict pain on any sentient being?"

In the case of "that most charming of men, a London physician," the answer is "He can." The thought is a disturbing one. It suggests all sorts of alarming possibilities about his fellow men. "Is it possible that that bank director, with his broad honest face, can be meditating a fraud? That the chairman of that meeting of shareholders, whose every tone has the ring of truth in it, can hold in his hand a "cooked" schedule of accounts? That my wine merchant, so outspoken, so confiding, can be supplying me with an adulterated article?" And so back to education again: "That the schoolmaster, to whom I have entrusted my little boy, can starve or neglect him?"

He quotes Herbert Spencer's "Study of Sociology" to confirm his view that knowledge in itself has no beneficial effect on morality. This is the opposite of the devil citing scripture, a situation of which he was probably aware and from which he no doubt derived grim amusement. The chief tenet of secular

education, "when divorced from religious or moral training" he finds to be "the purest and most unmitigated selfishness."

("Take care of yourself!" screamed the White Queen.)

And here is his conclusion, which those who regard Lewis Carroll as a mixture of Father Christmas and Peter Pan must find strangely bitter:

"The world has seen and tired of the worship of Nature, of Reason, of Humanity; for this nineteenth century has been reserved the development of the most refined religion of all - the worship of Self. For that, indeed, is the upshot of it all. The enslavement of his weaker brethren - "the labour of those who do not enjoy for the enjoyment of those who do not labour" - the degradation of woman - the torture of the animal world - these are the steps of the ladder by which man is ascending to his higher civilisation. Selfishness is the keynote of all purely secular education; and I take vivisection to be a glaring, a wholly unmistakable case in point .... This then is the glorious future to which the advocate of secular education may look forward: the dawn that gilds the horizon of his hopes! An age when all forms of religious thought shall be things of the past; when chemistry and biology shall be the ABC of a State education enforced on all; when vivisection shall be practised in every college and school; and when the man of science, looking forth over a world which will then own no other

sway than his, shall exult in the thought that he has made of this fair green earth, if not a heaven for man, at least a hell for animals."

Shortly afterwards Dodgson treated the subject rather differently in an article, "Some Popular Fallacies about Vivisection" which the "Pall Mall Gazette" refused. It appeared in the "Fortnightly Review" dated 1st June, 1875.

After considering our right to inflict pain and distinguishing between killing for food and dissecting for knowledge he asserts that the effect upon the operator is worse than that upon the animal. He then compares vivisection with blood-sports to the detriment of the former and advocates legislation. His thirteenth fallacy, "That the practice of vivisection will never be extended so as to include human subjects," is of peculiar interest to a generation which has lived through the second World War. Dodgson imagines "a day when anatomy shall claim as legitimate subjects for experiment, first, our condemned criminals - next, perhaps, the inmates of our refuges for incurables - then the hopeless lunatic, the pauper hospital-patient and generally "him that hath no helper" - a day when successive generations of students, trained from their earliest years to the repression of all human sympathies, shall have developed a new and more hideous Frankenstein - a soulless being to whom science shall be all in all." Something

like this actually did happen in Nazi Germany.

However, Dodgson's warning was for Everyman:

"And when that day shall come, O my brother-man, you who claim for yourself and for me so proud an ancestry - tracing our pedigree through the anthropomorphoid ape up to the primeval zoöphyte - what potent charm have you in store to win exemption from the common doom? Will you represent to that grim spectre, as he gloats over you, scalpel in hand, the inalienable rights of man? He will tell you that this is merely a question of relative expediency - that, with so feeble a physique as yours, you have only to be thankful that natural selection has spared you so long. Will you reproach him with the needless torture he proposes to inflict upon you? He will smilingly assure you that the hyperaesthesia, which he hopes to induce, is in itself a most interesting phenomenon, deserving much patient study. Will you then, gathering up all your strength for one last desperate appeal, plead with him as with a fellow-man, and with an agonised cry for "Mercy!" seek to rouse some dormant spark of pity in that icy breast? Ask it rather of the nether mill-stone."

It was in this mood of gathering gloom that his mind began, in despite of his invention, to compose a poem of its own. It has apparently escaped notice that the bellman's bell is an ordinary school-bell of the type used before electric bells came into use. It seems to me that Dodgson quite consciously derived his Bellman from the new secular state education of

which so much was hoped.

His crew are simply Tom, Dick and Harry, with the Baker as Everyman, for the framework of the poem is the nursery rhyme:

Rub-a-dub-dub,

Three men in a tub,

A butcher, a baker,

A candlestick-maker - "

but Dodgson limited himself to characters beginning with the letter "B" and widened the selection as if to let in some of all professions that go the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire.

We are all there, all in the same boat, all heading in the wrong direction, going the wrong way, as the Guard said to Alice. We are adrift on unknown seas, not merely rudderless, but with the rudder mixed up with the bowsprit and the ship sailing backwards. Our only chart is a blank with such helpful particulars as equator, nadir and North Pole distributed haphazard round the sides. When we do, in spite of this reach land, it is an island of chasms and crags in which we must search for something inconceivable, to find which is the worst thing that can happen to us.

And the end, the wild plunge into a chasm, the hope that ended in care:

"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."

The hunter is caught by his quarry, Everyman who (like the White Queen-in the thunderstorm) has forgotten his own name, is hoist with his own petard. It is the end of "Some Fallacies about Vivisection" disguised by fantastic dream-imagery.

Much of that imagery can be found in the "New Belfry" and "The Vision of the Three T's." Take, for example, Section VII of the New Belfry, "On the Impetus Given to Art in England by the New Belfry, Ch. Ch."

"The idea has spread far and wide, and is rapidly pervading all branches of manufacture. Already an enterprising maker of bonnet-boxes is advertising "the Belfry pattern": two builders of bathing machines at Ramsgate have followed his example: one of the great London houses is supplying "bar-soap" cut in the same striking and symmetrical form: and we are credibly informed



that Borwick's Baking Powder and Thorley's Food for Cattle are now sold in no other shape."

There is the bonnet-maker (or bonnet-box-maker in this case, but the resemblance is obvious enough) the bathing-machines, soap and if not a baker, at least baking-powder and cattle-cake.

As for the land of chasms and crags, here in the "Vision of the Three T's" is something very like it.

"A darker vision yet! A black gash appeared in the shuddering parapet! Spirits flitted hither and thither with averted face and warning fingers pressed to quivering lips!

"Then a wild shriek rang through the air, (The Beaver's Lesson: "Then a scream, shrill and high, rent the shuddering sky,") as with volcanic roar, two musky chasms burst upon the view, and the ancient College reeled giddily around me! ....

"Stand here with me and gaze. From this thrice-favoured spot, in one rapturous glance gather in, and brand for ever on the tablets of memory, the Vision of the Three T's! To your left frowns the abysmal blackness of the tenebrous Tunnel. To your right yawns the terrible Trench. While far above, away from the sordid aims of Earth and the petty criticisms of Art, soars tetragonal and tremendous, the tintinabulatory Tea-chest! Scholar, the Vision is complete!"

Complete it is, chasms and crags and all.

"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 new generation of secularly educated State schoolboys had arrived in the Christ Church which Dean Liddell had turned (in Dodgson's overheated imagination) into a landscape of nightmare precipices and ravines.

The "Hunting of the Snark" was not written in a short time but occupied "a year or two" and in that time Dodgson's mood changed. The discovery that he could still produce his own distinctive work raised his spirits and laughter returned to preside over the filling-out process.

Into a form decided upon while he himself was in the doldrums he poured every absurdity that occurred to him, including whole "fits" which treat old ideas in a new way. The Butcher and the Beaver, for instance are drawn together by the scream of the Jubjub, just as Tweedledum and Tweedledee forgot their quarrel at the approach of the monstrous crow.

Again, the Barrister's dream is in design identical with the Mouse's Tale.

"I'll be judge, I'll be Jury

Said cunning old Fury."

So is the Snark - and Council for the Defence as well as for the Prosecution. There is a link here with the trial-scene which Dodgson, on Tenniel's advice left out of "Through the Looking-glass," for Holiday's drawing of the trial is based on one made by Dodgson and containing a small female figure obviously intended to be Alice.

Confronted with the Banker one is tempted to outgripe in despair, but he changes colour, in the Looking-glass manner:

"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!"

Then his chanting in mimsiest tones

"Words whose utter inanity proved his insanity,

While he rattled a couple of bones"

may be a wierd caricature of extravagant church ritual. The Banker may well be an official of one of Butler's "Musical Banks" (Churches) in "Erewhon". In the "Vision of the Three T's" there are constant and scathing references to the singing and chanting of the chapter (and also to their collection of money) in the Services which the Dean had renovated along with everything else. Dodgson, as has been shown, did not make his nonsense

out of nothing but used whatever lay nearest, provided only that it could be made to harmonise with the context.

Once more he was writing not for a local and restricted public but for all the world. Once more he was negotiating with an artist about illustrations for his work - and would that more of their correspondence had been preserved!

Again (and whether this was a cause or an effect of his changed mood I do not know, though I suspect both) during the summer of 1875, he made a new child-friend, Gertrude Chataway.<sup>4</sup>

"I first met Mr. Lewis Carroll," says Gertrude, "on the sea-shore at Sandown on the Isle of Wight, in the summer of 1875, when I was quite a little child.

"We had all been taken there for change of air, and next door there was an old gentleman - to me at any rate he seemed old - who interested me immensely. He would come on to his balcony, which joined ours, sniffing the sea-air with his head thrown back, and would walk right down the steps on to the beach with his chin in air, drinking in the fresh breezes as if he could never have enough. I do not know why this excited such keen curiosity on my part, but I remember well that whenever I heard his footsteps, I flew out to see him coming and when one day he spoke to me, my joy was complete."

After that, it was the old story over again. They used to sit on the wooden steps which led from the gardens of the houses

1. The importance of this kind of stimulus can be seen from an entry in his diary, 24 Oct., 1875, in which he records that on a sudden impulse he decided to publish "The Hunting," wrote to Holiday and Macmillan and composed the account of Gertrude Chataway - all within twenty-four hours. Helmut Gensheim, p. 72.

on to the beach while he told her stories, illustrating as he went along.

"One thing that made his stories particularly charming to a child was that he often took a cue from her remarks - a question would set him off on quite a new trail of ideas, so that one felt that one had somehow helped to make the story, and it seemed a personal possession."

Gertrude, in later life, used to wonder just why he sought her society and never seemed to tire of it. Once she asked him and he replied that "it was the greatest pleasure he could have to converse freely with a child, and feel the depths of her mind."

When the holidays were over a correspondence began which Gertrude declares was one of the greatest joys of her childhood. "It was to her that he wrote the well-known letter about drinking each other's healths (Oct. 13, 1875) and the parcels of kisses letter, (Dec. 9, 1875). And the "Hunting" was dedicated to her, though she had no place in it, as "Alice's Adventures" and "Through the Looking-glass" were dedicated to Alice Liddell.

"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!

Away fond thoughts, and vex my soul no more!

Work claims my wakeful nights,

my busy days -

Albeit bright memories of that sunlit shore

Yet haunt my dreaming gaze!"

The poem is a double accrostic, since both the initial letters and the words with which the verses begin form "Gertrude Chataway."

The "Hunting" is the most obscure, but neither emotionally nor philosophically the most profound of Dodgson's works. Such feelings as can be discerned appear to be suppressed irritations, the thoughts of the nature of prejudices. There is nothing in the poem which is not ridiculous, no touchstone of sanity, no love, for even the friendship of the Bearer and the Butcher arose "merely from nervousness, not from goodwill." He had, in some

way, lost Alice and Gertrude came too late.

It is a strange interlude, an interim report in an unknown language. Again it is written in verse, and it is only in his prose that Dodgson is a true poet. His verse is, at its worst, the work of a competent tradesman, at its best of a skilled craftsman. The "Hunting" is a poem of genius, but not metrically.

As with Tenniel, he was able to get from Holiday work of a kind he never produced elsewhere. The nine illustrations are not only better drawings than Dodgson could have made himself; they are better conceptions of the characters. They are also better than Holiday could have made without Dodgson's text and suggestions to work from.

Two stand out almost as surrealist lyrics in themselves, the Search into which Holiday so beautifully insinuated his allegorical Hope and Care and the sinister vanishing, with the last streaks of day behind the distant crags, a black gulf containing the suggestions of trees and tenebrous horrors and in the foreground something which might be rock or a dead Prometheus. High in one corner is a hand clutching the familiar bell which seems to be tolling the knell of humanity. A book with Dodgson was not simply a piece of writing. It was an act of publication.

At this time, Christ Church was graced by a number of celebrated men with all of whom Dodgson had dealings of one kind

or another. There was Liddon, with whom he had toured the continent, Ruskin who taught Alice to draw and told Dodgson he had not enough talent to make it worth his while pursuing his artistic studies and the tall, elegant Dean, lexicographer and renovator of Christ Church buildings. Dr. Pusey, who nominated Dodgson to his studentship and who had come to Christ Church as an undergraduate in the days of George III, was now a spare, bowed figure with silver locks under a large black skull-cap.

And there was Max Müller, friend of kings and emperors, of Weber and Mendelssohn and an accomplished musician and entertainer himself. Made an M.A. and honorary member of Christ Church in 1851, he had been disappointed in not being elected professor of Sanskrit in 1860. In 1869, however, a chair of Comparative Philology had been created specially for him and this he had filled until the year of "The Hunting" when, to give him more time to devote to his "Sacred Books of the East," the University proposed to relieve him of the duties of his chair and appoint a deputy at half his salary.

This proposal outraged Dodgson whose pamphlet on the subject took its stand on what would now be called the rate for the job. The decree was carried in spite of him but Max remembered and in his essay on Dean Liddell written long afterwards refers, though not by name, to Dodgson in scathing terms.



Wherever he went, the Dean, Max says, "towered high above the heads of all in the room. He was truly beautiful as a man." He was not, however, without his detractors. "Even in the University there were those who could not bear his towering high above them as he did, not in stature only, but in character and position. Nasty things were said and written, but everybody knew from what forge those arrows came."

Dodgson should have remembered his own fable: if you take (or try to take) a bone from a dog, its temper remains.

1876 saw the publication of two more curious and revealing items, "An Easter Greeting to every Child who Loves Alice" and "Fame's Penny Trumpet." The first was evidently in reaction to the underlying rancour of the "Snark", while the second gives open expression to it.

"And is not that a Mother's gentle hand that undraws your curtains and a Mother's sweet voice that summons you to rise? To rise and forget, in the bright sunlight, the ugly dreams that frightened you so when all was dark - to rise and enjoy another happy day, first kneeling to thank that unseen Friend, who sends you the beautiful sun? ....

"Do you think He cares to see only kneeling figures, and to hear only tones of prayer - and that He does not also love to see the lambs leaping in the sunlight, and to hear the many voices of the children, as they roll among the hay? Surely their

1. Max Müller; Dean Liddell as I knew him, in "Last Essays."

innocent laughter is as sweet in His ears as the grandest anthem that ever rolled up from the "dim religious light" of some solemn cathedral?"

He looks forward to the time when he will walk through the valley of the shadows consoled by the thought that he has added to the happiness of the children he loves, and bids them too look forward to the glorious day "when all the sadness, and the sin, that darkened life on this little earth, shall be forgotten like the dreams of a night that is past."

It is written in the spirit of the dedicatory poem to Gertrude Chataway, and was no doubt suggested by the happy relationship he had established with that "baby child." Apparently he met her again that summer and she visited him at Christ Church in the autumn. The friendship continued after Gertrude had grown into a woman though he told her she would always be a child to him.

"Fame's Penny Trumpet" is an outburst against scientific research, astonishing and a little ridiculous in its vehemence.

"Affectionately dedicated to all 'original researchers' who pant for 'endowment,' it begins:

"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 chase with hoofs unclean

And Babel-clamour of the sty."

'Mountebanks,' 'vermin', 'idols of a petty clique' - can this be from the pen that invited the children to a world where lovelier sights would meet their eyes than waving trees or rippling waters? These are the two aspects of his mind at this time, disgust and disappointment at what he found to be adult life and escape into a wonderland which is no longer pure mathematics but the freshness and innocence of childhood.

He is still harping on vivisection in the "Penny-Trumpet," on the hypocrites,

"Who preach of Justice - plead with tears

That Love and Mercy should abound -

While marking with complacent ears

The moaning of some tortured hound."

Surely there is a suggestion there of the Walrus and his hand-

kerchief as well as an echo from the letter to the Pall Mall Gazette, while

"And oil each other's little heads  
With mutual Flattery's golden slime"

seems afar off to imitate:

"And pour the waters of the Nile  
On every golden scale!"

Afar off indeed! The direct method never suited Dodgson.

"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!"

In the following year another letter by Dodgson appeared in the "Pall Mall Gazette." This was on "Natural Science at Oxford" and suggested by the approach of a Congregation "to be holden at Oxford on the 24th inst." (i.e. May 24th, 1877) "when it will be proposed to grant, to those who have taken the degrees

of bachelor and master in Natural Science only, the same voting powers as in the case of the "M.A." degree. This proposal Dodgson opposed on the grounds that it meant "the omission of one of the two classical languages, Latin and Greek, from what has been hitherto understood as the curriculum of an Oxford education."

Soon, he thought, would come the thick end of the wedge in which Latin and Greek might disappear from the curriculum, logic, philosophy and history follow and the destinies of Oxford be left in the hands of those who had no education other than scientific! He protested his impartiality since he himself taught science, "for mathematics, though good-humouredly scorned by the biologists on account of the abnormal certainty of its conclusions, is still reckoned among the sciences."

The best parts of this letter are the three acts of a little fantastic morality play.

"In the dark ages of our University (some five-and-twenty years ago), while we still believed in classics and mathematics as constituting a liberal education, Natural Science sat weeping at our gates. 'Ah, let me in!' she moaned; 'why cram reluctant youth with your unsatisfying lore? Are they not hungering for bones; yea, panting for sulphuretted hydrogen?'

"We heard and we pitied. We let her in and housed her royally; we adorned her palace with re-agents and retorts, and

made it a very charnel-house of bones, and we cried to our undergraduates, 'The feast of Science is spread! Eat, drink and be happy!' But they would not. They fingered the bones, and thought them dry. They sniffed at the hydrogen and turned away. Yet for all that Science ceased not to cry, 'More gold, more gold!' and her three fair daughters, Chemistry, Biology and Physics (for the modern horse-leech is more prolific than in the days of Solomon), ceased not to plead 'Give, give!' And we gave; we poured forth our wealth like water (I beg her pardon, like  $H_2O$ ), and we could not help thinking there was something weird and uncanny in the ghoulish facility with which she absorbed it."

In the second act Science asked for boys, not bones - for scholarships, not apparatus; and in the third which was "yet under rehearsal" was to ask for endowments which would enable the devotees to think instead of teach. It is beautifully done, rich and bizarre in imagery and though it is founded on prejudice, and had no effect on Congregation, relieved his feelings.

After this he seemed to become resigned to the onward march of science, though he retained his horror of vivisection. Once, much later, when Collingwood himself was walking with Dodgson in Oxford, a well-known professor passed them.

"I am afraid that man vivisects," said Dodgson gravely. "

He was as Collingwood put it "nothing if not a staunch Conservative" and his conservatism was not merely political. Like the northern poets of pagan days, he thought the old times better than the new; like Mr Hardcastle in "She Stoops to Conquer," he loved old wine, old books, old ways and never tired of saying so.

Unfortunately for him he lived in a world which was not merely changing but where the rate of change was also being accelerated. Not merely Christ Church but all Oxford was being renovated. Horse-trams had been introduced; they were widening Magdalen Bridge. Cowley was not yet but the city was expanding into the green country.

And in everything it was the same. Even his beloved photography had lost its savour since the new dry-plate process had made it easy and cheap.<sup>1</sup> Now they were interfering with the order of Euclid's propositions! Nothing, absolutely nothing, was sacred.

Once more his voice was raised in defence of the old order. Hands off Euclid! "Euclid and his Modern Rivals" deserves to be better known than it is and though in places it becomes too elaborate and complicated, it is on the whole a delightful hybrid - a mathematical thesis in the form of a five-act comedy.

"The object of this little book," says the prologue, "is

1. This was not why he gave up photography. See below, p. 303.

to furnish evidence, first that it is essential in elementary Geometry, to employ one text-book only; secondly, that there are strong a priori reasons for retaining, in all its main features, and specially in its sequence and numbering of propositions and in its treatment of parallels the Manual of Euclid; and thirdly, that no sufficient reasons have yet been shown for abandoning it in favour of any one of the modern Manuals which have been offered as substitutes."

After acknowledging that in adopting a dramatic form and a popular style he risked falling between two stools he makes various apologies, one of which is highly significant as it gives his own estimate of his position in the mathematical world.

"To Mr Wilson especially such apology is due - partly because I have criticised his book at great length and with no sparing hand - partly because it may well be deemed an impertinence in one, whose line of study has been chiefly in the lower branches of Mathematics to dare to pronounce any opinion at all on the work of a Senior Wrangler. Nor should I thus dare, if it entailed my following him up 'yonder mountain height' which he has scaled, but which I can only gaze at from a distance; it is only when he ceases 'to move so near the heavens,' and comes down into the lower regions of Elementary Geometry, which I have been teaching for nearly five-and-twenty years, that I feel sufficiently familiar with the matter in hand



to venture to speak."

The style has the flavour of good 'shop.' We do not have to understand it all to be fascinated by it and the opening is a glimpse, distorted or transformed as always, but worth having none the less, into Dodgson's rooms in Tom Quad, when he was not entertaining children. Let us eavesdrop upon the Mathematical Lecturer, disguised as Minos, talking to himself as he corrects those interminable examination-papers, which we are apt to forget occupied a good deal of his time; they were his 'works' as Charles Lamb said of his ledgers. What we call his works were his play.

"ACT I, Sc.1.

'CONFUSION WORSE CONFOUNDED.'

Scene, A College Study. Time, midnight. MINOS discovered seated between two gigantic piles of manuscripts. Even and anon he takes a paper from one heap, reads it, makes an entry in a book, and with a weary sigh transfers it to the other heap. His hair, from much running of fingers through it, radiates in all directions, and surrounds his head like a halo of glory, or like the second Corollary of Euc. I. 32. Over one paper he ponders gloomily and at length breaks out in a passionate soliloquy.

"Minos: So, my friend! That's the way you prove I. 19,

is it? Assuming I. 20? Cool, refreshingly cool! But stop a bit! Perhaps he doesn't 'declare to win' on Euclid. Let's see. Ah, just so! 'Legendre,' of course! Well, I suppose I must give him full marks for it: what's the question worth? - Wait a bit, though! Where's his paper of yesterday? I've a very decided impression he was all for 'Euclid' then: and I know the paper had I. 20 in it .... Ah, here it is! 'I think we do know the sweet Roman hand.' Here's the proposition, as large as life, and proved by I. 19. 'Now, infidel, I have thee on the hip!' You shall have such a sweet thing to do in viva-voce, my very dear friend! You shall have the two propositions together, and take them in any order you like. It's my profound conviction that you don't know how to prove either of them without the other. They'll have to introduce each other, like Messrs. Pyke and Pluck. But what fearful confusion the whole subject is getting into! (Knocking heard.) Come in!

Enter RHADAMANTHUS

Rhad. I say! Are we bound to mark an answer that's a clear logical fallacy?

Min. Of course you are - with that peculiar mark which cricketers call 'a duck's egg' and thermometers 'zero'."

Discussion follows of Cooley and Wilson on parallels and they finally decide that full marks must be given. Rhadamanthus

takes his leave and Minos just takes forty winks and - Snores.

"Scene ii.

(Minos sleeping: to him enter the Phantasm of Euclid. Minos opens his eyes and regards him with a blank and stony gaze, without betraying the slightest surprise or even interest.)

Euc. Now what is it you really require in a Manual of Geometry?"

That has the grand manner and only the highly specialised nature of the subject-matter has prevented "Euclid and his Modern Rivals" from joining "Alice," "Looking-glass" and "Snark" as a popular classic.

The attitude to ghosts and spirits displayed in this work is like that in "Phantasmagoria," frivolous, yet curiously well-informed. Minos is to review the modern geometries without Euclid's help.

"Min. It will be weary work to do it all alone. And yet, I suppose you cannot, even with your supernatural powers, fetch me the authors themselves?

Euc. I dare not. The living human race is so strangely prejudiced. There is nothing men object to so emphatically as being transferred by ghosts from place to place. I cannot

say they are consistent in this matter: they are forever 'raising' or 'laying' us poor ghosts - we cannot even haunt a garret without having the parish at our heels, bent on making us change our quarters: whereas if I were to venture to move one single small boy - say to lift him by the hair of his head over only two or three houses, and to set him down safe and sound in a neighbour's garden - why, I give you my word, it would be the talk of the town for the next month!"

Compare Alice lifting the White King to the table.

"Min. I can well believe it. But what can you do for me? Are their Doppelgänger available?

Euc. I fear not. The best thing I can do is to send you the Phantasm of a German Professor, a great friend of mine. He has read all books, and is ready to defend any thesis, true or untrue."

Professor Niemand (Nobody) is abstracted from German scholarship in general and a more delightful devil's advocate it would be hard to find.

# ACT II. Sc. 1

'E fumo dare lucem.'

(Minos sleeping. To him enter, first a cloud of tobacco-smoke, secondly the bowl, and thirdly the stem of a gigantic meerschaum; fourthly the phantasm of Herr Niemand, carrying a pile of phantom-books, the works of Euclid's Modern Rivals,

phantastically bound.)"

Surely this entrance is like that of the Cheshire Cat, grin first. It seems to me also that the phantom books are related to those in Fechner's 'Space Has Four Dimensions,' each one of which would last for only a short time, thus fulfilling their purpose of making way for new books all the quicker.

The detailed discussion of the books is beautifully managed. Legendre is let down lightly as well suited for advanced students, though not for beginners but Cooley is soon marched off the table, Cuthbertson follows and then Wilson is brought on, heralded by a quotation from his own preface: 'There is moreover a logic besides that of mere reasoning.'

Niemand: I lay on the table 'Elementary Geometry' by J. M. Wilson, M.A., late Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, late Math. Master of Rugby School, now Headmaster of Clifton College. The second edition, 1869. And I warn you to be careful how you criticise it, as it is already adopted in several schools.

Minos: Tant pis pour les écoles. So you and your client deliberately propose to supersede Euclid as a textbook.

Nie: 'I am of opinion that the time is come for making an effort to supplant Euclid in our schools and universities.' (Pref. p. XIV)

Min. It will be necessary, considering how great a change you are advocating, to examine your book very minutely and critically.

Nie. With all my heart, I hope you will show, in your review, 'the spirit without the prejudices of a geometrician?' (Pref. p. XV.)

But after collecting the 'unaxiomatic axioms' and other fallacies, Minos concludes that the Manual 'has no claim whatever to be adopted as the Manual for purposes of teaching and examination.'

Dodgson revels in the destruction, for example, of Morell.

"Min.: What have you about Lines, to begin with?

Nie.: Here is a definition. 'The place where two surfaces meet is called a line.'

Min.: Really! Let us take two touching spheres, for instance?

Nie.: Ahem! We abandon the definition."

He is also seizing on the meanings of words not intended by the author and producing little fire-crackers of pure fantasy as good in their way as any of his other 'nonsense.'

Min.: Look at p. 36. 'a circumference is generally described in language by one of its radii.' Let us hope that the language is complimentary - at least if the circumference is within hearing! Can't you imagine the radius gracefully rising to his feet, rubbing his lips with his table-napkin?

'Gentlemen! The toast I have the honour to propose is &c. &c. Gentlemen, I give you the Circumference!' And then the chorus of excited Lines,

'For he's a jolly good fellow!'

Nie.: (Rapturously) Ha, ha! (checking himself) You are insulting my client.

Min.: Only filling in his suggestive outlines.

In Act III the pièce de résistance is the Syllabus of the Association for the improvement of Geometrical Teaching. 1878. Niemand has to have a new name here and chooses Nostradamus, from Nostra, the plural of Nostrum, 'a quack remedy' and damus, 'we give.'

"(Even as he utters the mystic name, the air grows dense around him, and gradually crystallises into living forms. Enter a phantasmic procession, grouped about a banner, on which is emblazoned in letters of gold the title 'Association for the Improvement of Things in General.' Foremost in the line marches Nero, carrying his unfinished 'Scheme for the Amelioration of Rome': while among the crowd which follow him may be noticed - Guy Fawkes, President of the 'Association for raising the position of Members of Parliament' - The Marchioness de Brinvilliers, Foundress of the 'Association for the Amendment of the Digestive Faculty' - and The Rev. F. Gustrell (the being who cut down Shakespeare's mulberry-tree) leader of the 'Association

for the Refinement of Literary Taste.' Afterwards enter, on the other side, Sir Isaac Newton's little dog, 'Diamond,' carrying in his mouth a half-burnt roll of manuscript. He pointedly avoids the procession and the banner, and marches past alone, serene in the consciousness that he, single-pawed, conceived and carried out his great 'Scheme for the Advancement of Mathematical Research,' without the aid of any association whatever.)

From this point, however, the book becomes increasingly difficult to follow, owing to a system of codifying the various methods of treating parallel lines. Dodgson assumes we can appreciate his subtleties as easily as he himself, but the labour of constantly referring to the key is more than most people, including, I suspect, most mathematicians are prepared to take, even for the intellectual pleasure such an exercise might conceivably yield.

The truth is that the field was too narrow for literature and the treatment too frivolous for mathematics. The general conclusion reached in the book was that only very slight changes were required to make Euclid the best geometry book on the market.

"(To the sound of slow music, Euclid and the other ghosts 'heavily vanish,' according to Shakespeare's approved stage-direction. Minos wakes with a start and betakes himself to bed, 'a sadder and a wiser man.')



In an appendix, Todhunter is allowed to supply an explanation of the sudden urge to change the order of the propositions and perhaps also of Dodgson's irritation thereat.

"The objections against Euclid's order seem to me to spring mainly from an intrusion of natural history into the region of mathematics. It is to the influence of the classificatory sciences that we probably owe this notion that it is desirable or essential in our geometrical course to have all the properties of triangles thrown together, then all the properties of rectangles, then perhaps all the properties of circles, and so on."

And De Morgan in a second appendix links the mathematical with the religious heretics. "Even Bishop Colenso has written a Euclid."

Dodgson's outspoken pamphlets and open letters had by this time made him rather unpopular in academic circles. Ruskin was the only eminent member of the House who escaped his censure and how he did so is a mystery, for he was rich, popular and an innovator (at one time he set young Oxford to make roads in the name of progress and the brotherhood of man) but he too had a horror of vivisection and no doubt that cemented their friendship forever.

It certainly seems that Dodgson was no longer a visitor at the Deanery which was then the centre of University social life.

Everybody of note called on the Liddells, Ruskin, if he thought the Dean was out, to have tea and muffins with Alice and her sisters, the Prince of Wales and other members of the royal family. Dodgson apparently did not. He went off to London to attend the theatre and meet Ellen and Kate Terry or to draw in the studio of Miss E. Gertrude Thomson.

In the *Gentlewoman*, (January 29, 1898), Miss Thomson described the circumstances in which she and Dodgson became acquainted.<sup>1</sup> He had seen some drawings of fairies she had made and wrote under his own name asking to see more of her work. By the same post, came a letter from her London publisher telling her that the Rev. C. L. Dodgson was "Lewis Carroll." Evidently he was considering her in the light of a possible illustrator for "Sylvie and Bruno."

Later he wrote: "Do you ever come to London? If so will you allow me to call upon you?"

In the summer of 1879 she sent him word that she was in town, but when he called she was out. However, he left a card suggesting a meeting in two days' time, at some museum or gallery. Miss Thomson selected "the South Kensington Museum, by the 'Schliemann' collection, at twelve o'clock." She arrived ahead of time and only then realised that neither knew what the other looked like.

However, they recognised each other at sight. "At that

1. *See*, p. 193-196.

moment a gentleman entered, two little girls clinging to his hands, and as I caught sight of the tall, slim figure, with the clean-shaven, delicate refined face, I said to myself 'That's Lewis Carroll.' He stood for a moment, head erect, glancing swiftly over the room, then, bending down, whispered something to one of the children; she, after a moment's pause, pointed straight at me.

"Dropping their hands he came forward, and with that winning smile of his that utterly banished the oppressive sense of the Oxford don, said simply, 'I am Mr Dodgson; I was to meet you, I think?' To which I as frankly smiled and said, 'How did you know me so soon?'

"My little friend found you. I told her I had come to meet a young lady who knew fairies, and she fixed on you at once. But I knew you before she spoke."

When they knew each other better he sent her his drawings to criticise, and often went to her studio to draw child models.

"I love the effort to draw," he wrote in one of his letters to her, "but I utterly fail to please even my own eye - tho' now and then I seem to get somewhere near a right line or two, when I have a **live** child to draw from. But I have no time left now for such things. In the next life, I do hope we shall not only see lovely forms such as this world does not contain, but also be able to draw them."

It was nearly twenty years before she illustrated for him,<sup>4</sup> for he did not after all ask her to do the pictures for "Sylvie and Bruno."

1. *Three Sunsets* published posthumously.

The wedding was in December 1841, when John Ruskin's old friend, John Stanley, married him and Alice was married to the daughter, Catherine.

The name of profession of the bridegroom is registrar, "Ruskin, J.R.", their residence "Ruskinella, near London and County of Kentish Town."

George was not at the wedding, or if he was, he did not record the fact in his diary, where there is a brief entry with a sketch. So far as we know he spent the night of 18th September with his sister, and the entries of 18th and 19th September are about the arrival of another sister, the young woman. For the first time since the wedding, his failure to supply the wedding account is attributed to indifference. He was not even present at the wedding, though he was unlikely to receive an invitation - or to accept it. On 18th September, when he was only twenty-four, he was in London, the announcement appeared in the "Times."

## CHAPTER VII

### OUTLAND

On 15th September, 1880, Alice Liddell was married to Reginald Hargreaves. The wedding was in Westminster Abbey, where Dean Liddell's old friend, Dean Stanley, conducted the ceremony and Alice was married from the Deanery, Westminster.

The rank or profession of the bridegroom is registered as "Esquire, J.P.," their residence "Cuffnells, near Lyndhurst, in the County of Southampton."

Dodgson was not at the wedding, or if he was, he did not record the fact in his diary, where there is a break from 13th - 17th September. So far as we know he spent the month of September at Eastbourne with his sisters, and the entries on 13th and 17th September are about the arrival of another sister and about Eastbourne friends.<sup>2</sup> Nor is the gap conclusive evidence of agitation since such gaps occur all through the diaries. Nevertheless, his failure to mention the wedding cannot be attributed to indifference. He must have known of it beforehand though he was unlikely to receive an invitation - or to accept one - and on 17th September, when he has only commonplace events to record, the announcement appeared in the "Times."

To all outward appearance he was quite unaffected. During

1. General Register Office, Somerset House, London.

2. Private letter, Miss F. Menella Dodgson.

the rest of the month, we find him going to the beach, sketching children, inventing puzzles and games as if nothing of any importance was happening.

But there are unmistakable signs that he was profoundly affected and the first of these was that he gave up photography. The last entry in his diary relating to this art, or in his case, substitute for art, which he practised assiduously for twenty-four years was made on 15th July, 1880. There is nothing to show why he dropped it, but the sacrifice fits into a general pattern of renunciation and self-dedication. As Helmut Gernsheim has pointed out, it has nothing to do with the invention four years earlier of the dry-plate process but was apparently a sudden decision taken during the summer vacation of 1880.<sup>2</sup>

It was a sign that he had begun to feel old, that he wished to conserve his powers and it was soon to be followed by signs even more obvious. He had never been completely at home with young men and there is evidence that his mathematical lectures were neither inspiring nor well-attended, except on compulsion. In February 1880 he had made the extraordinary proposal that, as the tutorial work was now lighter, his salary should be reduced from £300 to £200. The gesture was lost, for the proposal was not accepted.<sup>3</sup>

Now, in 1881 he determined to resign. "My chief motive for holding on," he writes on July 14th, "has been to provide

1. There is a long entry for Sept. 2nd in *Coll.*, h. 211.

2. Helmut Gernsheim, h. 77.

3. *Coll.*, h. 216.

money for others (for myself, I have been many years able to retire) but even the £300 a year I shall thus lose, I may fairly hope to make by the additional time I shall have for book-writing."<sup>1</sup>

A month previously he had held out the olive branch to Dean Liddell by defending him in the "Observer" against a charge of neglecting his duties and displaying favouritism towards highly-connected undergraduates.<sup>2</sup> But when he finally took steps to make his resignation effective, it seems that he was still not on calling terms at the Deanery.

On Oct. 18th he writes: "I have just taken an important step in life by sending to the Dean a proposal to resign the Mathematical Lectureship at the end of the year," and on Oct. 21st: "I had a note in the evening from the Dean, to say that he had seen the censors on the subject of my proposed resignation at the end of the year, and that arrangements should be made, as far as could be done, to carry out my wishes; and kindly adding an expression of regret at losing my services, but allowing that I had 'earned a right to retirement.' So my lectureship seems to be near its end."<sup>3</sup>

He and the Dean lived within a hundred yards of each other, yet when this important step was proposed Dodgson neither called, nor was invited to call upon the Dean to discuss the matter. They exchanged notes.

1. *Coll.*, p. 218.

2. *Coll.*, pp. 214 - 216

3. *Coll.*, p. 218.

At the last lecture, on Nov. 30th, 1881, only two attended. Here is the rather pathetic entry in the diary in which that fact is recorded. "I find by my Journal that I gave my first Euclid Lecture in the Lecture-room on Monday, January 28, 1856. It consisted of twelve men, of whom nine attended. This morning I have given what is most probably my last: the lecture is now reduced to nine, of whom all attended on Monday: this morning being a Saint's Day, the attendance was voluntary and only two appeared - E. H. Morris and G. Lavie. I was Lecturer when the father of the latter took his degree, viz., in 1858.

"There is a sadness in coming to the end of anything. Man's instincts cling to the Life that will never end."

His programme for the future is outlined in an entry made a month earlier. "I shall now have my whole time at my own disposal, and if God gives me life and continued health and strength, may hope, before my powers fail, to do some worthy work in writing - partly in the cause of mathematical education, partly in the cause of innocent recreation for children, and partly, I hope (though so utterly unworthy of being allowed to take up such work), in the cause of religious thought. May God bless the new form of life that lies before me; that I may use it according to His Holy Will!"

He had already written almost everything of permanent value which he had it in him to write. The rest of the story

1. *Coll.*, p. 219.

2. *Coll.*, p. 218.



is of declining powers, waning inspiration, growing eccentricity. An entry in his diary for June 1st, 1882, suggests a symbol. "Went out with Charsley and did four miles on one of his velocimans, very pleasantly." "The velociman was a large tricycle steered from behind the rider's back by means of a curved bar."<sup>2</sup> Dodgson never attempted to bicycle but produced a typical formula.

"In youth, try a bicycle,  
In age, buy a tricycle."

There he is then, our White Knight, in his frock-coat pedalling away towards the sunset and the dark forest. At the turn in the road he pauses to raise his top-hat in a last precarious gesture, hoping perhaps for the flutter of some responsive handkerchief.

Henceforward, he was in a sense finished with the world. He continued to invent games and puzzles, to make endless suggestions for improving things, including the velociman - improving things like lawn-tennis tournaments and the election of proctors - to devise systems of mnemonics and new theories of parallels, to conduct arguments with circle-squarers and hair-splitting disputes with logicians. He was passing the time.

In 1882, he produced the words of "Dreamland," to suit an air dreamed by a friend of his, the Rev. C.E. Hutchinson of

1. *Coll.*, p. 219.

2. Miss Violet Dodgson, broadcast, Third Programme, 15 Sept., 1950.

Chichester.

"I found myself seated," says Hutchinson, "with many others, in darkness, in a large amphitheatre. Deep stillness prevailed. A kind of hushed expectancy was upon us. We sat awaiting I know not what. Before us hung a vast and dark curtain, and between it and us was a kind of stage. Suddenly an intense wish seized me to look upon the forms of some of the heroes of past days. I cannot say whom in particular I longed to behold, but, even as I wished, a faint light flickered over the stage and I was aware of a silent procession of figures moving from right to left across the platform in front of me. As each figure approached the left-hand corner it turned and gazed at me, and I knew (by what means I cannot say) its name. One only I recall - Saint George; the light shone with a peculiar bluish lustre on his shield and helmet as he slowly faced me. The figures were shadowy, and floated like mist before us, as each one disappeared an invisible choir behind the curtain sang the 'Dream music.' I awoke with the melody ringing in my ears and the words of the last line complete - 'I see the shadows falling, and slowly pass away.' The rest I could not recall."

This curious dream of his friend inspired Dodgson to write his best serious lyric, into which he wrote his own pride in the ancient university and in the history of his country, his perception, not new, but his own, of the transience of earthly things, and, the strange thought, that in dreams we are closer

*l. Coll., p. 223.*

to reality than in waking life.

"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."

The lyric, be it said, the product of Dodgson's waking

mind is better than Hutchinson's dream-music, which is a rather sentimental hymn tune.

He became indifferent to the proprieties and did not hesitate to go upon long rambles with unchaperoned ladies.

"I walked as diligently as any of Jane Austen's heroines," says E.L.S., wife of a Student of the House, "and many were the delightful rambles Lewis Carroll took me. By Mesopotamia, up Headington Hill to Joe Pullen's tree; down to Iffley; round the '4-mile grind,' over Folly Bridge, along the towing path and back by Kennington, he talking all the way."

He told her innumerable stories, but never the same one twice and used his old trick of holding up the point by means of his stammer. A companion-picture to our velociman-study:

"When a stile crossed our path, he went first and with averted eyes and his head turned as much as possible away from me, would hold up his hand to help me over."

At the end of the year he was elected Curator of the Common Room which he thought would take him out of himself a little: "my life was tending to become too much that of a selfish recluse."<sup>2</sup> There is abundant evidence that he was not merely a conscientious official - he published several pamphlets on his tenure of office and on the problems he encountered - but a recognised wit.

"There was always the same mind displayed in his talk,"

1. *Cambridge Mag.*: "Lewis Carroll as Artist," Nov., 1932 - Lh. 559-562.

2. *Coll.*, p. 221.

says Strong who replaced him ten years later. "When he was playful or inclined to be paradoxical he could be as irresistably funny as any of the characters in his books. The things that he said in conversation do not lend themselves to description. He talked readily and naturally in connection with what was going on around him; and his power lay, as so often in the books, in suddenly revealing a new meaning in some ordinary expression, or in developing unexpected consequences from a very ordinary idea."

But in his letters Dodgson reveals the other side of his character.

"I find that as life slips away (I am over fifty now) and the life on the other side of the great river becomes more and more the reality, of which this is only a shadow, that the petty distinctions of the many creeds of Christianity tend to slip away as well - leaving only the great truths which all Christians believe alike."

The Society for Psychical Research was constituted in February 1882 and Dodgson's name appears in the first list of members, dated December, 1883. He continued to be a member until the year before his death and in the Dodgson Sale Catalogue are listed eleven volumes of the Proceedings and seven of the Journal of the Society. Other books on spiritualism and kindred subjects which he possessed are Home's "Lights and

1. Cornhill Mag., March 1898, p. 304.

2. Gll., p. 340.

Shadows of Spiritualism," Lee's "Other World," Wallace's "Miracles and Modern Spritualism," Thomson's "Philosophy of Magic," Christmas's "Phantom World," Seafield's "Literature and Curiosities of Dreams," Clodd's "Myths and Dreams" and numerous other works on the occult, among which should perhaps be mentioned Gilchrist's "Life of William Blake."

He had always been interested in ghosts and spirits, but in his writings, had invariably treated them flippantly. Now he began to take the subject seriously and this new attitude to the spirit-world affected the form and texture of "Sylvie and Bruno" material for which was still accumulating.

He was also contributing to the "Monthly Pocket," edited by Charlotte M. Yonge, a series of mathematical puzzles. He had met this once popular authoress of High Anglican romances in 1866 and according to Collingwood, before that her novels "had long delighted him." From April, 1880 until March 1885 he carried on an open correspondence on the problems he set, classifying and grading the answers that were sent in from all over the country and thoroughly enjoying himself. The complete set was published in Dec. 1885 as "A Tangled Tale" with illustrations by Arthur B. Frost, who also illustrated "Rhyme? and Reason?" a collected edition of his humorous verse, which appeared two years earlier.

At the beginning of 1885, he seems to have felt that the

1. *Dodgson Sale Catalogue, Bodleian.*

time had come to put "Sylvie and Bruno" into its final shape. Reluctantly but firmly, even rather abruptly, he terminated the "Tangled Tale," declaring: "My puppets were neither distinctly in my life (like those I now address) nor yet (like Alice and the Mock Turtle) distinctly out of it."

By then, "most of the substance of both volumes was in existence in MS." and on March 1st, as he mentions in his diary, he "sent off two letters of literary importance, one to Mrs Hargreaves, to ask her consent to my publishing the original MS of "Alice" in facsimile (the idea occurred to me the other day); the other to Mr H. Furniss, a very clever illustrator in Punch, asking if he is open to proposals to draw pictures for me."

The letter to Alice opens strangely:

"My Dear Mrs Hargreaves, -

I fancy this will come to you almost like a voice from the dead, after so many years of silence, and yet those years have made no difference that I can perceive in my clearness of memory of the days when we did correspond. I am getting to feel what an old man's failing memory is as to recent events and new friends, (for instance, I made friends, only a few weeks ago, with a very nice little maid of about twelve, and had a walk with her - and now I can't recall either of her names!), but my mental picture is as vivid as ever of one who was, through so many years, my ideal child-friend. I have had scores of

child-friends since your time, but they have been quite a different thing.

"However, I did not begin this letter to say all that. What I want to ask is, Would you have any objection to the original MS. book of "Alice's Adventures" (which I suppose you still possess) being published in facsimile? The idea of doing so occurred to me only the other day. If, on consideration, you come to the conclusion that you would rather not have it done, there is an end of the matter. If, however, you give a favourable reply, I would be much obliged if you would lend it me (registered post, I should think, would be safest) that I may consider the possibilities. I have not seen it for about twenty years, so am by no means sure that the illustrations may not prove to be so awfully bad that to reproduce them would be absurd.

There can be no doubt that I should incur the charge of gross egoism in publishing it. But I don't care for that in the least, knowing that I have no such motive; only I think, considering the extraordinary popularity the books have had (we have sold more than 120,000 of the two) there must be many who would like to see the original form.

Always your friend,

C. L. DODGSON."

A great deal might be read between the lines of that



letter. "A voice from the dead ... quite a different thing ... we did correspond ... I have not seen it for about twenty years (since about 1865 that is to say) ... My Dear Mrs Hargreaves ... Always your friend."

Egoism being ruled out we may reasonably feel some curiosity about the motive which led him to publish this rough draft of a book which was already known to the public in a form more complete, better illustrated, less personal. The most probable explanation is that when about to turn his accumulation of bits and pieces into a new major work, he required some contact, however remote, with Alice and the times with which she was associated. He felt that he had lost the magic touch and hoped thus to recover it.

More than a year later, in a letter to Alice dated November 11, 1886, he tells the story of this odd edition.

"My Dear Mrs Hargreaves," he begins as always, "Many thanks for your permission to insert 'Hospitals' in the Preface to your book. I have had almost as many adventures in getting that unfortunate facsimile finished Above ground, as your namesake had Under it!"

The first Zincographer he approached insisted on being entrusted with the book which Dodgson refused, countering with an offer to come to London and turn the pages. "I felt that it was only due to you, in return for your great kindness in

lending so unique a book, to be scrupulous in not letting it be even touched by the workmen's hands."

The offer being refused on the grounds that other authors' works were being photographed and must on no account be seen by the public and Dodgson's word that he would look at nothing but the "Adventures" not being sufficient, he next applied to a photographer who was willing to come to Oxford. "So it was all done in my studio, I remaining in waiting all the time to turn over the pages."

Next Dodgson made the mistake of paying for the blocks in advance. At first these arrived regularly but when twenty-two remained to be delivered, the photo-zincographer disappeared, taking the negatives with him. Meantime Dodgson had returned the book to Alice - "On October, 1885. I sent your book to Mrs Liddell, who had told me your sisters were going to visit you and would take it with them. I trust it reached you safely" - and he had scruples about asking for it a second time - "I was most unwilling to rob you of it again, and also afraid of the risk of loss of the book, if sent by post - for even 'registered post' does not seem absolutely safe."

As nobody then could have any suspicion that this small volume would one day change hands at nearly £30,000 his anxiety about its safety must have seemed excessive, at any rate to Mrs Liddell, perhaps even to Mrs Hargreaves, but that we cannot

certainly know. At all events it really was worth treasuring for in 1928 Alice sold it at Sotheby's for £15,000, thus launching it on its own adventures in America. From there it has now returned, gifted generously and unobtrusively to the British Museum by a group of American business-men.

We digress. "Mr X" as Dodgson called him came out of hiding in April 1886, left eight blocks at Macmillan's and again vanished. In the summer of that year, Dodgson had to employ a solicitor, take out a summons, appear in court and explain what photo-zincography was. Threatened with actual imprisonment,

Mr X produced the fourteen negatives, Mr Dodgson dropped the action, pocketed his loss and had the blocks made elsewhere. The first copies were available on Dec. 17th and Alice received one bound in white vellum.

December saw another recrudescence of the "Alice" story for Savile Clarke's stage version was then appearing at the Prince of Wales's Theatre with Phoebe Carlo as Alice and Sydney Harcourt as the Mad Hatter. The music was by Walter Slaughter. "The play," says Collingwood, "for the first few weeks at least, was a great success " and again, "After the London run was over, the Company made a tour of the provinces, where it met with a fair amount of success."

It also led to the very revealing "Theatre" article of 1887 to which frequent reference has been made.

On March 29th, 1885, Dodgson had noted in his diary: "Never before have I had so many literary projects on hand at once" and listed fifteen of them besides "other shadowy ideas." Not all of these were actually published, but the Supplement and 2nd edition of "Euclid and his Modern Rivals" and "A Tangled Tale" belong to 1885, the "Under-Ground" facsimile and "Game of Logic" to 1886; the first part of his "Pillow Problems and other Math. Trifles" appeared in 1888 as "Curiosa Mathematica" and the "Nursery Alice" in 1889.

In 1889 also was published "(15) The new child's book, which Mr Furniss is to illustrate. I have settled on no name as yet, but it will perhaps be "Sylvie and Bruno."

In the preface to the first part he explains why he did not adopt the same plan as for his earlier and highly successful books. The Alice books had been imitated. "The path I timidly explored - believing myself to be 'the first that ever burst into that silent sea' - is now a beaten high-road: all the way-side flowers have long ago been trampled into the dust: and it would be courting disaster for me to attempt that style again.

"Hence it is that in 'Sylvie and Bruno,' I have striven - with I know not what success - to strike out yet another new path: be it bad or good, it is the best I can do. It is written, not for money, and not for fame, but in the hope of

supplying, for the children whom I love, some thoughts that may suit those hours of innocent merriment which are the very life of childhood: and also, in the hope of suggesting, to them and to others, some thoughts that may prove, I would fain hope, not wholly out of harmony with the grave<sup>+</sup> cadences of Life."

Here was the chief cause of failure. In the "Alice" books the solemn thoughts were allowed to come and go, to give rise to the nonsense and to emerge from it again. Now for pages on end we have to consider them on their merits and then for pages on end the kind of nonsense which is not based upon them. It is as if a conjuror, instead of producing a rabbit out of a hat, were to present them both to the audience at the same time.

Let us, however, examine the new plan, which was, as he said himself, the best he could do.

In the first place there is a group of human characters among whom is worked out a simple but highly significant little plot. The hero is Arthur Forester, a brilliant young doctor, very much in love with Lady Muriel Orme, the daughter of a kindly old Earl.

"I hadn't meant to tell you anything about her," he said (naming no names, as if there were only one 'she' in the world!) "till you had seen more of her, and formed your own judgment of her; but somehow you surprised it out of me. And I've not breathed a word of it to any one else. But I can trust you

with a secret, old friend! Yes'. It's true of me, what I suppose you said in jest."

"In the merest jest, believe me!" I said earnestly. "Why, man, I'm three times her age!"

(He had said, "I quite lost my heart to her!")

"But if she's your choice, then I'm sure she's all that is good and - "

" - and sweet," Arthur went on, "and pure, and self-denying, and true-hearted, and - " he broke off hastily as if he could not trust himself to say more on a subject so sacred and so precious. Silence followed, and I leaned back drowsily in my easy-chair, filled with bright and beautiful imaginings of Arthur and his lady-love, and of all the peace and happiness in store for them."

But Arthur is at first not over-endowed with worldly goods.

"When I first spoke to you about - " Arthur began after a long and embarrassing silence, "that is, when we first talked about her - for I think it was you that introduced the subject - my own position in life forbade me to do more than worship her from a distance: and I was turning over plans for leaving this place finally, and settling somewhere out of all chance of meeting her again."

"Would that have been wise?" I said. "To leave yourself no hope at all."

"There was no hope to leave," Arthur firmly replied, though his eyes glittered with tears as he gazed upwards into the midnight sky, from which one solitary star, the glorious 'Vega' blazed out in fitful splendour through the driving clouds. "She was like that star to me - bright, beautiful and pure, but out of reach, out of reach!"

A letter from his solicitor alters Arthur's financial position and removes that particular obstacle, but still he dares not put the matter to the proof.

"And as for - as for Lady Muriel, try as I may, I cannot read her feelings towards me. If there is love, she is hiding it! No, I must wait, I must wait!"

The narrator, older and wiser, advises him to speak.

"But meanwhile," I pleaded, "you are running a risk that perhaps you have not thought of. Some other man - "

"No," said Arthur firmly. "She is heart-whole. I am sure of that. Yet, if she loves another better than me, so be it! I will not spoil her happiness. The secret shall die with me. But she is my first - and my only love!"

Next there is the arrival of a handsome young cousin, the Honourable Eric Lindon who is waiting for a commission in the army. The telegram which informs him of his posting leads to his formal engagement to Lady Muriel and the end of Arthur's hopes

"Then the telegram has come!" I said.

"Did you not hear?" (the Earl speaking) "Oh, I had forgotten, it came in after you left the Station. Yes, it's all right: Eric has got his commission; and, now that he has arranged matters with Muriel, he has business in town that must be seen to at once."

"What arrangement do you mean?" I asked with a sinking heart, as the thought of Arthur's crushed hopes came to my mind. "Do you mean that they are engaged?"

"They have been engaged - in a sense - for two years," the old man gently replied: "that is, he has had my promise to consent to it, so soon as he could secure a permanent and settled line in life. I could never be happy with my child married to a man without an object to live for - without even an object to die for!"

"I hope they will be happy," a strange voice said. The speaker was evidently in the room, but I had not heard the door open, and I looked round in some astonishment. The earl seemed to share my surprise. "Who spoke?" he exclaimed.

"It was I," said Arthur, looking at us with a worn, haggard face, and eyes from which the light of life seemed suddenly to have faded. "And let me wish you joy also, dear friend," he added, looking sadly at the Earl, and speaking in the same hollow tones that had startled us so much.

"Thank you," the old man said, simply and heartily.



A silence followed: then I rose, feeling sure that Arthur would wish to be alone, and bade our gentle host "Good night": Arthur took his hand, but said nothing: nor did he speak again, as we went home, till we were in the house and had lit our bed-room candles. Then he said more to himself than to me, 'The heart knoweth its own bitterness.' I never understood those words till now."

Arthur prepares to leave for India where he has been offered a medical appointment. "Out there, I suppose I shall find something to live for; I can't see anything at present. 'This life of mine I guard, as God's high gift, from scathe and wrong, Not greatly care to lose!'"

"Yes," I said, "your name-sake bore as heavy a blow, and lived through it."

"A far heavier one than mine," said Arthur. "The woman he loved proved false. There is no such cloud as that on my memory of - of - " He left the name unuttered.

The book ends with a kind of litany: "Look Eastward!"

"Aye, look Eastward!" Arthur eagerly reply, pausing at the stair-case window, which commanded a fine view of the sea and the eastward horizon. "The West is the fitting tomb for all the sorrow and the sighing, all the errors and the follies of the Past: for all its withered Hopes and all its buried Loves! From the East comes new strength, new ambition, new

Hope, new Life, new Love! Look Eastward! Aye, look Eastward!"

And the narrator, as he watches the sunrise, concurs.

"So may it be for him, and me and all of us!" I mused.

"All that is evil, and dead, and hopeless, fading with the Night that is past! All that is good, and living, and hopeful, rising with the dawn of Day!

"Fading, with the Night, the chilly mists, and the noxious vapours, and the heavy shadows, and the wailing gusts and the owl's melancholy hootings: rising, with the Day, the darting shafts of light, and wholesome morning breeze, and the warmth of a dawning life, and the mad music of the lark! Look Eastward.

"Fading, with the Night, the clouds of ignorance, and the deadly blight of sin, and the silent tears of sorrow! and ever rising higher, higher with the Day, the radiant dawn of knowledge and the sweet breath of purity, and the throb of a world's ecstasy! Look Eastward!

"Fading, with the Night, the memory of a dead love, and the withered leaves of a blighted hope, and the sickly repinings and moody regrets that numb the best energies of the soul: and rising, broadening, rolling upward like a living flood, the manly resolve, and the dauntless will, and the heavenward gaze of faith - the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen!

"Look Eastward! Aye, look Eastward!"

This is not fiction but autobiography. Arthur and the Narrator are projections of Dodgson himself, the latter older than Dodgson ever became ("three score years and ten, baldness and spectacles,") Arthur apparently younger, but in the passages quoted above, not really to be distinguished as a character.

What Dodgson meant his characters to look like in Harry Furniss's illustrations can be seen from his criticisms of the preliminary sketches.

"(3) The 'Doctor' and 'Eric.' No! The Doctor won't do at all! He is a smug London man, a great 'ladies' man,' who would hardly talk anything but medical 'shop.' He is forty at least, and can have had no love-affair for the last fifteen years. I want him to be about twenty-five, powerful in frame, poetical in face: capable of intelligent interest in any subject, and of being a passionate lover. How would you draw King Arthur when he first met Guinevere? Try that type.

"Eric's attitude is capital: but his face is a little too near to the ordinary 'masher.' Please avoid that inane creature; and please don't cut his hair short. That fashion will be 'out' directly.

"(4) 'Lady Muriel' (head); ditto (full length); 'Earl.'

"I don't like either face of Lady Muriel. I don't think I could talk to her; and I'm quite sure I couldn't fall in love with her. Her dress ('evening,' of course) is very pretty,

I think.

"I don't like the Earl's face either. He is proud of his title, very formal, and one who would keep one 'at arm's length' always. And he is too prodigiously tall. I want a gentle, genial old man, with whom one would feel at one's ease in a moment."

Furniss's "Earl" was, in fact, too like Dean Liddell. Dodgson was writing plastic autobiography and gave Lady Muriel the characteristics he thought Alice had or should have had including a very different father and no mother! Her age in the story is "scarcely over twenty," about the age, that is of the "sad" photograph of 1874. But Arthur's age is "about twenty-five" and he is identical with Dodgson and with the narrator. He is the age Dodgson would have liked to be when Alice was "scarcely over twenty," that is to say young enough to have a chance (about twenty-five), just as the narrator is much too old (about seventy), and therefore not expected to compete.

In "Sylvie and Bruno Concluded" (1893) there is a 'wish-fulfilment' ending with Lady Muriel breaking off her engagement on theological grounds.

"I would like to tell you how it happened," Lady Muriel remarks to the Narrator who has again arrived at Elveston station. "I had long realised that we were not in sympathy

in religious belief. His ideas of Christianity are very shadowy; and even as to the existence of a God, he lives in a sort of dreamland. But it has not affected his life! I feel sure, now, that the most absolute Atheist may be leading, though walking blindfold, a pure and noble life."

Eric it seems has released her unconditionally, though the ethics of accepting his self-sacrifice have to be debated at length before she can be convinced that she is entitled to her freedom.

The next task is to bring Arthur and Lady Muriel together, which, with a little sylph-like assistance from the invisible Sylvie and Bruno is at length accomplished.

"And what sort of meeting was it?" I wondered, as I paced dreamily on.

"They shook hands," said Bruno, who was trotting at my side, in answer to the unspoken question.

"And they looked ever so pleased!" Sylvie added from the other side.

Ah Love! Could thou and I with Fate conspire  
To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,  
Would we not shatter it to bits - and then  
Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's desire!

About these sprites, a whole world has grown up, a realm called Outland, governed by a Warden who absents himself in

order to go upon a journey disguised as a beggar. The Sub-Warden and his fat wife conspire with the Chancellor to usurp his authority. He visits them in disguise, is spurned and insulted by their ugly son Uggug and eventually returns in thunder and storm to discipline the guilty and proclaim the Empire of Love.

The system by which the two worlds are brought into contact has already been explained. The narrator himself is the chief 'Medium,' since he suffers from heart-trouble which produces states of semi-consciousness (or eeriness) and sometimes trances in which he visits Outland. All the permutations and combinations are exhibited, and still further complicated by the fact that Arthur, Lady Muriel, the Earl and even the sceptical Eric are also subject to various degrees of eeriness and thus make the acquaintance of visitants, from Outland.

Allegory freely invades our everyday world, in the person of an aged man in a smock frock who is roughly cleared out of the way by the Station-master at Payfield Junction ("Change here for Elveston") in order to make way for Lady Muriel. That was in Part I. Part II takes us again to the Junction, "and, to make this repetition of it stranger still, there was the same old man, whom I remembered seeing so roughly ordered off, by the Station-Master, to make room for his titled passenger.

The same, but "with a difference": no longer tottering feebly along the platform, but actually seated at Lady Muriel's side, and in conversation with her! "Yes, put it in your purse," she was saying . . . Rather than disturb the poor old man at her side, she rose from her seat, and joined me in my walk up and down the platform . . . "

In the words of the old Gaelic poet,

"Often, often, often

Goes the Christ in the stranger's guise."

The characters in the Outland story are also used to demonstrate a system of punishments and rewards in the hereafter similar in some respects to that devised by Kingsley in the "Water Babies."

On his departure to Elfland, the Warden gives to Sylvie a locket, which has the curious optical property of being transparent, yet red one side and blue the other. When rubbed in the correct manner, the Outland scenery opens to reveal Elfland. But when the locket is wrongly handled, our world begins to break through in the most alarming fashion and a mouse finds its way into Oatland. Here it turns into a lion, but a gentle, loving lion, without any earthly fierceness. Perhaps, on earth, it was a good mouse, the mouse that set the lion free in Aesop's fable?

The reverse process is exhibited when the Professor is delivering his long-promised lecture. By means of a "Megaloscope"

he reduces an elephant to the size of a mouse. He then "reverses the tubes" and turns a flea into a monster, the size of a horse. It escapes.

"The monster gathered its legs together, and in one tremendous bound vanished into the sky."

"Where is it?" said the Emperor, rubbing his eyes.

"In the next Province, I fancy," the Professor replied.

No doubt it has entered our world, where relative to ourselves it will be of the normal, inconvenient size. The application of this idea to Prince Uggug reveals Dodgson's purpose. This "boy," ugly in nature as in appearance, "Loveless, loveless!" turns into a porcupine and is sent into our world to be disciplined as the mouse went into Outland to be rewarded. The "philosophy" is, in fact, a modified form of Platonism.

Puzzles, jokes and riddles are set, told or posed by the Professor, whose counterpart, the Other Professor, always has his back to us, and by Mein Herr and though some of these are amusing and all are ingenious, there is nothing of the "Wonderland" or "Looking-glass" quality. The contrast is greatest when, as he frequently does, he uses "Wonderland" or "Looking-glass" ideas remade as problems or whimsical discussions.

There is, for example Mein Herr's gravity-trains which require only "machinery to stop them with."

"But that would need a railway going down-hill," the Earl



remarked. "You can't have all your railways going down-hill?"

"They all do," said Mein Herr.

"Not from both ends?"

"From both ends."

"Then I give it up!" said the Earl.

"Can you explain the process?" said Lady Muriel. "Without using that language, that I can't speak fluently?"

"Easily," said Mein Herr. "Each railway is in a long tunnel, perfectly straight: so of course the middle of it is nearer the centre of the globe than the two ends: so every train runs half-way down-hill, and that gives it force enough to run the other half up-hill."

"Thank you. I understand that perfectly," said Lady Muriel. "But the velocity in the middle of the tunnel, must be something fearful!"

Mein Herr was evidently much gratified at the intelligent interest Lady Muriel took in his remarks.

This is the kind of use made of dynamics in contriving Alice's fall to the centre of the earth, though the strict application of the principle would, as she half-suspected, have landed her at the "antipathies." But in the "Wonderland" story we are not asked to admire the cleverness of the idea. We are presented with the consequences in the form of Alice's experiences and share her bewilderment. That was 'nonsense' This is

merely a stray 'knot' from "A Tangled Tale."

Another gravity-problem is expounded by Arthur.

"How convenient it would be," Lady Muriel laughingly remarked, `a propos of my having insisted on saving her the trouble of carrying a cup of tea across the room to the Earl, "if cups of tea had no weight at all! Then perhaps ladies would sometimes be permitted to carry them for short distances!"

"One can easily imagine a situation," said Arthur, "where things would necessarily have no weight, relatively to each other, though each would have its own weight, looked at by itself."

"Some desperate paradox!" said the Earl. "Tell us how it could be. We shall never guess it."

"Well, suppose this house, just as it is, placed a few billion miles above a planet, and with nothing else near enough to disturb it: of course it falls to the planet?"

The Earl nodded. "Of course - though it might take some centuries to do it."

"And is five o'clock tea to be going on all the while?" said Lady Muriel.

Compare with this the Mad Hatter's remark: "It's always six o'clock now." Conditions have been devised which affect not only the law of gravity but time and these are factors which would also be affected at the centre of the earth. Arthur

goes on to develop the little scientific fantasy but only in conversation. H. G. Wells, whose "Time Machine" was already on the market went back to Dodgson's earlier method of demonstration in action and used the very same idea in "The First Men in the Moon" and "The Truth about Pyecraft," with far more striking effect.

In his treatment of time, Dodgson does use the old baffling technique, but mere ingenuity has replaced the exquisite simplicity of the earlier works. There is, for instance, an "Outlandish Watch" which makes everything happen backwards in a manner calculated to the last tedious detail. The White Queen living backwards on the chess-board through the looking-glass was one thing. An ordinary humdrum family sewing and eating backwards is another.

Nor does it seem to matter that the Narrator can have a multitude of outlandish experiences in "the space of a single comma in Lady Muriel's speech! A single comma, for which grammarians tell us to 'count one'!" We accept the fact that in his trances he is out of our time and space, but if it is only to meet the Professor, or the Mad Gardener, he might just as well stay in the drawing-room with Lady Muriel, Arthur and the Earl.

Even there, however, he is by no means isolated from the other world. Sylvie and Bruno come and go, bringing flowers

from Central India which disappear from a locked room and performing other 'miracles' all in a manner irresistibly suggestive of spiritualism. More interesting is the system of identifications, for we are certainly led to suppose that Sylvie and Lady Muriel are somehow the same and Bruno the same with Arthur. There is a further, disturbing possibility that Lady Muriel is one with the wife of the Sub-Warden, and Uggug, the hideous boy, her son. Here, a curious dream, recorded by Dodgson on May 15, 1879, may provide a clue. It was about Marion ("Polly") Terry. He seemed to be staying with his sisters in a suburb of London and went to call on the Terrys who lived near. Mrs Terry told him that Polly was playing in the "Water House."

"In that case," said Dodgson in his dream, "I'll go on there at once, and see the performance - and may I take Polly with me?"

"Certainly," said Mrs Terry.

"And there," says Dodgson, "was Polly the child, seated in the room, and looking about nine or ten years old: and I was distinctly conscious of the fact, yet without any feeling of surprise at its incongruity that I was going to take the child Polly with me to the theatre, to see the grown-up Polly act! Both pictures - Polly as a child, and Polly as a woman, are, I suppose, equally clear in my ordinary waking memory: and it

seems that in sleep I had contrived to give the two pictures separate individualities."

This is what he has contrived to do in the case of Lady Muriel and Sylvie, Arthur and Bruno, and he has carried the process a step further by adding the Narrator, his possible older self and the Sub-Warden's wife, a creature of nightmare when thought of as related to Lady Muriel or her prototype, Alice Liddell.

As to Prince Uggug, he seems to embody the side of boyhood repugnant to Dodgson, the bullying, gloating, greedy little beast who is not and never was us but whom we remember as just too large to tackle successfully. He cannot in his origin have had anything whatever to do with Alice, her marriage or children but he probably explains why Dodgson who had confidently expected another little Alice ignored an invitation to be godfather to a young male Hargreaves.

The whole book is of interest only in so far as it throws light on the creator of the "Alice" books. In itself, as literature, it has no claim on our attention. It is a web spun out of his suppressed desire for a happy married life, out of his jealousy and his dreams. It is a sad book and the saddest part of it is the happy ending.

One more aspect of "Sylvie and Bruno" remains to be considered. Besides figuring in the story, the human characters

are used to air Dodgson's views on a variety of subjects. Thus we have Socratic discussions of Art Criticism and Church Services, drama in life and in the theatre, how to read, observation of Sunday, Prayer and fatalism, alcholism and teetotalism, eternity, whether animals can reason or have souls, sin and socialism.

It is impossible to do justice to all these opinions here. Briefly it may be said that Dodgson believed in free-will and individual responsibility to a personal God. He thought that animals had rudimentary souls and some reasoning powers, that all life consisted in progress and that progress was its own reward. After death there would be neither heaven nor hell in the ordinary sense but simply progress again towards ever richer and fuller experience.

In "Sylvie and Bruno Concluded," Chapter XVI, the Earl is feeling a little despondent. Life is slipping away from him and he envies the younger men their opportunities and interests.

"Yet surely many human interests survive human life?"

I said . . .

"Many do, no doubt. And some forms of Science; but only some, I think. Mathematics, for instance; that seems to possess an endless interest: one can't imagine any form of life, or any race of intelligent beings, where Mathematical truth would lose its meaning. But I fear Medecine stands on a different footing."

And he points out that in a life where there are no material bodies, there will be no disease. Arthur, who is a doctor, is bound to agree.

"Military science is a yet stronger instance," said the Earl. Wellington, he thinks will have to find himself some other congenial line of work hereafter. But he is still troubled.

"The one idea," the Earl resumed, "that has seemed to me to overshadow all the rest, is that of Eternity - involving as it seems to do, the necessary exhaustion of all subjects of human interest. Take Pure Mathematics, for instance - a Science independent of our present surroundings. I have studied it, myself, a little. Take the subject of circles and ellipses - what we call 'curves of the second degree.' In a future Life, it would only be a question of so many years (or hundreds of years, if you like), for a man to work out all their properties ... And when I transport myself, in thought, through some thousands or millions of years, and fancy myself possessed of as much Science as one created reason can carry, I ask myself 'What then? With nothing more to learn, can one rest content on knowledge for the eternity yet to be lived through?' It has been a very wearying thought to me. I have sometimes fancied one might in that event, say 'It is better not to be,' and pray for personal annihilation - the Nirvana of the Buddhists."

"I know that weary feeling," said the young Doctor.

"I have gone through it all more than once. Now let me tell you how I have put it to myself. I have imagined a little child playing with toys on his nursery floor and yet able to reason and to look on thirty years ahead. Might he not say to himself, 'By that time I shall have had enough of bricks and ninepins. How weary life will be!' Yet if we look forward through these thirty years, we find him a great statesman, full of interests and joys far more intense than his baby-life could give - joys wholly inconceivable to his baby mind - joys such as no baby-language could in the faintest degree describe. Now may not our life, a million years hence have the same relation to our life now that the man's life has to the child's? And, just as one might try, all in vain, to express to that child in the language of bricks and ninepins, the meaning of 'politics,' so perhaps all those descriptions of Heaven, with its music and its feasts and its streets of gold, may be only attempts to describe in our words, things for which we really have no words at all. Don't you think that in your picture of another life, you are in fact transplanting that child into political life, without making any allowance for his growing up?"

So may the Dodgsons, father and son, have conversed in the old days at Croft.

The failure of "Sylvie and Bruno" was not entirely due to



the plan on which it was written. Another cause was certainly Dodgson's bee-in-the-bonnet about drawing from life, for he transcribed a good deal of the childish prattle straight from real children and made much more to conform. Real children, however, supplement words by gesture, tone, facial expression and other evidences of intention less easy to define shorn of which their grammatical (and other) eccentricities are more irritating than amusing.

An example will show how far Dodgson was from realising this simple truth.

"I once found two very small boys in a garden," he says in the Preface to "Sylvie and Bruno Concluded," playing a microscopic game of 'Single Wicket'. The bat was, I think, about the size of a table-spoon; and the utmost distance attained by the ball, in its most daring flights, was some 4 or 5 yards. The exact length was of course a matter of supreme importance; and it was always carefully measured out (the batsman and the bowler amicably sharing the toil) with a dead mouse!"

As an anecdote, nothing could be more delightful. Now see what he made of it in "Sylvie and Bruno."

"What do you keep that mouse for?" I said. "You should either bury it, or else throw it into the brook."

"Why, it's to measure with!" cried Bruno. "How ever

would oo do a garden without one? We make each bed three  
mouses and a half long, and two mouses wide."

It is almost cruel to compare this kind of thing with  
Dodgson's earlier dialogue. We open the book at random.

"I can't explain myself, I'm afraid, sir," said Alice,  
"because I'm not myself, you see."

"I don't see," said the Caterpillar.

That he could no longer do.

But even yet we have not plumbed the depths to which  
had sunk this master of ruthless rhyme and trenchant prose.  
There is still the maudlin lovingness of the Fairy Duet,  
with its chorus:

"For I think it is Love,

For I feel it is Love,

For I'm sure it is nothing but Love!"

There is worse. There is the supreme bathos of Bruno's  
Last Words:

"God's own sky," the little fellow repeated, as they stood,  
lovingly clinging together, and looking out into the night.

"But oh, Sylvie, what makes the sky such a darling blue?"

The awful thing is the complete sincerity.

He had always been an odd character and as the years wore  
on, he became "difficult." His friends were warned not to  
tell improper stories, particularly about the Bible, in his

presence. In the middle of a theatrical performance he would walk out if something indelicate were said or done on the stage.

Most of his friends forgave him his goodness cheerfully but once he carried his prudery a step too far and incurred the formidable displeasure of Ellen Terry. He had taken a little girl to see her in "Faust" (it must have been in 1885) and wrote to her afterwards that when Margaret began to undress, the child had said 'Where is it going to stop?' As it had affected a mere child disagreeably, he thought she ought to alter her 'business'.

"I had known dear Mr Dodgson for years and years," says Ellen who had actually known him since 1856. "He was as fond of me as he could be of any one over the age of ten, but I was furious. 'I thought you only knew nice children,' was all the answer I gave him. 'It would have seemed awful for a child to see harm where harm is; how much more so when she sees it where harm is not.'" /

But he had succeeded in making her feel 'ashamed and shy' and she had no such success with him as can be seen from the Preface to "Sylvie and Bruno" where he improves the occasion by warning his readers of the risk to their immortal souls of watching plays with 'risky' situations, strong dialogue or suggestive 'business.' "Be sure," he says, "the safest

rule is that we should not dare to live in any scene in which we dare not die," which, he assures us cheerfully may happen to us tonight.

His attitude to his own literary reputation was odd. When he made a new child friend he invariably presented a copy of "Alice" or "Looking-glass" or both, yet any reference to his authorship of these works by friends or acquaintances caused his instant departure. Autograph-hunting he regarded as an impertinence and also as tending to make him vain. He delighted in passing off his friends' forgeries of his signature as his own, and he only called where he was not invited.<sup>1</sup>

Harry Furniss, who illustrated "Sylvie and Bruno" summed him up as "A clergyman, an Oxford man, an orthodox cleric and a typical Don to boot." He also expressed the opinion, the converse of Bishop Strong's that "His humour was not spontaneous; in himself he was a dull man; his jokes, elaborate and designed, were feeble."<sup>2</sup>

Perhaps that was so when Furniss knew him. It was not always so. Also, Furniss was a more spiteful character than either Tenniel, that other White Knight, or Holiday, and Dodgson was never renowned for tact.

"He subjected," says Furniss, "every illustration, when finished to a minute examination under a magnifying glass.

1. *Coll.*, p. 273, p. 335, etc.

2. *Stand Mag.*, Jan., 1908.

He would take a square inch of the drawing, count the lines I had made in that space, and compare their number with those on a square inch of illustration made for "Alice" by Tenniel! And in due course I would receive a long essay on the subject from Dodgson the mathematician."

The artistic temperament takes that kind of thing very hard.

On another occasion Dodgson called at Harry Furniss's studio to see the illustrations in the making. Furniss invited him in but warned him that if he criticised any of the drawings they would have to be destroyed. Dodgson retired in haste. Furniss rather spoils the story by adding that the illustrations had not been started. On the whole, I think Furniss is a rather unreliable witness and both his estimate of Dodgson and his account of Tenniel's estimate of Dodgson should be taken with a pinch of salt. <sup>2</sup>.

The truth is probably that having a reputation as a wit, Dodgson occasionally displayed a little too much ingenuity in his efforts to justify it. But that does not detract from such successful sallies as that recorded by Falconer Madan. Somebody in Congregation stated that it was the chief function of Universities to turn out Professors. In a pause which followed Dodgson rose and with his curious hesitating speech exclaimed: 'Quite right. Quite right. Turn them out! Turn them out!' <sup>3</sup>.

1. *Stand Mag.*, Jan., 1908.

2. F.M. in *Handbook*, p. 126.

3. F.M. in *Handbook*, Intro., p. xv

From his rooms in Christ Church, there was emitted a continuous flow of pillow-problems, indoor-games, circulars, letters to the press and private correspondence. The last of these activities he took seriously. "He made a *précis*," says Collingwood, "of every letter he wrote or received, from the 1st of January, 1861, to the 8th of the same month, 1898. These *précis* were all numbered and entered in reference books, and by an ingenious system of cross-numbering he was able to trace a whole correspondence, which might extend through several volumes. The last number entered in his book is 98, 721."

It is not to be wondered at that there were generally seventy or eighty names on his list of unanswered correspondents.

His child-friends were legion, almost always little girls, whom he met on the beach or in trains. He carried safety-pins in case they needed anything pinning up and toys and puzzles as bait. He sketched them, told them stories, illustrating as he went, gave them copies of his books and as a rule dropped them before the dangerous age. "He always used to say," Ethel Arnold remarks, "that when the time came for him to take off his hat when he met one of his quondam child friends in the street, it was time for the friendship to cease."<sup>2</sup> But the rule was not invariable. Gertrude Chataway and Ethel Arnold herself were exceptions and he had several good friends among women he had not known as children.

1. *Coll.*, H. 265 - 266.

2. *Atlantic Monthly*, June 1929, H. 782 - 789.

Isa Bowman, who played Alice in the 1888 revival of the Operetta, became an especial favourite and records that Dodgson not merely entertained her but provided her with the best education that money and influence could obtain, including elocution lessons from his friend Ellen Terry, swimming lessons, lessons in singing and languages while he himself undertook geography, arithmetic, Euclid and the Bible. Her "course" lasted for about three hours, six days a week and was extended over a period of years. When she went to America his own part of the instruction continued by post. She faithfully played her part in this, for a child-actress in those days, wonderful opportunity. "Sylvie and Bruno" was dedicated to her, and "Sylvie and Bruno Concluded" to Enid Stevens, a pastel study of whom hung above his mantelpiece in the '90's.<sup>2</sup>

But they were all "a very different thing" and quite enough attention has been paid to them.<sup>3</sup>

His last meeting with Alice Liddell was, according to her son, in 1891 and as Dean Liddell retired in that year and the family left Christ Church, it would probably be the last opportunity of such a meeting. Here is his note of invitation t! send round to the Deanery where he had heard Alice was paying her parents a visit:

"My Dear Mrs Hargreaves,

I should be so glad if you could, quite

1. Isa Bowman: *The Story of Lewis Carroll*.

2. F.B. Henson: *Lewis Carroll*, p. 205. Dodgson's relations with his later child-friends are very fully covered in the chapter called "Matilda Jane".

3. They were his substitutes for Alice Liddell, marriage and children of his own.

conveniently to yourself, look in for tea any day. You would probably prefer to bring a companion; but I must leave the choice to you, only remarking that if your husband is here he would be (most) very welcome. (I crossed out most because it's ambiguous - most words are, I fear.) I met him in our Common Room not long ago. It was hard to relize that he was the husband of one I can scarcely picture to myself as more than seven years old.

Always sincerely yours,

C. L. DODGSON.

Your adventures have had a marvellous success. I have now sold well over 100,000 copies."

The substitution of 'very' for 'most' is interesting but it was probably made to avoid any apparent slight to Mrs Liddell or the Dean. He had to be careful. It is odd that he should picture Alice as seven years old. She was ten when he first told her the Wonderland story, but he certainly knew her before she was seven, and seven-and-a-half is her age in "Through the Looking-glass." Humpty Dumpty, it will be remembered, thought she should have left off at seven.

About ten years before his death Dodgson wrote to his friend, the Rev. F. H. Atkinson, "So you have been for twelve years a married man, while I am still a lonely old bachelor! And mean to keep so, for the matter of that. College life is



by no means unmixed misery, though married life has no doubt many charms to which I am a stranger."<sup>6</sup>

The other side of the picture appears in his preface to "Pillow Problems" where he says it is no use trying not to think of so-and-so. It is, however, possible to think of something else, which has the effect of banishing, or almost banishing "the worrying subject." "There are," he says, "Sceptical thoughts, which seem for the moment to uproot the firmest faith; there are blasphemous thoughts, which dart unbidden into the most reverent souls; there are unholy thoughts, which torture, with their hateful presence, the fancy that would fain be pure. Against all these, some real mental work is a most helpful ally."

The ceaseless and multifarious activity with which he filled his waking hours tells the same story. There is no reason to believe that he was incapable of forming an adult sex-relationship, though he did not in fact do so. Very few people are incapable of marrying. We all know men who having seemed much less likely to marry than C. L. Dodgson, are yet married and to all appearances happily. Dodgson was for much of his life a very eligible bachelor; he remained unmarried from choice, not because he could not fall in love but because he had fallen in love once and finally -

1. *Coll.*, L. 231.

But either it was different in blood ...  
 Or else misgrafted in respect of years ...  
 Or else it stood upon the choice of friends -  
 or else Alice simply preferred Reginald Hargreaves.

Dodgson started off his relationship with Alice as adopted uncle to adopted niece, at a time when he felt repugnance towards the physical aspect of love, probably due to fear and inexperience. (His very sheltered upbringing, preoccupation with independence and cloistered life at Oxford must be remembered.) There was a time when that relationship might have developed into the kind of love which leads to marriage, but at that critical time something happened which threw him back upon his loneliness. Perhaps he was waiting until Alice was old enough to be capable of choosing for herself, as a man twenty years her senior was bound in honour to do, but by the time she was old enough to choose, she had met Reginald Hargreaves; her parents approved of him and disapproved of Dodgson. The older man accepted the loser's part without putting the matter to the test and his loneliness was permanent. Then, like Arthur in "Sylvie and Bruno," he determined that the secret should die with him, except that he told Collingwood, who respected his confidence and left it out of his biography.

There was once a slave who whispered a secret to the earth, and when he passed again, the reeds were telling it.

The importance of Alice is that she acted upon Dodgson as a powerful stimulus and catalyst. She made him put forth all his powers at once in her service, and rewarded him with a smile. Their love was an irrelevance in both their lives yet its bi-products were two masterpieces. Without her, he floundered along for a time, and even produced a lesser masterpiece, in the "Hunting of the Snark," and, diminuendo, a work touched here and there with genius, "Euclid and his Modern Rivals." And then his powers disintegrated. The elements of "Sylvie and Bruno" are not fused at all but arranged according to a mathematical formula.

The rest of the story is soon told. Collingwood assures us that the resignation of Dean Liddell "came as a great blow to Mr Dodgson" but there was nothing personal about this regret. The Dean stood for everything that Dodgson resented. He was a liberal where Dodgson was a conservative, Broad Church as opposed to High Church, the friend of Stanley, the champion of Jowett, the man who thought Oxford had disgraced itself by not re-electing Gladstone. Dodgson hated change and the Dean had been the instrument of change at Christ Church. He had altered the shape of the buildings, the system of administration, the composition of the College hymn-book. He was cold, reserved, proud and implacable. He was the only man in Christ Church who occupied better quarters than Dodgson himself. and he had put

them tacitly out-of-bounds.

With Mrs Liddell, Dodgson was on scarcely better terms, though she sometimes forgot to be cold to him, which always pleased him greatly.<sup>1</sup> But they were part of the past and it was like the end of an old song when there was no longer a Liddell at the Deanery.

Still, the new Dean, Dr Paget was a close personal friend of Dodgson's and the last years of "Lewis Carroll" were passed in something like the tranquility in which it used to be thought he had passed it all.

In 1892, he resigned as Curator of the Common-room, thus severing his last link with university affairs.<sup>2</sup> He lived on at Tom Quad., a celebrity whom scarcely anybody knew, though there are many people alive who can remember his rather melancholy appearance. He rose early and attended College Service, but seldom dined in hall; still went for long walks and often worked, standing at his tall writing-desk until four in the morning. He also worked in bed without light, using an instrument of his own invention called the "nyctograph." He became deaf in one ear and suffered from the form of hallucination known as "moving fortifications" but his general health was excellent.

The summer vacations were generally spent at Eastbourne and at other times between terms he went to Guildford where no

1. Miss F. Mendella Dodgson, *Private Letter*.

2. *Coll.*, A. 303.

fewer than five of his sisters had lived at "The Chestnuts," since the death of the Archdeacon. There, too, repaired a numerous tribe of young nephews and nieces to be given gold watches and instructed in Symbolic Logic. He was always a wonderful uncle.<sup>1</sup>

And there, on 6th January, 1898, he contracted influenza, took to his bed and died some eight days later.<sup>2</sup>

1. Miss Violet Dodgson, broadcast, Third Programme, 15 Sept., 1950.

2. Coll., pp. 345 - 348.

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