

A number of cases, in which making laces
Had been proved an infringement of right.

The maker of Bonnets ferociously planned
A novel arrangement of bows:
While the Billiard-marker with quivering hand 55
Was chalking the tip of his nose.

But the Butcher turned nervous, and dressed himself fine,
With yellow kid gloves and a ruff ——
Said he felt it exactly like going to dine,
Which the Bellman declared was all “stuff.” 60

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

The Beaver went simply galumphing about, 65
At seeing the Butcher so shy:
And even the Baker, though stupid and stout,
Made an effort to wink with one eye.

“Be a man!” said the Bellman in wrath, as he heard
The Butcher beginning to sob. 70
“Should we meet with a Jubjub, that desperate bird,
We shall need all our strength for the job!”

Fit the Fifth
THE BEAVER’S LESSON

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

Then the Butcher contrived an ingenious plan 5
For making a separate sally;
And had fixed on a spot unfrequented by man,
A dismal and desolate valley.

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

“Two added to one — if that could but be done,” 45
It said, “with one’s fingers and thumbs!”
Recollecting with tears how, in earlier years,
It had taken no pains with its sums.

“The thing can be done,” said the Butcher, “I think.
The thing must be done, I am sure. 50
The thing shall be done! Bring me paper and ink,
The best there is time to procure.”

The Beaver brought paper, portfolio, pens,
And ink in unfailing supplies:
While strange creepy creatures came out of their dens, 55
And watched them with wondering eyes.

So engrossed was the Butcher, he heeded them not,
As he wrote with a pen in each hand,
And explained all the while in a popular style
Which the Beaver could well understand. 60

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

“The result we proceed to divide, as you see, 65
By Nine Hundred and Ninety and Two:
Then subtract Seventeen, and the answer must be
Exactly and perfectly true.

“The method employed I would gladly explain,
While I have it so clear in my head, 70
If I had but the time and you had but the brain ——
But much yet remains to be said.

“In one moment I’ve seen what has hitherto been

Enveloped in absolute mystery,
And without extra charge I will give you at large
A Lesson in Natural History.” 75

In his genial way he proceeded to say
(Forgetting all laws of propriety,
And that giving instruction, without introduction,
Would have caused quite a thrill in Society), 80

“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: 85
It never will look at a bribe:
And in charity-meetings it stands at the door,
And collects — though it does not subscribe.

“Its flavour when cooked is more exquisite far
Than mutton, or oysters, or eggs: 90
(Some think it keeps best in an ivory jar,
And some, in mahogany kegs:)

“You boil it in sawdust: you salt it in glue:
You condense it with locusts and tape:
Still keeping one principal object in view — 95
To preserve its symmetrical shape.”

The Butcher would gladly have talked till next day,
But he felt that the Lesson must end,
And he wept with delight in attempting to say
He considered the Beaver his friend. 100

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

They returned hand-in-hand, and the Bellman, unmanned 105
(For a moment) with noble emotion,

Said, "This amply repays all the wearisome days
We have spent on the billowy ocean!"

Such friends, as the Beaver and Butcher became,
Have seldom if ever been known; 110
In winter or summer, 'twas always the same ——
You could never meet either alone.

And when quarrels arose —— as one frequently finds
Quarrels will, spite of every endeavour ——
The song of the Jubjub recurred to their minds, 115
And cemented their friendship for ever!

Fit the Sixth
THE BARRISTER'S DREAM

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

But the Barrister, weary of proving in vain 5
That the Beaver's lace-making was wrong,
Fell asleep, and in dreams saw the creature quite plain
That his fancy had dwelt on so long.

He dreamed that he stood in a shadowy Court,
Where the Snark, with a glass in its eye, 10
Dressed in gown, bands, and wig, was defending a pig
On the charge of deserting its sty.

The Witnesses proved, without error or flaw,
That the sty was deserted when found:
And the Judge kept explaining the state of the law 15
In a soft under-current of sound.

The indictment had never been clearly expressed,
And it seemed that the Snark had begun,
And had spoken three hours, before any one guessed
What the pig was supposed to have done. 20

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

“You must know ——” said the Judge: but the Snark exclaimed,
 “Fudge! 25
 That statute is obsolete quite!
Let me tell you, my friends, the whole question depends
 On an ancient manorial right.

“In the matter of Treason the pig would appear
 To have aided, but scarcely abetted: 30
While the charge of Insolvency fails, it is clear,
 If you grant the plea ‘never indebted.’

“The fact of Desertion I will not dispute:
 But its guilt, as I trust, is removed
(So far as relates to the costs of this suit) 35
 By the Alibi which has been proved.

“My poor client’s fate now depends on your votes.”
 Here the speaker sat down in his place,
And directed the Judge to refer to his notes
 And briefly to sum up the case. 40

But the Judge said he never had summed up before:
 So the Snark undertook it instead,
And summed it so well that it came to far more
 Than the Witnesses ever had said!

When the verdict was called for, the Jury declined, 45
 As the word was so puzzling to spell;
But they ventured to hope that the Snark wouldn’t mind
 Undertaking that duty as well.

So the Snark found the verdict, although, as it owned,
 It was spent with the toils of the day: 50
When it said the word “GUILTY!” the Jury all groaned,
 And some of them fainted away.

Then the Snark pronounced sentence, the Judge being quite
Too nervous to utter a word:
When it rose to its feet, there was silence like night, 55
And the fall of a pin might be heard.

“Transportation for life” was the sentence it gave,
“And *then* to be fined forty pound.”
The Jury all cheered, though the Judge said he feared
That the phrase was not legally sound. 60

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

The Judge left the Court, looking deeply disgusted: 65
But the Snark, though a little aghast,
As the lawyer to whom the defence was intrusted,
Went bellowing on to the last.

Thus the Barrister dreamed, while the bellowing seemed
To grow every moment more clear: 70
Till he woke to the knell of a furious bell,
Which the Bellman rang close at his ear.

Fit the Seventh
THE BANKER'S FATE

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

And the Banker, inspired with a courage so new 5
It was matter for general remark,
Rushed madly ahead and was lost to their view
In his zeal to discover the Snark.

But while he was seeking with thimbles and care,

A Bandersnatch swiftly drew nigh 10
 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 15
 And grabbed at the Banker again.

Without rest or pause — while those frumious jaws
 Went savagely snapping around —
 He skipped and he hopped, and he floundered and flopped,
 Till fainting he fell to the ground. 20

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

He was black in the face, and they scarcely could trace 25
 The least likeness to what he had been:
 While so great was his fright that his waistcoat turned white —
 A wonderful thing to be seen!

To the horror of all who were present that day,
 He uprose in full evening dress, 30
 And with senseless grimaces endeavoured to say
 What his tongue could no longer express.

Down he sank in a chair — ran his hands through his hair —
 And chanted in mimsiest tones
 Words whose utter inanity proved his insanity, 35
 While he rattled a couple of bones.

“Leave him here to his fate — it is getting so late!”
 The Bellman exclaimed in a fright.
 “We have lost half the day. Any further delay,
 And we shan’t catch a Snark before night!” 40

Fit the Eighth

THE VANISHING

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

They shuddered to think that the chase might fail, 5
And the Beaver, excited at last,
Went bounding along on the tip of its tail,
For the daylight was nearly past.

“There is Thingumbob shouting!” the Bellman said.
“He is shouting like mad, only hark! 10
He is waving his hands, he is wagging his head,
He has certainly found a Snark!”

They gazed in delight, while the Butcher exclaimed,
“He was always a desperate wag!”
They beheld him — their Baker — their hero unnamed — 15
On the top of a neighbouring crag,

Erect and sublime, for one moment of time.
In the next, that wild figure they saw
(As if stung by a spasm) plunge into a chasm,
While they waited and listened in awe. 20

“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 25
A weary and wandering sigh
That sounded like “—jum!” but the others declare
It was only a breeze that went by.

They hunted till darkness came on, but they found 30
Not a button, or feather, or mark,
By which they could tell that they stood on the ground
Where the Baker had met with the Snark.

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

35

THE END

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