

1870

PUZZLES FROM WONDERLAND

Lewis Carroll

Carroll, Lewis (pen name of Charles Lutwidge Dodgson) (1832-1898) - English novelist, poet, photographer, and mathematician, best known for his fantastical childrens' classics. He was a mathematical lecturer at Oxford. Puzzles from Wonderland (1870) - Seven puzzles written in verse with solutions.

Opening lines of the first puzzle: Dreaming of apples on a wall, /
And dreaming often, dear,...

PUZZLES FROM WONDERLAND

I

DREAMING of apples on a wall, And dreaming often, dear, I
dreamed that, if I counted all, -How many would appear?

II

***A stick I found that weighed two pound: I sawed it up one day In
pieces eight of equal weight!***

How much did each piece weigh? (Everybody says "a quarter of a
pound", which is wrong.)

III

John gave his brother James a box: About it there were many locks.

James woke and said it gave him pain; So gave it back to John
again.

The box was not with lid supplied, Yet caused two lids to open
wide: And all these locks had never a key
What kind of a box, then,
could it be?

IV

What is most like a bee in May? "Well, let me think: perhaps-" you
say Bravo! You're guessing well to-day!

V

Three sisters at breakfast were feeding the cat, The first gave it sole- Puss was grateful for that: The next gave it salmon- which Puss thought a treat: The third gave it herring- which Puss wouldn't eat.

(Explain the conduct of the cat.)

VI

Said the Moon to the Sun, "Is the daylight begun?" Said the Sun to the Moon, "Not a minute too soon."

"You're a Full Moon," said he.

She replied with a frown, "Well! I never did see So uncivil a clown!" (Query. Why was the moon so angry?)

VII

WHEN the King found that his money was nearly all gone, and that he really must live more economically, he decided on sending away most of his Wise Men. There were some hundreds of them- very fine old men, and magnificently dressed in green velvet gowns with gold buttons: if they had a fault, it was that they always contradicted one another when he asked for their advice and they certainly ate and drank enormously. So, on the whole, he was rather glad to get rid of them. But there was an old law, which he did not dare to disobey, which said that there must always be

"Seven blind of both eyes: Two blind of one eye:

Four that see with both eyes: Nine that see with one eye." (Query. How many did he keep?)

SOLUTIONS

I

Ten.

II

In Shylock's bargain for the flesh was found No mention of the blood that flowed around: So when the stick was sawed in eight, The sawdust lost diminished from the weight.

III

As curly-headed Jemmy was sleeping in bed, His brother John gave him a blow on the head; James opened his eyelids, and spying his brother, Doubled his fist, and gave him another.

This kind of box then is not so rare; The lids are the eyelids, the locks are the hair, And so every schoolboy can tell to his cost, The key to the tangles is constantly lost.

IV

'Twixt "Perhaps" and "May be" Little difference we see: Let the question go round, The answer is found.

V

That salmon and sole Puss should think very grand Is no such remarkable thing.

For more of these dainties Puss took up her stand; But when the third sister stretched out her fair hand Pray why should Puss swallow her ring?

VI

"In these degenerate days", we oft hear said, "Manners are lost and chivalry is dead!" No wonder, since in high exalted spheres

The same degeneracy, in fact, appears.

The Moon, in social matters interfering, Scolded the Sun, when early in appearing; And the rude Sun, her gentle sex ignoring, Called her a fool, thus her pretensions flooring.

VII

Five seeing, and seven blind Give us twelve, in all, we find; But all of these, 'tis very plain, Come into account again.

For take notice, it may be true, That those blind of one eye are blind for two; And consider contrariwise, That to see with your eye you may have your eyes; So setting one against the other For a mathematician no great bother And working the sum, you will understand That sixteen wise men still trouble the land.

THE END