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Alice's Adventures in Wonderland & Through the Looking-Glass by Lewis Carroll





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Alice's Adventures in Wonderland & Through the Looking-Glass by Lewis Carroll

With an Introduction by Morton N. Cohen



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ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND AND
THROUGH THE LOOKING-GLASS

A Bantam Book

PRINTING HISTORY

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland was first published in 1865.

Through the Looking-Glass was first published in 1871.

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Text Illustrations by John Tenniel

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Lewis Carroll

"Lewis Carroll," creator of the brilliantly witty *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, was a pseudonym for Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, a shy Oxford don with a stammer.

He was born at Daresbury, Cheshire on January 27, 1832, son of a vicar. As the eldest boy among eleven children, he learned early to amuse his siblings by writing and editing family magazines. He was educated at Christ Church College, Oxford, where he lectured in mathematics from 1855 to 1881. In 1861 he was ordained a deacon.

Dodgson's entry into the world of fiction was accidental. It happened one "golden afternoon" as he escorted his colleague's three daughters on a trip up the river Isis. There he invented the story that might have been forgotten if not for the persistence of the youngest girl, Alice Liddell. Thanks to her, and to encouraging friends, *Alice* was published in 1865, with drawings by the political cartoonist, John Tenniel. After *Alice*, Dodgson wrote *Phantasmagoria and Other Poems* (1869), *Through the Looking-Glass* (1871), *The Hunting of the Snark* (1876), and *Rhyme? and Reason?* (1883).

As a mathematician Dodgson is best known for *Euclid and His Modern Rivals* (1879). He was also a superb children's photographer, who captured the delicate, sensuous beauty of such little girls as Alice Liddell and Ellen Terry, the future actress. W. H. Auden called him "one of the best portrait photographers of the century." Dodgson was also an inventor; his projects included a game of arithmetic croquet, a substitute for glue, and an apparatus for making notes in the dark. Though he sought publication for his light verse, he never dreamed his true gift—telling stories to children—merited publication or lasting fame, and he avoided publicity scrupulously. Charles Dodgson died in 1898 of influenza.

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Introduction: Lewis Carroll and the *Alice Books**

by Morton N. Cohen

Why does Lewis Carroll the man continue to provoke so much interest? And why have the two *Alice* books become thoroughly established as children's classics while so many other books have fallen into neglect?

The answers to the two questions are closely related and emerge gradually as we examine the nature of the author and the events that led to the publication of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There*.

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland was Lewis Carroll's first book for children and some think the greatest children's book ever written. The way it came into being is curious, an accident as entrancing as the book itself. On a "golden afternoon" in 1862 a shy Oxford don with the cumbersome name of Charles Lutwidge Dodgson (Lewis Carroll's real name) took the three little daughters of his college dean on a boat trip on the river Isis. With them was another Oxford don, Robinson Duckworth (he is, of course, the Duck in the story). Together they rowed along the river and had tea by a haystack on the bank at Godstow. And as they moved along languidly over the glimmering river Charles Dodgson spontaneously created the world of Wonderland. We like to think that he invented the story to amuse the young girls, but more likely, he told the tale in order to keep them quiet, to stop them from squabbling, to hold their attention, or to interrupt a flow of their irrelevant questions—or perhaps even to keep them from rocking the boat and annoying him.

The story almost evaporated in thin air and would have but for the persistence of Dodgson's favorite of the three sisters, ten-year-old Alice Liddell. Many years after the river picnic, when Alice was an elderly woman, she reminisced that the tale that Dodgson told on that particular river journey "must have been better than usual" because "on the next day I started to pester him to write down the story for me which I had never done before." Alice recalled that she "kept going on, going on at him" until he promised to oblige her. For one reason or another, however, it took him almost two and a half years to deliver to his young friend the completed manuscript, illustrated with his own drawings.

He gave the green leather booklet that contained the neatly hand-scripted text to Alice as a Christmas present in 1864. It was then apparently kept in an obvious place in the Deanery, and visitors would sometimes pick it up and look at it, even read through it. Henry Kingsley, the less well known novelist brother of Charles Kingsley, visiting the Liddells, noticed the book, read it, and told Mrs. Liddell to urge its author to publish it. Dodgson must have been encouraged by the message, but by that time he was actually well along the road towards publishing the book, even though he later recalled that "there was no idea of publication in my mind when I wrote this little book: *that* was wholly an afterthought, pressed on me by the 'perhaps too partial friends' who always have to bear the blame when a writer rushes into print." One of those friends was Duckworth whom Dodgson had asked for his "candid opinion whether it was worthy of publication or not, as he himself," Duckworth recalled, "felt very doubtful." Duckworth's verdict supported the others: he too thought the book should be published.

Perhaps the most meaningful spur came a good deal earlier, after Dodgson had lent a draft of his story to his friends, Rev. and Mrs. George MacDonald. These were people whose taste and judgment Dodgson trusted. MacDonald was an accomplished poet and storyteller; Mrs. MacDonald wrote and produced private theatricals. Besides, they had a household full of children on whom they could test the tale. One of these, Greville, tells us that Dodgson "asked my mother to read his first 'Alice' book to us, just to see how we took it and thus to gauge its worth if published. . . . I remember that first reading well," he continues, "and also my braggart avowal that I wished there were 60,000 volumes of it." On May 9, 1863, Dodgson got a letter from Mrs. MacDonald announcing that the MacDonalds had handed down a positive

verdict: "They wish me to publish," Dodgson wrote in his diary.

But the life of a mathematical lecturer at Oxford in Victorian times was a busy one, and Dodgson had no experience with high-powered London publishers. Still, he valued the story enough to set himself the task of revising it completely. If he was to publish it, there would need to be more of it. He added numerous chapters, incidents, characters, and lengthened the whole considerably. Looking back upon the original in later years, Dodgson described it as merely "the germ that was to grow into the published volume."

Now Dodgson needed a publisher, and he found one through another happy accident. On October 19, 1863, he went by invitation to visit the director of the Clarendon Press and Printer of Oxford University, Thomas Combe (1797-1872). Dodgson had frequently visited Combe and his wife at home and he had already photographed the strikingly handsome Combe. But on that evening, he recorded in his diary, he went expressly "to meet the publisher Macmillan to get him to print some of Blake's *Songs of Innocence*, etc., on large paper." Arranging private printings of verses, pamphlets, calling cards, menus, and even letters that one wished to circulate was customary among the educated and well-to-do of Victorian England, and Dodgson allowed himself this indulgence from time to time. His mention of *Songs of Innocence* is not surprising: he admired Blake's poetry and shared Blake's romantic attitude toward child innocence and purity.

Combe's guest of honor, Alexander Macmillan (1818-1896) had, with his elder brother, Daniel, established in Cambridge in the mid-1840s the house of publishers and booksellers that bore their family name. In 1857 Daniel died, and in 1863, the same year that Dodgson and Alexander Macmillan met at Combe's, Macmillan moved the company's main business office to London. Alexander proved in time a greatly gifted businessman with an eye to expansion and profit. Almost single-handedly, he established the firm on a sound basis and made it one of England's most highly respected publishing houses.

We do not know whether Macmillan agreed to print Blake's work for Dodgson or not, but either on the evening that they met at Combe's or soon thereafter, Dodgson tried out his idea for a children's book on the publisher. Five months before the two men met, Macmillan had published Charles Kingsley's *The Water Babies*, and that fact alone may have led Dodgson to think of Macmillan as a likely publisher of *Alice*. Evidently

Macmillan reacted favorably to Dodgson and his manuscript, for he agreed to publish. If it seems surprising that he would undertake a first children's book by an unknown mathematics don hiding behind a *nom de plume*, one must realize that Alexander Macmillan was a publisher with courage: if he believed in a manuscript and in its author, he took them on.

Now Dodgson had to find an illustrator. Robinson Duckworth later recalled that he told Dodgson "that if only he could induce John Tenniel to illustrate it, the book would be perfectly certain of success." Tenniel was already one of the best-known artists in England, and his drawings appeared regularly in *Punch*. What is more, his style of drawing suited Dodgson's taste perfectly. Dodgson decided to see if Tenniel would consider doing the illustrations. Two months after the meeting with Macmillan, on December 20, 1863, he wrote to an acquaintance, the popular playwright Tom Taylor:

Do you know Mr. Tenniel well enough to be able to say whether he could undertake such a thing as drawing a dozen wood-cuts to illustrate a child's book, and if so, could you put me into communication with him? The reasons for which I ask . . . are that I have written such a tale for a young friend, and illustrated it in pen and ink. It has been read and liked by so many children, and I have been so often asked to publish it, that I have decided on doing so. . . . If [Mr. Tenniel] . . . should be willing to undertake [the illustrations] . . . , I would send him the book to look over, not that he should at all follow my pictures, but simply to give him an idea of the sort of thing I want.

A month later, on January 25, 1864, Dodgson called on Tenniel in London with a letter of introduction from Taylor. "He was very friendly," Dodgson wrote in his diary, "and seemed to think favourably of undertaking the pictures." If Tenniel did see the early version of the tale, he certainly was later furnished with the fuller version, which contained more than twice as many words and all the changes and expansions. The wording of the mouse's tale, for instance, Tenniel would have noticed, was entirely different, and the trial scene at the end of the story, which Tenniel illustrated, occupies two whole chapters of twenty-six pages as opposed to only two pages in the early version.

Dodgson changed the title as well. The book he gave to Alice, now safely housed in the British Library in London, is entitled *Alice's Adventures Under Ground*. But Dodgson was unhappy with that title and he cast about for a new one. On June 10, 1864, he wrote to his friend Tom Taylor again:

I should be very glad if you could help me in fixing on a name for my fairy-tale, which Mr. Tenniel (in consequence of your kind introduction) is now illustrating for me, and which I hope to get published before Xmas. The heroine spends an hour underground, and meets various birds, beasts, etc. (no fairies), endowed with speech. The whole thing is a dream, but *that* I don't want revealed till the end. I first thought of "Alice's Adventures Under Ground," but that was pronounced too like a lesson-book, in which instruction about mines would be administered in the form of a grill; then I took "Alice's Golden Hour," but that I gave up, having a dark suspicion that there is already a book called "Lily's Golden Hours." Here are other names I have thought of:

Alice among the	{	elves	Alice's	{	hour	in	{	elf-land
		goblins			doings			wonderland.
					adventures			

Of all these I at present prefer "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland." In spite of your "morality," I want something sensational. Perhaps you can suggest a better name than any of these.

Taylor evidently could not and Dodgson settled on his own preference.

During the summer months Dodgson discussed, both in person and by letter, various production details with Macmillan. On June 21 he called on the publisher in London, and as Dodgson noted in his diary, Macmillan "strongly advised my altering the size of the page of my book, and adopting that of *The Water Babies*." From Macmillan's office Dodgson went directly to call on "Tenniel"—Dodgson actually misspells the name in his diary—"who agreed to the change of the page." A letter survives from Macmillan to Dodgson written on September 10th of that year. "I don't like any of the title pages," Macmillan

wrote. "I will try to get a new specimen and send it to you," and he goes on with suggestions for altering the title page and other details. "The headings of the page should give the title of your book—which is very good," Macmillan adds. "'*Fairy Tales*' cannot claim the merit of great novelty! . . . The end of October—or early November would be about the best time [to publish]. I don't like ornamental type in title pages. Mr. Tenniel's drawings in the book need no such meretricious help."

"I have been considering the question of the colour of *Alice's Adventures*," Dodgson wrote to Macmillan on November 11, "and have come to the conclusion that *bright red* will be best—not the best, perhaps, artistically, but the most attractive to childish eyes." And indeed the book was published in bright red, and that color soon became a standard for the Alice books and for other Lewis Carroll books as well.

The exchanges between Dodgson and Tenniel are not so well documented as those with the publisher—Tenniel probably destroyed the letters he received from Dodgson—and in fact a certain myth has grown up about the relationship through the years that paints John Tenniel as the long-suffering illustrator at the mercy of the iron whim of the fledgling author Lewis Carroll—merciless, exacting, and extremely difficult to satisfy. But that myth is false. It probably originated with Harry Furniss, a slap-dash caricaturist, who, while popular, was by no means in the same artistic league as Tenniel, and who, three years after Dodgson's death, published a two-volume memoir where he describes Dodgson most unfavorably. He claims there that "Tenniel had point-blank refused to illustrate another story for Carroll" when Carroll needed an illustrator for *Sylvie and Bruno* and that Carroll "was, Tenniel told me, 'impossible'—and Carroll evidently was not satisfied with other artists he had tried. . . . Tenniel and other artists declared I would not work with Carroll for seven weeks!" Furniss proclaims and goes on to characterize Carroll the man as "a wit, a gentleman, a bore and an egotist—and, like Hans Anderson, a spoilt child." But the letters between Dodgson and his illustrators, and especially the correspondence with Furniss, which does survive, prove Dodgson to be patient and considerate on almost every count and Furniss quite the opposite. Furniss did last longer than seven weeks with Carroll, for he illustrated both *Sylvie and Bruno* and *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded*, but he and Dodgson did come to grief many times in the process, largely as a result of misunderstandings, but

also clearly because of a certain amount of Furniss's high-handed behavior. Dodgson emerges from the record as a much more considerate and patient artist than Furniss does, a man of high principle who suffered many rebuffs from both Tenniel and Furniss, as well as from other illustrators he engaged, and bore them quietly and patiently.

Perhaps the greatest instance of Dodgson's willingness to reconcile himself to the temperamental demands of an illustrator emerges from the fantastic details that compose the publishing history of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. These details have a fairy-tale quality all their own. The Clarendon Press of Oxford printed two thousand copies of what has come to be known as the first edition of the book. On May 24, 1865, Dodgson wrote to Macmillan requesting fifty early copies to give to friends, saying that "the rest of the 2000 you can bind at your leisure and publish at whatever time of the year you think best." On June 27 he recorded in his diary that the Clarendon Press had sent its first copies to Macmillan, and on July 15 he went to London "and wrote in 20 or more copies of *Alice* to go as presents to various friends." Four days later, on July 19, however, the shock came: "Heard from Tenniel, who is dissatisfied with the printing of the pictures," Dodgson wrote in his diary. Nowhere at this point does Dodgson himself express any displeasure with either Tenniel's drawings or with the Clarendon Press printing of the pictures. The next day Dodgson recorded that he "called on Macmillan, and showed him Tenniel's letter [which has apparently not survived] about the fairy-tale—he is entirely dissatisfied with the printing of the pictures, and I suppose we shall have to do it all again." Less than a fortnight later (on August 2) Dodgson recorded: "Finally decided on the re-print of *Alice*, and that the first 2000 shall be sold as waste paper. Wrote about it to Macmillan, Combe and Tenniel."

Then Dodgson immediately set himself the task of recalling all the copies he had inscribed and sent to friends, promising them replacements as soon as the new printing was available. The new printing was carried out by a different printer, Richard Clay of London, and Dodgson received his first copy of the new impression on November 9, 1865. He "heard from Tenniel, approving the new impression," his diary records, on November 28. The diary also records what the reprinting cost him. As his arrangements with Macmillan called for the author to pay all the costs—printing, engraving, even advertising—and for the pub-

lisher, Macmillan, to receive a commission on the sales, Dodgson was the one who suffered most by the need to reprint. It cost him £600 to have the book done a second time, "i.e. 6s. a copy of the 2000," he noted. "If I make £500 by sale," he added, "this will be a loss of £100, and the loss of the first 2000 will probably be £100, leaving me £200 out of pocket." For a thirty-three-year-old Oxford lecturer with a modest income, these must have been figures to make the head whirl. But Dodgson refused to compromise on the quality of the book and he was eager that his publisher and his illustrator be satisfied. ". . . if a second 2000 could be sold," he continued in his diary, "it would cost £300, and bring in £500, thus squaring accounts: any other further sale would be a gain. But that I can hardly hope for," he concluded, unaware that, in fact, he had on his hands one of the greatest children's classics in the English language.

For a long time literary historians understandably jumped to the conclusion that it was originally Dodgson who wanted Macmillan to scrap the first edition of *Alice*, but we know now that it was really all Tenniel's doing. Dodgson would probably have been content to leave the first edition stand and, at most, would have wanted the later impressions printed more carefully. For him it was simply a case of making concessions to his uncompromising illustrator. In fact, Tenniel boasted in a letter he wrote at the time to one of the Dalziel brothers, the firm of engravers: "I protested so strongly against the disgraceful printing that . . . [Dodgson] cancelled the edition."

Both Dodgson and Tenniel would be stunned to know that a single copy of that "inferior" first edition brings thousands of English pounds when it comes up for sale these days. So choice a book has it become that collectors would trade whole segments of their libraries for a single copy of the "first" *Alice*; bibliographers dream of uncovering an unrecorded copy; and literary chroniclers are at a loss to explain how, even in the heyday of Victorian publishing, such extravagant decisions could be made over a single children's book as were made over this one.

Dodgson sent copies of the new impression to his friends, and some of their reactions are on record. Christina Rossetti wrote to offer "A thousand and one thanks . . . for the funny pretty book you have so very kindly sent me. My Mother and Sister as well as myself made ourselves quite at home yesterday in Wonderland: and . . . I confess it would give me sincere pleasure to fall in with that conversational rabbit, that endearing puppy,

that very sparkling dormouse. . . . The woodcuts are charming." Her brother Dante Gabriel Rossetti also wrote: "I saw *Alice in Wonderland* at my sister's, and was glad to find myself still childish enough to enjoy looking through it very much. The wonderful ballad of Father William and Alice's perverted snatches of school poetry are among the funniest things I have seen for a long while." Henry Kingsley also wrote: "Many thanks for your charming little book. My real opinion of it may be gathered from this fact, that I received it in bed in the morning, and in spite of threats and persuasions, in bed I stayed until I had read every word of it. I could pay you no higher compliment in half a dozen pages, than confessing that I could not stop reading your book till I had finished it. The fancy of the whole thing is delicious; it is like gathering cowslips in springtime. . . . Your versification is a gift I envy you very much."

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland was widely reviewed and earned almost unconditionally good notices. Dodgson catalogued the reviews in his diary, and he was able to list a total of nineteen that appeared between November 12, 1865, and October 1, 1866. The earlier ones, especially those that appeared before Christmas, would have had the most effect. The one in the *Reader* appeared on November 12: "From Messrs. Macmillan and Co. comes a glorious artistic treasure"—it begins—"a book to put on one's shelf as an antidote to a fit of the blues . . . sure to be run after as one of the most popular works of its class." On November 25 the *Press* reported that *Alice* was written in "a simple and attractive style, and . . . while suited for very young children, is nevertheless more elaborately 'got up'" than the other books under review. ". . . the illustrations, by Tenniel, are beautiful," it continues, and then goes on to summarize the story. "It is most amusingly written"—the notice concludes—"and a child, when once the tale has been commenced, will long to hear the whole of this wondrous narrative."

The notice in the *Publisher's Circular* appeared on December 8: "Among the two hundred books for children which have been sent to us this year, the most original and most charming is *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, by Lewis Carroll, illustrated with no less than forty-two pictures by John Tenniel. What the great advocates for the progress of scientific knowledge will say to this book it is difficult to imagine. It is a piece of delicious nonsense—the story of a simple loving child, who allows her imagination to paint fairy-like pictures. . . . Mr. Tenniel has

helped little Alice with his best pictures which we have seen for many a day." On December 12, the *Bookseller* reported that it was "delighted . . . a more original fairy tale . . . it has not lately been our good fortune to read." It continues and predicts that all boys and girls will be "impatient to possess the book." The *Guardian*, on December 13, reported that "the story . . . is absolute nonsense; but nonsense so graceful and so full of humour that one can hardly help reading it through. The illustrations . . . are, if anything, still better than the story; together they furnish children with materials for many a hearty laugh, which older children may very easily share."

Before the end of 1865 other notices appeared in the *Illustrated London News*, the *Illustrated Times*, the *Pall Mall Gazette*, the *Spectator*, the *London Review*, the *Star*, the *Christmas Bookseller*, and *The Times*. In 1886, the *Monthly Packet*, *John Bull*, the *Literary Churchman*, the *Sunderland Herald*, *Aunt Judy's Magazine*, and the *Contemporary Review* noticed the book.

With his first children's book receiving good notices and selling tolerably well, Dodgson might logically have begun to think that he should put more of his energies into writing children's books professionally. But it took quite a while for him even to consider doing another. Perhaps the travail over scraping the first impression of *Alice* turned him from the thought, perhaps the demands of college affairs kept him too busy. But when Macmillan wrote to suggest that another three thousand copies of *Alice* should be printed to supply the demand, Dodgson must have begun to think about writing more. Still he was hesitant. In a letter to Alexander Macmillan nine months after the second impression of *Alice* appeared, on August 24, 1866, he wrote: "It will probably be some time before I again indulge in paper and print. I have, however, a floating idea of writing a sort of sequel to *Alice*, and if it ever comes to anything, I intend to consult you at the very outset, so as to have the thing properly managed from the beginning."

But nothing happened. A year and a half later, he broke the silence about a second book in a letter to a friend dated December 15, 1867, and even then he merely noted that "*Alice's* visit to Looking-Glass House is getting on pretty well." A month after that, he wrote in his diary that over the Christmas vacation "I have . . . added a few pages to the second volume of *Alice*," and on February 6, 1867, he made a flat statement about it when he wrote to his publisher: "I am hoping before long to

complete another book about 'Alice'. . . . You would not, I presume, object to publish the book, if it should ever reach completion."

A major obstacle still stood in Dodgson's way, however. Once again, he needed an illustrator. Tenniel was an obvious choice, particularly as his illustrations had been so highly praised, and Dodgson knew that it would be hard to find anyone as good. He made the approach, but the answer was an immediate and unconditional "no": Tenniel was too busy. Dodgson tried to find another suitable artist: Richard Doyle, Sir Joseph Noël Paton, and even W. S. Gilbert, whose "Bab Ballads" were then appearing with his own illustrations in the humor magazine *Fun*. But for various reasons, none of these illustrators could come to the rescue. In fact, two and a half years passed before Dodgson finally convinced Tenniel to illustrate *Through the Looking-Glass*, and even then, the artist consented to do them only "at such time as he can find."

Dodgson sent his publisher the first chapter to his looking-glass story on January 12, 1869, but two more years passed before he finished writing it. And further delays were inevitable. For one thing, Tenniel had not yet done all the pictures. "*Through the Looking-Glass* . . . lingers on, though the text is ready," Dodgson wrote in August 1871, adding, "I have only received twenty-seven pictures." And four days after that, he wrote to Tenniel "accepting the melancholy . . . fact that we cannot get *Through the Looking-Glass* out by Michaelmas."

Even after Tenniel supplied the drawing of the Jabberwock for a frontispiece, Dodgson was so worried that the monster would frighten his young readers that he sent copies of the drawing to thirty mothers asking their opinion of the picture. They must have confirmed his own fears, for he substituted a drawing of the White Knight in the front of the book. Carrying out all these precautionary measures took time. Finally, in November 1871 Dodgson was able to breathe a sigh of relief and write in his diary that "'Alice Through the Looking Glass' is now printing off rapidly." Although the title page bears the publication date 1872, *Through the Looking-Glass* appeared as a Christmas book for 1871, six years after the appearance of the second impression of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.

Looking-Glass was an immediate success, both critically and commercially. Macmillan began by printing nine thousand copies, as opposed to the much smaller number of the first *Alice*.

But even so, he had to print an additional six thousand immediately. On January 27, 1872, seven weeks after the book appeared, Dodgson wrote in his diary: "My birthday was signalled by hearing from . . . Macmillan that they have now sold 15000 *Looking-Glasses* and have orders for 500 more." By 1893 Macmillan had printed sixty thousand. By 1898, when Dodgson died, Macmillan had printed over one hundred and fifty thousand copies of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and over one hundred thousand copies of *Looking-Glass*.

Neither book has ever gone out of print; both have, in fact, become firm bulwarks of society, not only in the English-speaking world, but everywhere else as well. Short of the Bible, no other book is so widely and so frequently translated or quoted as these two.

There must be some explanation for this popularity and for the intense interest of the life of the author. Let us consider him first. At a hasty glance he does seem to be impenetrably mysterious. But a closer look at Charles Lutwidge Dodgson the man reveals much. He was fairly tall, slender, shy, and handsome; he usually dressed in black. In addition to being an Oxford mathematics don, he was an ordained clergyman with a stammer. He was a reserved, conservative, formal, retiring bachelor, and he nurtured a special interest in little girls. But how could a bachelor living in a monastic institution comprehend the child's mind well enough to write stories that became children's classics? The answer is probably not so difficult to find, for he was, after all, once a child himself and a sensitive one at that.

He was the eldest boy in a family of eleven children and very early in life took it upon himself to amuse and instruct his younger siblings. In fact he actually wrote and edited several family magazines, in verse and in prose, where, one might say, he cut his teeth as a creative writer for children. When Dodgson was thirty-six, his father died, and he became the head of the family, a responsibility that he took seriously. But however heavy the burden of such a large family, he always remembered his childhood, the pain of it as well as the joy, and in dealing with children he knew how to avoid the unintentional callousness of which children often find adults guilty. Instead, he remembered and concentrated on how to please them, how to entertain them, how to make them shriek with laughter.

One might ask how a clergyman could allow himself to spin tales that make his readers abandon all seriousness. Well, Dodgson