Alice in Wonderland Glossary of Terms
for Madge Miller's adaptation from Lewis Carroll

Lewis Carroll's novella ***Alice's Adventures in Wonderland***, on which Madge Miller's play is based, begins not with Alice sitting on the grass with her sister, but with the following poem, which recalls the "golden afternoon" when Carroll first began telling the story of Alice's adventures underground to the three Liddell sisters, Lorina (aged 13), Alice (aged 10), and Edith (aged 8). The date was Friday, July 4th, 1862. W.H. Auden once declared that July 4th, 1862 was "as memorable a day in the history of literature as it is in American history."[1] This quote and, indeed, much of the information in this glossary is culled from *The Annotated Alice*, a volume of Carroll's work superbly annotated by Martin Gardner, from which I will be citing frequently.

The poem which begins *Alice's Adventures* reads as follows:

All in the golden afternoon
  Full leisurely we glide;
For both our oars, with little skill,
  By little arms are plied,
While little hands make vain pretence
  Our wanderings to guide.

Ah, cruel Three! In such an hour,
  Beneath such dreamy weather,
To beg a tale of breath too weak
  To stir the tiniest feather!
Yet what can one poor voice avail
  Against three tongues together?

Imperious Prima flashes forth
  Her edict to "begin it":
In gentler tones Secunda hopes
  "There will be nonsense in it!"
While Tertia interrupts the tale
  Not *more* than once a minute.

Anon, to sudden silence won,
  In fancy they pursue
The dream-child moving through a land
  Of wonders wild and new,
In friendly chat with bird or beast—
  And half believe it true.

[1] Martin Gardner, *The Annotated Alice: the Definitive Edition* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2000), 7. *The Definitive Edition* is a compendium of two earlier volumes by Gardner entitled *The Annotated Alice* (1960) and *More Annotated Alice* (1990).

And ever, as the story drained
  The wells of fancy dry,
And faintly strove that weary one
  To put the subject by,
"The rest next time—" "It *is* next time!"
  The happy voices cry.

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.

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

The "cruel three" are the three Liddell sisters: Lorina is Prima since she is the eldest; Alice is Secunda; and Edith Tertia. You should also note the fun Carroll is having punning on the last name Liddell in the first stanza.

Dinah (8) – (pronounced die'-nah – unlike the Biblical name *Dinah*) The cat is named for Alice Liddell's cat which was in turn named after a popular ballad called "Villikins and His Dinah." The Liddells had two cats: one was indeed named Villikins and the other Dinah.

Mary Ann (10) – From Gardner: "According to Roger Green, *Mary Ann* was at the time a British euphemism for 'servant girl.' … Mary Anne Paragon was the dishonest servant who took care of David Copperfield's house. … Slang dictionaries give other meanings to *Mary Ann* that were current in Carroll's day. A dressmaker's dress stand was called a *Mary Ann*. Later the name became attached to women who attacked sweatshop owners. Still later it became a vulgar term for sodomites. Before the French Revolution *Mary Anne* was a generic term for secret republican organizations, as well as a slang term for the guillotine."[2]

She'll have me executed as sure as ferrets are ferrets! (11) – "As sure as ferrets are ferrets" was, evidently, a common saying in Carroll's day. Ferrets kill rabbits, of course, so I suppose the notion of execution couples naturally with ferrets for the White Rabbit.

Pepper! (13) – It has been suggested that it was customary for the lower classes in Victorian England to put an excessive amount of pepper in their soups to mask the flavor of the slightly spoiled meat.

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[2] Ibid., 38-39.

would you tell me why your cat grins like that? / It's a Cheshire Cat, and that's why. (13) – Much has been made of the grinning Cheshire cat. Some have claimed that Lewis Carroll invented the phrase himself, but the evidence simply does not support this theory. As early as 1778 British satirist John Wolcot used the phrase "Lo, like a Cheshire cat our court will grin." The phrase surely dates as far back as the eighteenth century, but it might, indeed, date as far back as the sixteenth century! In "The Cheshire-Cat and Its Origins" from the Winter 1973 issue of *Jabberwocky,* Ken Oultran reports that "According to *Ballads and Legends of Cheshire* by E. Leigh (1867), the Cheshire emblem at the time of the fifteenth century depicted a man astride a lion and the face of the lion could have resembled a grinning Cheshire cat."[3]

Martin Gardner shares that " 'Grin like a Cheshire cat' was a common phrase in Carroll's day. Its origin is not known. … Some have suggested that Carroll's vanishing cat might derive from the wandering of the moon—the moon has long been associated with lunacy—as it slowly turns into a fingernail crescent, resembling a grin, before it finally disappears." Gardner also reports a conjecture from Katsuko Kasai, who argues that "We know that Cheshire cheese was once sold in the shape of a grinning cat. One would tend to slice off the cheese at the cat's tail end until finally only the grinning head would remain on the plate."[4]

According to Christina Hole in *Traditions and Customs* (1937), "Cats in Cheshire prophesy rain by washing their ears or stormy weather by racing madly about. Whatever the Cheshire cat's explanation," she says, "so cheerful and improbable a creature is an asset to any county."[5]

There is also the phrase *funny enough to make a cat laugh*. Cats are notoriously serious, dignified animals. The origin of this phrase is thought to be a *yawning* cat. When a cat yawns it appears to be laughing heartily.

My favorite explanation, however, is the following, which I have adapted from Ken Oultran: note that young ladies are frequently referred to in slang as "cats," and ladies from Cheshire County are no different. In England, however, the young women from Lancashire County—which neighbors Cheshire to the north—were notoriously dour and sour-pussed (if you will), so that when Cheshire "cats" were compared with their Lancashire neighbors, the young ladies from Cheshire were noted for their smiling dispositions. The Cheshire cat, then, is a smiling young lady from Cheshire County. The word *puss* is also often used in slang to refer to a person's disposition (you might even remember that Barbara Stanwyck's nightclub singer in the 1941 Howard Hawks' comedy *Ball of Fire* was named Sugarpuss O'Shea!). When Alice adopts the moniker *Cheshire-puss* later in the story for the Cheshire Cat, then, she seems to be referring to his smiling disposition *as well as* his feline physiognomy.

[3] Ken Oultran, *Jabberwocky* 2.4 (Winter 1973), 8-12.
[4] Gardner, 61-62.
[5] Quoted in Oultran, 8-12.

Pig! (13) – In *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, this exclamation is explained a bit better:

> "It's a Cheshire-Cat," said the Duchess, "and that's why. Pig!"
> She said the last word with such sudden violence that Alice quite jumped; but she saw in another moment that it was addressed to the baby, and not to her, so she took courage, and went on again:—

The exclamation is evidently addressed to the baby himself, whom the Duchess calls a pig, though Alice thinks the Duchess is speaking to her.

Speak roughly to your little boy… (16) – From Gardner: "The original of this burlesque is 'Speak Gently,' a happily unremembered poem attributed by some authorities to one G.W. Langford and by other authorities to David Bates, a Philadelphia broker."[6] The original poem reads as follows:

> Speak gently! It is better far
> To rule by love than fear;
> Speak gently; let no harsh words mar
> The good we might do here!
>
> Speak gently! Love doth whisper low
> The vows that true hearts bind;
> And gently Friendship's accents flow;
> Affection's voice is kind.
>
> Speak gently to the little child!
> Its love be sure to gain;
> Teach it in accents soft and mild;
> It may not long remain.

The poem continues similarly from there (and continues to be boring). I can find no music for this poem, and Carroll's lyrics are, I'm afraid, nonsense.

If you're going to turn into a pig, I'll have nothing more to do with you. (18) – From Gardner: "It was surely not without malice that Carroll turned a male baby into a pig, for he had a low opinion of little boys. … Carroll now and then made an effort to be friendly with a little boy, but usually only when the lad had sisters that Carroll wanted to meet."[7] It seems to make a lot of sense to me, this little boy becoming a pig. Young boys frequently, in fact, *do* grow up to be pigs. It makes sense, too, that the young lady wants nothing to do with the young man once he has turned into a pig. Which is not to say that the young man could not *stop* being a pig if he wanted…

Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here? (18) – In the original text, the conversation is ever-so-slightly different. I think the differences are significant (and I would suggest changing them back, actually) and so I am including the original here. Note, particularly, that Carroll has emphasized the word "somewhere," though Miller has not. The original is as follows:

[6] Ibid., 62-64.
[7] Ibid., 64.

> ALICE. Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?
> CHESHIRE CAT. That depends a good deal on where you want to go.
> ALICE. I don't much care where—
> CHESHIRE CAT. Then it doesn't matter which way you go.
> ALICE. —so long as I get *somewhere.*
> CHESHIRE CAT. Oh, you're sure to do that, if only you walk long enough.

This section is perhaps the most quoted section in the entirety of *Alice's Adventures,* and is, I think, rightly famous, as it expresses rather eternal truths about life, journeys, and destinations.

We're all mad here. (19) – From Gardner: "The phrases 'mad as a hatter' and 'mad as a March hare' were common at the time Carroll wrote, and of course that was why he created the two characters. 'Mad as a hatter' may have been a corruption of the earlier 'mad as an adder' but more likely owes its origin to the fact that until recently hatters actually did go mad. The mercury used in curing felt (there are now laws against its use in most states and in parts of Europe) was a common cause of mercury poisoning. Victims developed a tremor called 'hatter's shakes,' which affected their eyes and addled their speech. In advanced stages they developed hallucinations and other psychotic symptoms."[8] As for March and hares, the belief was that male hares go a little crazy during the March mating season. Gardner reports that "The main behavior of hares throughout their entire eight-month breeding period consists in males chasing females, then getting into boxing matches with them. March is no different from any other month. It was Erasmus who wrote 'Mad as a marsh hare,' … scientists think that 'marsh' got corrupted to 'March' in later decades. "[9] The March Hare is often depicted (as he is in Tenniel's drawing above) with straw in his hair. Having straw in one's hair was thought to be a sign of madness. This seems particularly significant since the Mad Hatter refers to Alice's hair later.

No room! No room! No room! (19) – A Jesus joke perhaps? I don't know about you, but when I hear this phrase I immediately think of Luke 2:7, which is the verse in the book of Luke when Jesus Christ is born to the Virgin Mary:

> And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

I can't see that this has anything to do with *Alice*, but I feel like I need to include it here.

[8] Ibid., 66-67.
[9] Ibid.

Dormouse (19) – From Gardner: "The British dormouse is a tree-living rodent that resembles a small squirrel much more than it does a mouse. The name is from the Latin *dormire*, to sleep, and has reference to the animal's habit of winter hibernation. Unlike the squirrel, the dormouse is nocturnal, so that even in May (the month of Alice's adventure) it remains in a torpid state throughout the day."[10]

Your hair needs cutting. (19) – Apparently the Mad Hatter is simply being rude, but he might just be curious about Alice. After all, he has probably not seen anyone like her before. This remark, you will remember, is his first speech to Alice. From Gardner: "In *Under the Quizzing Glass*, R. B. Shaberman and Denis Crutch point out that no one would tell a Victorian little girl that her hair was too long, but the remark *would* apply to Carroll. In Isa Bowman's *The Story of Lewis Carroll*, the actress and former child-friend recalls: 'Lewis Carroll was a man of medium height. When I knew him his hair was silvery-grey, rather longer than it was the fashion to wear, and his eyes were a deep blue.' "[11]

Why is a robin like a writing-desk? (19) – I think it rather unfortunate that Miller has changed Carroll's original riddle here, which is "Why is a raven like a writing-desk?" I wonder if "robin" is a more recognizable bird for children nowadays than "raven." Surely that was Miller's reasoning. As for the answer to the riddle, which is not answered in the play (or the book), many answers have been proposed, my favorite of which comes from Sam Loyd, who referred to the raven's lack of musical abilities when he wrote "because the notes for which they are noted are not noted for being musical notes."[12]

Two days wrong! (20) – From Gardner: "Alice's remark that the day is the fourth, coupled with the previous chapter's revelation that the month is May, establishes the date of Alice's underground adventure as May 4. May 4, 1852, was Alice Liddell's birthday. She was ten in 1862, the year Carroll first told and recorded the story, but her age in the story is almost certainly seven. … In his book *The White Knight*, A. L. Taylor reports that on May 4, 1862, there was exactly two days' difference between the lunar and calendar months. This, Taylor argues, suggests that the Mad Hatter's watch ran on lunar time and accounts for his remark that the watch is "two days wrong." If Wonderland is near the earth's center, Taylor points out, the position of the sun would be useless for time-telling, whereas phases of the moon remain unambiguous. The conjecture is also supported by the close connection of 'lunar' with 'lunacy,' but it is hard to believe that Carroll had all this in mind."[13] Carroll was a mathematician and seems to have been fairly obsessed with the particular charms of Alice Liddell. I do not find it the least bit difficult to believe that he had obsessively studied the mathematics of her birthday no matter how difficult Mr. Gardner finds it.

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[10] Ibid., 70-71.
[11] Ibid. 71.
[12] See Ibid., 71-73.
[13] Ibid., 73.

I told you butter wouldn't suit the works! (20) – In order to oil the gears of the watch, the March Hare has evidently attempted to butter the watch-works. The Mad Hatter proposes that he has inadvertently gotten crumbs in the watch's gears and messed up the works.

If you knew Time as well as I do, you wouldn't talk about *it.* It's *him.* (20) – Time has often been personified in mythology. The Greek god Kronos (also known as Chronos, from which we get our English words *chronology*, *chronic*, and *chronicle*) was the god of time and is often depicted with both a scythe (like the Grim Reaper) and an hourglass. In English mythology, Father Time is depicted as very old, and usually feeble. The Mad Hatter depicts him as particularly bad tempered, as well.

We quarreled last March, Time and I… (21) – I find a pun here, particularly with the murdering time referred to later (see "He's murdering time!" below). It seems to me that a march would be an occasion where the Mad Hatter might quarrel with Time (i.e. not be able to march with the correct time.)

Twinkle, twinkle, little bat… (21) – From Gardner: "Carroll's burlesque may contain what professional comics call an 'inside joke.' Bartholomew Price, a distinguished professor of mathematics at Oxford and a good friend of Carroll's, was known among his students by the nickname 'The Bat.' His lectures no doubt had a way of soaring high above the heads of listeners."[14]

He's murdering time! (21) – This is rather an amusing pun, I think; to murder time is to mess up the meter of the verse in the song.

It's always four o'clock now. (21) – In *Alice's Adventure's* the time is six o'clock, which is the time when the Liddell sisters had tea. Miller has wisely changed the time to a more normal tea-time. Time standing still here might have various resonances. Alice is, of course, dreaming, and so time is, in a way, standing still for her. The dream is also, one could argue, killing time, as Alice is bored by her sister's book. The notion of stopping time also has to do with childhood. *Peter Pan* is about this precise topic, if you remember: the children wish to stay children forever and never grow old or grow up. They wish, in fact, to stop time. Carroll's version of this is a nonsensical, literal stopping of the hour. In Wonderland this means eating tea for all eternity.

Elsie, Lacie, and Tillie (22) – From Gardner: "The three little sisters are the three Liddell sisters. Elsie is L.C. (Lorina Charlotte), Tillie refers to Edith's family name Matilda, and Lacie is an anagram of Alice."[15] The phrases *three little sisters* and *three Liddell sisters* are homophonous.

[14] Ibid., 74-75.
[15] Ibid,, 75.

molasses (22) – In the original the molasses-well is a treacle well. *Treacle* indeed means *molasses*, so this makes sense. May I, perhaps, suggest a change from *molasses* to *syrup*? One of the reasons I like this substitution is that in addition to a play on *chocolate syrup* and *maple syrup*, the word also plays on *cough syrup*, which preserves *treacle*'s allusions to medicine. From Gardner: "what was called a 'treacle well' actually existed in Carroll's time in Binsey, near Oxford. *Treacle* originally referred to medicinal compounds given for snakebites, poisons and various diseases. Wells believed to contain water of medicinal value were sometimes called 'treacle wells.' This adds of course to the meaning of the Dormouse's remark, a few lines later, that the sisters were 'very ill.' "[16] *Well* and *ill* are also being punned here, it seems to me. The photo at left is the treacle well at Binsey.

Why with an M? (22) – All of the *M*s have the effect of producing the sound *Mmmm*, which I would probably make if I sat around eating treacle all day. Alice, too, is fond of sugar, as is the Knave of Hearts. From Gardner: "Henry Holiday, who illustrated Carroll's *Hunting of the Snark*, recalled in a letter asking Carroll why all the names of the ship's crew members begin with *B*. Carroll replied, "Why not?"[17]

Why not? (22) – According to Gardner, the March Hare's "own name begins with an *M* as well, and he wanted to be part of the story."[18]

muchness (22) – From Gardner: " 'Much of a muchness' is still a colloquial British phrase meaning that two or more things are very much alike, or have the same value; or it may refer to any sort of all-pervading sameness in a situation."[19]

pig, or fig? (24) – There is absolutely no explanation for the Cheshire Cat's confusion here, except that he said that it is funny/nonsensical that he thought the baby would turn into a pig just moments earlier but now doesn't seem to know whether he thought the baby would turn into a pig or into a fig. In doesn't make a bit of sense, really, though Miller has expanded this hard-of-hearing trait so that it recurs in the play.

[16] Ibid., 76.
[17] Ibid., 77.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid., 77.

The Queen of Hearts herself. (24) – The Queen of England at the time of the composition of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* was Queen Victoria (1819-1901). She was quite a severe woman in popular depictions of her. This has largely to do with the fact that when her husband Albert died in 1861, she entered a period of mourning and wore black for *the rest of her life*. Her reign is associated also with Victorian morality, which was also rather severe. Victoria was not, however, known for her executions. In any case, compare the following two images. The one on the left is Tenniel's drawing of the Queen of Hearts. The one to the right is Queen Victoria on her 66th birthday. I defy you to deny there is a resemblance. I mean, check out those *chins!* Still, it doesn't mean Carroll had Victoria necessarily in mind.

Its head is *gone*, if it please your majesty. (25) – In *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, this first example of the Queen's fury is directed toward three gardeners (spades, of course) and not the Cheshire Cat.

hearts, or *carts?* / Or *silver darts?* (25) – Miller's invention. See "pig, or fig?" above.

you've lost your crown! (26) – *Crown* is another way of saying *head*. The king has lost his crown and everyone *else* in the scene is in danger of losing their heads.

my word! / Did you say bird? (27) – Miller's invention. See "pig, or fig?" above.

A cat may look at a king (28) – From Gardner: " 'A cat may look at a king' is a familiar proverb implying that inferiors have certain privileges in the presence of superiors."[20]

[20] Ibid., 87.

A flamingo? Isn't that a bird? What's *it* for? (28) – Most Lewis Carroll scholars can find no significance to flamingoes being used as the mallets in the croquet game. As it happens, Carroll was fond of inventing absurd games that were impossible or near-impossible to actually play. Furthermore, as one reads more about flamingoes, the nonsense multiplies. As it turns out, though there are many theories, no one has actually figured out why flamingoes stand on one leg while they feed. And here's a fun fact, according to Paul R. Ehrlich and his pals at Stanford University, the flamingo's tongue was prized in Ancient Rome as a tasty morsel: "Roman emperors considered it a delicacy and were served flamingo tongues in a dish that also included pheasant brains, parrotfish livers, and lamprey guts."[21] Okay, that's just disgusting! I was with them with the pheasant brains and parrotfish livers, but lamprey guts!!! Yuck. According to the Stanford guys, the ancient Roman poets wrote against the killing of these birds. This is from the poet Martial in a translation by Stephen Jay Gould:

> My red wing gives me my name, but epicures regard my tongue as tasty.
> But what if my tongue could sing?

Returning to a more USAmerican reference for the moment, the plastic lawn flamingo, since we are on the subject of flamingoes, was designed by a man named Don Featherstone in 1957 as a product for mass consumption. The popularity of this icon of popular culture is, as far as I can tell, completely inexplicable.

Why, it looks like a hedgehog! (29) – As in "A flamingo?" above, there is no sensible explanation for why Carroll decided his croquet match was to have hedgehogs as croquet balls. Some fun facts about hedgehogs, though, while we're thinking about them: first of all, they are so cute! Just look at this little pygmy hedgehog to the right if you need proof.

The holiday Groundhog Day in the United States was actually celebrated in ancient Rome, where it was called Hedgehog Day! It is evidently still celebrated in much of the world. Hedgehogs are not native to the United States and so early colonists chose a different animal to name February 2nd in the U.S.

In other children's literature, Beatrix Potter's *The Tale of Mrs. Tiggy-Winkle*, Kenneth Graham's *The Wind in the Willows*, and Rudyard Kipling's *Just So Stories for Little Children* all feature hedgehogs, and all were published in the first decade of the twentieth century. Children today will recognize the hedgehog from the popular and enduring video game Sonic the Hedgehog, released by Sega. Sonic is royal blue, wears bright red tennis shoes and is almost always seen wearing a smirk.

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[21] Paul R. Ehrlich, David S. Dobkin, and Darryl Wheye, "Flamingo Feeding," *Birds of Stanford,* http://www.stanford.edu/group/stanfordbirds/text/essays/Flamingo_Feeding.html.

Flamingoes and mustard both bite. (30) – This immediately reminds me of Shakespeare. The following exchange takes place in *Taming of the Shrew*, act four, scene three, when Grumio is taunting Katharine, and making sure he doesn't feed her anything that might make her more hot-tempered:

> GRUMIO. What say you to a piece of beef and mustard?
> KATHARINE. A dish that I do love to feed upon.
> GRUMIO. Ay, but the mustard is too hot a little.
> KATHARINE. Why then, the beef, and let the mustard rest.
> GRUMIO. Nay then, I will not: you shall have the mustard,
> Or else you get no beef of Grumio.
> KATHARINE. Then both or one or any thing thou wilt.
> GRUMIO. Why, then, the mustard without the beef.
> KATHARINE. Go, get thee gone, thou false deluding slave!

Would it be awkward to change this word to *horseradish* or some other item with a bite? Mustard is not exactly thought of as a *hot* condiment any more. Actually, *peppers* would do here nicely. The word already has an association with the Duchess, and peppers do, indeed, bite in the same way that mustard does.

They never executes nobody, you know—leastwise without a trial (32) – The gryphon appears to speak with a kind of Londoner or Cockney accent. In *Alice's Adventures*, for example, he tells the Gryphon "This here young lady, she wants for to know your history, she do." As far as I can tell, Carroll does not explain why the Gryphon speaks this way.

Mock Turtle soup (32) – From Gardner: "Mock turtle soup is an imitation of green turtle soup, usually made from veal. This explains why Tenniel drew his Mock Turtle with the head, hind hoofs, and tail of a calf."[22] It seems that in order to duplicate the texture and flavor of turtle meat, makers of mock turtle soup usually use the meat from head, hooves, or offal. The explanation for the Mock Turtle's propensity for crying is that sea turtles were often thought to be tearful creatures. They secrete salt water from glands near their eyes; in the water this is not evident, but on land (where they lay their eggs) they appear to be weeping.

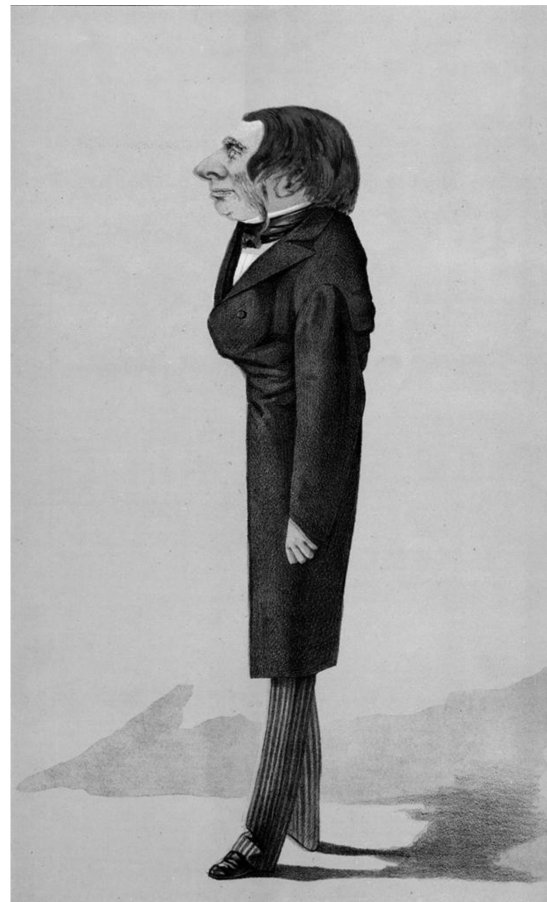
We called him Tortoise, because he taught us! (33) – Carroll puns here on tortoise/taught-us, which would have been pronounced very similarly by upper-class Victorians.

[22] Ibid., 94.

French, music, and washing—extra. (33) – From Gardner: "The phrase 'French, music and washing—extra' often appeared on boarding-school bills. It meant, of course, that there was an extra charge for French and music, and for having one's laundry done by the school."[23]

Reeling and Writhing (34) – This section is full of puns. The Mock Turtle seems to simply *live* by them, beginning with the *tortoise/taught-us* pun above. *Reeling and writhing* pun on *reading and writing.*

Arithmetic: Ambition, Distraction, Uglification, and Derision (34) – The puns here are on *addition*, *subtraction*, *multiplication*, and *division.*



Mystery, Ancient and Modern (34) – The pun here is *history*, ancient and modern. I like the linking of history and mystery, as though one *solves* history.

Drawling, Stretching, and Fainting in Coils (34) – The puns here are *drawing*, *sketching*, and *painting in oils*.

congereel (34) – In *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, this is actually spelled *conger-eel.* Gardner shares that "The 'Drawling-master' … is a reference to none other than the art critic John Ruskin. … Photographs of Ruskin at the time, and a caricature by Max Beerbohm, show him tall and thin, and strongly resembling a conger eel."[24] Is that obscure enough for you? Perhaps we could come up with a pun as a substitute for the conger eel…

And how did you manage on the twelfth? (34) – From Gardner: "Alice's excellent question rightly puzzles the Gryphon because it introduces the possibility of mysterious negative numbers (a concept that also puzzled early mathematicians), which seem to have no application to hours of lessons in the 'curious' educational scheme. On the twelfth day and succeeding days did the pupils start teaching their teacher?"[25] ☺

[23] Ibid., 97.
[24] Ibid., 98.
[25] Ibid., 99.

"Will you walk a little faster?" said a whiting to a snail (35) – This is a parody of Mary Howlitt's poem "The Spider and the Fly," which reads as follows:

> "Will you walk into my parlour?" said the spider to the fly.
> " 'Tis the prettiest little parlour that ever you did spy."
> "The way into my parlour is up a winding stair;
> "And I've got many curious things to show when you are there."
> "Oh, no, no," said the little fly, "To ask me is in vain,
> "For who goes up your winding stair can ne'er come down again."

A whiting is a cod-like fish used for food.

shingle (35) – The shingle is the part of the beach that is less sandy and more filled with pebbles. May I perhaps suggest the word *seashore* as a substitute?

Soles and eels (36) – Another pun. The shoes in the ocean are made with soles and eels instead of *soles* and *heels* (which, in any case, would be pronounced by many Londoners as *'eels*).

Beautiful soup, so rich and green, / Waiting in a hot tureen! (37) – This is a burlesque of the song "Star of the Evening," with music and lyrics by James M. Sayles:

> Beautiful star in heav'n so bright,
> Softly falls they silv'ry light,
> As thou movest from earth afar,
> Star of the evening, beautiful star.
>
> Beautiful star,
> Beautiful star,
> Star of the evening, beautiful star.

The Queen of Hearts, she made some tarts… (39) – This poem (by an anonymous author) is only partially included in *Alice*. The longer version goes as follows:

> The Queen of Hearts
> She made some tarts,
> All on a summer's day;
> The Knave of Hearts
> He stole the tarts,
> And took them clean away.
> The King of Hearts
> Called for the tarts,
> And beat the Knave full sore;
> The Knave of Hearts
> Brought back the tarts,
> And vow'd he'd steal no more.
>
> The King of Spades
> He kissed the maids,
> Which made the Queen full sore;
> The Queen of Spades
> She beat those maids,
> And turned them out of door;

The Knave of Spades
Grieved for those jades,
And did for them implore;
The Queen so gent
She did relent
And vow'd she'd ne'er strike more.

The King of Clubs
He often drubs
His loving Queen and wife;
The Queen of Clubs
Returns his snubs,
And all is noise and strife;
The Knave of Clubs
Gives winks and rubs,
And swears he'll take her part;
For when our kings
Will do such things,
They should be made to smart.

The Diamond King
I fain would sing,
And likewise his fair Queen;
But that the Knave,
A haughty slave,
Must needs step in between;
Good Diamond King,
With hempen string,
The haughty Knave destroy!
Then may your Queen
With mind serene,
Your royal bed enjoy.

I'm a poor man, Your Majesty, and I hadn't but just begun my tea—and what with the bread-and-butter getting so thin—and the twinkling of the tea—… (40) – From Gardner: "If the Hatter had not been interrupted he would have said 'tea tray.' He is thinking of the song he sang at the Mad Tea Party about the bat that twinkled in the sky like a tea tray."[26] None of this makes a bit of sense as far as I can tell.

[26] Ibid., 114.