Feeding the mind

Carroll Lewis
Title: Feeding the mind

Author: Carroll Lewis

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FEEDING THE MIND

BY

LEWIS CARROLL

WITH A PREFATORY NOTE BY

WILLIAM H. DRAPER

LONDON
CHATTO & WINDUS
1907
NOTE

The history of this little sparkle from the pen of Lewis Carroll may soon be told. It was in October of the year 1884 that he came on a visit to a certain vicarage in Derbyshire, where he had promised, on the score of friendship, to do what was for him a most unusual favour—to give a lecture before a public audience.

The writer well remembers his nervous, highly-strung manner as he stood before the little room full of simple people, few of whom had any idea of the world-wide reputation of that shy, slight figure before them.
NOTE

When the lecture was over, he handed the manuscript to me, saying: 
‘Do what you like with it.’

The one for whose sake he did this kindness was not long after called

‘Into the Silent Land.’

So the beautifully-written MS., in his customary violet ink, has been treasured for more than twenty years, only now and then being read over at Christmas-time to a friend or two by the study fire, always to meet with the same welcome and glad acknowledgment that here was a genuine, though little flame that could not have belonged to any other source but that which all the world knew in Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking-Glass.

There may be, perhaps, many others who, gathering round a winter fire,
NOTE

will be glad to read words, however few, from that bright source, and whose memories will respond to the fresh touch of that cherished name.

It remains to add but one or two more associations that cling to it and make the remembrance more vivid still. While Lewis Carroll was staying in the house, there came to call a certain genial and by no means shy Dean, who, without realizing what he was doing, proceeded, in the presence of other callers, to make some remark identifying Mr. Dodgson as the author of his books.

There followed an immense explosion immediately on the visitor’s departure, with a pathetic and serious request that, if there were any risk of a repetition of the call, due warning might be given, and the retreat secured.
NOTE

Probably not many readers of the immortal Alice have ever seen the curious little whimsical paper called

EIGHT OR NINE WISE WORDS

ABOUT

LETTER-WRITING

which their author had printed and used to send to his acquaintance, accompanied by a small case for postage-stamps.

It consists of forty pages, and is published by Emberlin and Son, Oxford; and these are the contents:

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In this little script, also, there are the same sparkles of wit which betoken
NOTE

that nimble pen, as, for example, under 'How to begin a Letter':

"And never, never, dear madam" (N.B.—This remark is addressed to ladies only. No man would ever do such a thing), "put 'Wednesday' simply as the date! "That way madness lies!"

*From section 3:* 'How to go on with a Letter.'—'A great deal of the bad writing in the world comes simply from writing too quickly. Of course you reply, "I do it to save time." A very good object, no doubt, but what right have you to do it at your friend's expense? Isn't his time as valuable as yours? Years ago I used to receive letters from a friend—and very interesting letters too—written in one of the most atrocious hands ever invented. It generally took me about
NOTE

a week to read one of his letters! I used to carry it about in my pocket and take it out at leisure times, to puzzle over the riddles which composed it—holding it in different positions and at different distances, till at last the meaning of some hopeless scrawl would flash upon me, when I at once wrote down the English under it. And when several had been thus guessed the context would help one with the others, till at last the whole series of hieroglyphics was deciphered. If all one's friends wrote like that, life would be entirely spent in reading their letters!'

Rule for correspondence that has, unfortunately, become controversial.

'Don't repeat yourself. — When once you have had your say fully and clearly on a certain point, and have