

## Some Hallucinations

He thought he saw an Elephant,  
That practiced on a fife:  
He looked again, and found it was  
A letter from his wife.  
"At length I realize," he said,  
"The bitterness of life."

He thought he saw a Buffalo  
Upon the chimneypiece:  
He looked again, and found it was  
His Sister's Husband's Niece.  
"Unless you leave this house," he said,  
"I'll send for the Police!"

He thought he saw a Rattlesnake  
That questioned him in Greek:  
He looked again, and found it was  
The Middle of Next Week.  
"The one thing I regret," he said,  
"Is that it cannot speak!"

He thought he saw a Banker's Clerk  
Descending from the 'bus:  
He looked again, and found it was  
A Hippopotamus.  
"If this should stay to dine," he said,  
"There won't be much for us!"

—Lewis Carroll

## The Purist

I give you now Professor Twist,  
A conscientious scientist,  
Trustees exclaimed, "He never bungles!"  
And sent him off to distant jungles.  
Camped on a tropic riverside,  
One day he missed his loving bride.  
She had, the guide informed him later,  
Been eaten by an alligator.  
Professor Twist could not but smile.  
"You mean," he said, "a crocodile."

--Ogden Nash

## You Are Old, Father William

"You are old, father William," the young man said,  
"And your hair has become very white;  
And yet you incessantly stand on your head--  
Do you think, at your age, it is right?"

"In my youth," father William replied to his son,  
"I feared it might injure the brain;  
But now that I'm perfectly sure I have none,  
Why, I do it again and again."

"You are old," said the youth, "as I mentioned  
before,  
And have grown most uncommonly fat;  
Yet you turned a back-somersault in at the door--  
Pray what is the reason of that?"

"In my youth," said the sage, as he shook his grey  
locks,  
"I kept all my limbs very supple  
By the use of this ointment--one shilling the box--  
Allow me to sell you a couple?"

"You are old," said the youth, "and your jaws are to  
weak  
For anything tougher than suet;  
Yet you finished the goose, with the bones and the  
beak--  
Pray, how did you manage to do it?"

"In my youth," said his father, "I took to the law,  
And argued each case with my wife;  
And the muscular strength, which it gave to my  
jaw,  
Has lasted the rest of my life."

"You are old," said the youth, "one would hardly  
suppose  
That your eye was as steady as ever;  
Yet you balanced an eel on the end of your nose--  
What made you so awfully clever?"

"I have answered three questions and that is  
enough,"  
Said the father. "Don't give yourself airs!  
Do you think I can listen all day to such stuff?  
Be off, or I'll kick you down stairs!"

---Lewis Carroll