

BALLADE OF NEW CRITICISM  
(AFTER ANDREW LANG)

THERE'S a joy like the joy of a lark,  
    There's a pleasure that's known to the few,  
Tis to listen all day to the bark  
    Of a critic's vitriolic review.  
    Corroding the centuries through,  
It eats since the first poet sang,  
    And they cursed him, and called him a Jew,  
Before the good æon of Lang.

These critics (their style, you remark,  
    Into forests of verbiage grew)  
Ere Carroll invented the Snark  
    Were ready to eat me and you ;  
    They snorted, they snapped, and they slew,  
They were mighty of quill and of slang,  
    Till they quenched the Philistian crew  
Before the good æon of Lang.

Here's an article mystic and dark  
    In a manner as fluent as glue,  
Which (though lovers meet deep in a park,  
    The wearisome tome of it through)

    Has forgotten the venom we knew ;  
Nor sting as those articles stang  
    When Keats wrote a poem or two  
Before the good æon of Lang.

L'ENVOI

There is a young lady, it's true,  
    Who finds that their tongues have a tang

But—the sorrows of Satan were few  
Before the good æon of Lang.