

**THE RUBAIYAT OF
OMAR CAYENNE**

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The Rubaiyat of Omar Cayenne by Gelett Burgess

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GELETT BURGESS

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BY
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NEW YORK
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PUBLISHERS

THE RUBAIYAT
OF
OMAR CAYENNE

I

WAKE! For the Hack can scatter into flight
Shakespeare and Dante in a single Night!
The Penny-a-liner is Abroad, and strikes
Our Modern Literature with blithering Blight.

II

Before Historical Romances died,
Methought a Voice from Art's Olympus cried,
"When all Dumas and Scott is still for Sale,
Why nod o'er drowsy Tales, by Tyros tried?"

III

A cock-sure Crew with Names ne'er heard before
Greeditly shouted—"Open then the Door!

You know how little Stuff is going to live,
But where it came from there is plenty More."

IV

Now the New Year reviving old Desires,
The Artist poor to Calendars aspires,

But of the Stuff the Publisher puts out
Most in the Paper Basket soon suspires.

V

Harum indeed is gone, and Lady Rose,
And Janice Meredith, where no one knows;

But still the Author gushes overtime,
And many a Poet babbles on in Prose.

VI

Aldrich's lips are lock'd; but people buy
High-piping Authoresses, boomed sky-high.

"How Fine!"—the Publisher cries to the Mob,
That monumental Cheek to justify.

VII

Come, fill the Purse, to Publishers, this Spring,
Your Manuscripts of paltry Passion bring:
The New York Times has oft a little Way
Of praising—let The Times your praises sing.

VIII

Whether by Century or Doubleday,
Whether Macmillan or the Harpers pay,
The Publisher prints new books every Year;
The Critics will keep Busy, anyway!

IX

Each Morn a thousand Volumes brings, you say;
Yes, but who reads the Books of Yesterday?
And this first Autumn List that brings the New
Shall take The Pit and Mrs. Wiggs away.

X

Well, let it take them! What, are we not through
With Richard Calmady and Emmy Lou?
Let Ade and Dooley guy us as they will,
Or Ella Wheeler Wilcox—heed not you.

XI

With me despise this kind of Fiction rude
That just divides the Rotten from the Good,
Where names of Poe and Dickens are forgot—
And Peace to Thackeray with his giant Brood!

XII

A Book of Limericks—Nonsense, anyhow—
Alice in Wonderland, the Purple Cow
Beside me singing on Fifth Avenue—
Ah, this were Modern Literature enow!

XIII

Some for the stories of The World; and some
Sigh for the Boston Transcript till it come;
Ah, take The Sun, and let The Herald go,
Nor heed the Yellow Journalistic scum!

XIV

Look to the blowing Advertiser—"Lo,
Booming's the way," he says, "to make Books go!
I advertise until I've drained my Purse,
And huge Editions on the Market throw."

XV

And those who made a Mint off Miss MacLane,
And those who shuddered at her Jest's profane,
Alike consigned her to Oblivion,
And buried once, would not dig up again.

XVI

Anthony Hope men set their hearts upon—
Like Conan Doyle he prospered; and anon,
Remained unopened on the dusty Shelf,
Delighting us an Hour—and then was gone.

XVII

Think, in this gaudy monthly Magazine
Whose Covers are Soapette and Breakfastine,
How Author after Author with his Tale
Fills his fool Pages, and no more is seen.

XVIII

They say that now Miss Myra Kelly reaps
Rewards that Howells used to have for Keeps:
And Seton, that great Hunter of Wild Beasts
Has Coin ahead; Cash comes to him in Heaps!

XIX

I sometimes think that never Prose is read
 So good as that by Advertising bred,
 And every Verse Sapolian poets sing
 Brings laurel wreaths once twin'd for Spenser's head.

XX

And this audacious Author, young and green
 In Smart Set—surely you know whom I mean—
 Ah, look upon him lightly! for who knows
 But once in Lippincott's he wrote unseen!

XXI

Ah, my Belovèd, write the Book that clears
 To-day of dreary Debt and sad Arrears;
 To-morrow!—Why, To-morrow I may see
 My Nonsense popular as Edward Lear's.

XXII

For some we've read, the month's Six Selling Best
 The Bookman scored with elephantine Jest,
 Have sold a half a Million in a Year,
 Yet no one ever heard of them, out West!