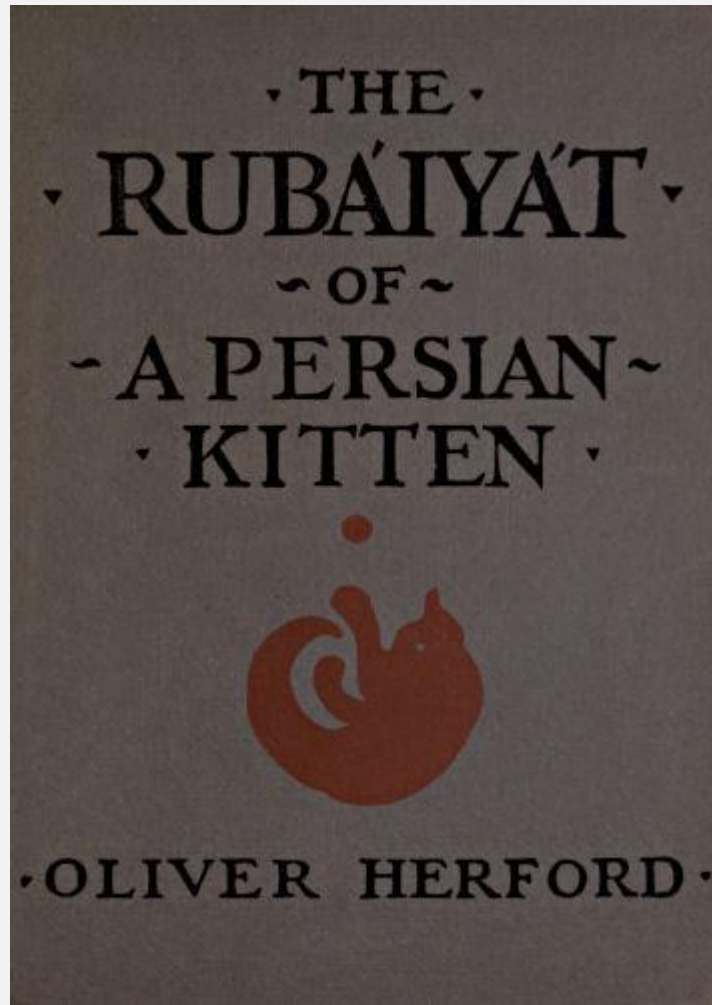


\*\*\*



The  
**Rubáiyát**  
of a  
**Persian Kitten**

By  
**Oliver Herford**



New York · Charles Scribner's Sons  
Mcmvi

Copyright, 1904, by  
Oliver Herford

THE DE VINNE PRESS.

## **The Rubáiyát of a Persian Kitten**

Wake! for the Golden Cat has put to flight  
The Mouse of Darkness with  
his Paw of Light: Which means, in Plain and simple every-day  
Unoriental Speech—The Dawn is bright.



They say the Early Bird the Worm shall taste. Then rise, O Kitten! Wherefore, sleeping, waste The Fruits of Virtue? Quick! the Early Bird Will soon be on the Flutter—O make haste!



The Early Bird has gone, and with him ta'en  
The Early Worm—Alas! the Moral's  
plain,  
O Senseless Worm! Thus, thus we are repaid  
For Early Rising—I shall doze  
again.



The Mouse makes merry 'mid the Larder Shelves, The Bird for Dinner in the Garden delves. I often wonder what the creatures eat One half so toothsome as they are Themselves.





And that Inverted Bowl of Skyblue Delf  
That helpless lies upon the Pantry  
Shelf—Lift not your eyes to It for help, for It's quite as empty as you are  
yourself.



The Ball no question makes of Ayes or Noes, But right or left, as strikes the  
Kitten, goes; Yet why, altho' I toss it Far Afield, It still returneth—Goodness only  
knows!



A Secret Presence that my likeness feigns, And yet, quicksilver-like, eludes my pains—  
In vain I look for Him behind the glass; He is not there, and yet He still remains.

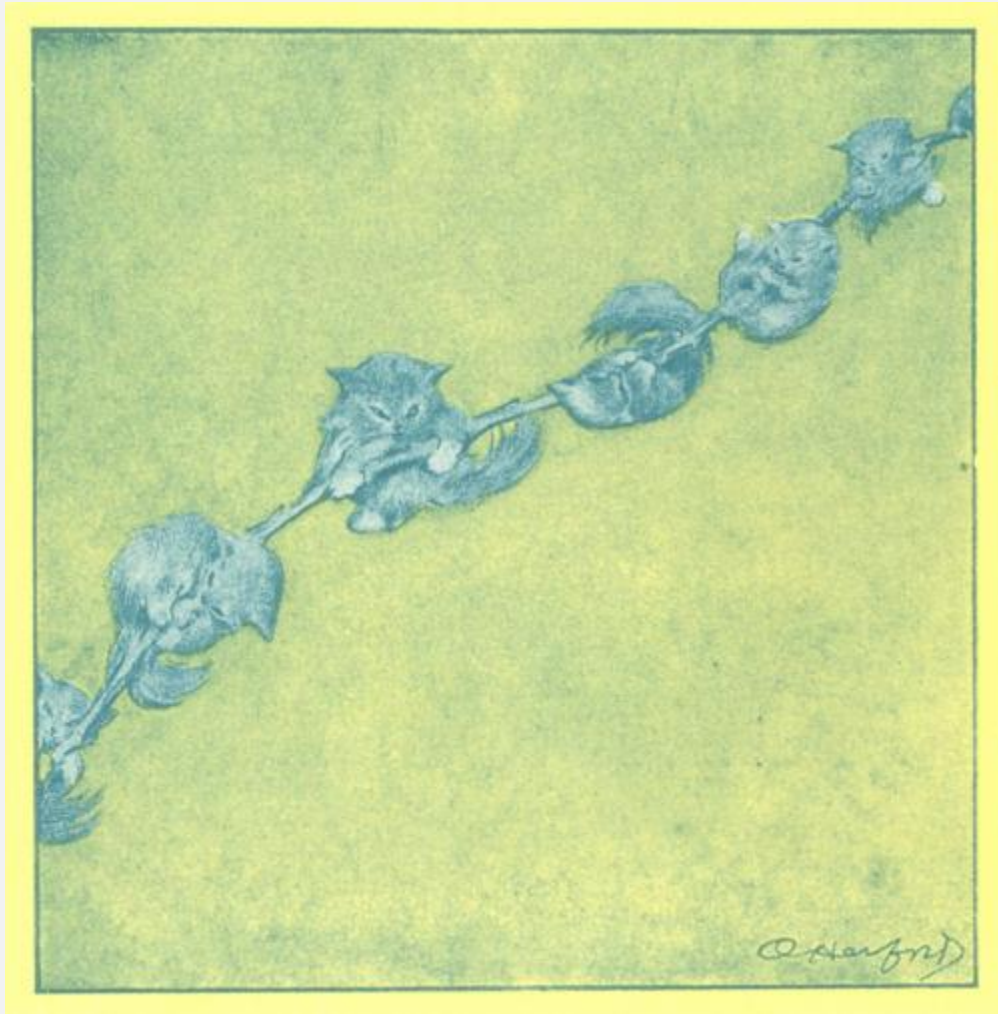




What out of airy Nothing to invokeA senseless Something to resist the  
strokeOf unpermitted Paw—upon the painOf Everlasting Penalties—if broke.



I sometimes think the Pussy-Willows grey  
Are Angel Kittens who have lost their  
way,  
And every Bulrush on the river bank  
A Cat-Tail from some lovely Cat astray.



Sometimes I think perchance that Allah may, When he created Cats, have  
thrown away The Tails He marred in making, and they grew To Cat-Tails and to  
Pussy-Willows grey.





And lately, when I was not Feeling Fit, Bereft alike of Piety and Wit, There came  
an Angel Shape and offered me A Fragrant Plant and bid me taste of it.



'Twas that reviving Herb, that Spicy Weed, The Cat-Nip. Tho' 'tis good in time of need, Ah, feed upon it lightly, for who knows To what unlovely antics it may lead.





Strange—is it not?—that of the numbers who  
Before me passed this Door of  
Darkness thro',  
Not one returns thro' it again, altho'  
Ofttimes I've waited here  
an hour or two.



'Tis but a Tent where takes his one Night's Rest  
A Rodent to the Realms of  
Death address'd, When Cook, arising, looks for him and then—Baits, and  
prepares it for another Guest.



They say the Lion and the Lizard keep  
The Courts where Jamshýd gloried and  
drank deep.  
The Lion is my cousin; I don't know  
Who Jamshýd is—nor shall it  
break my sleep.



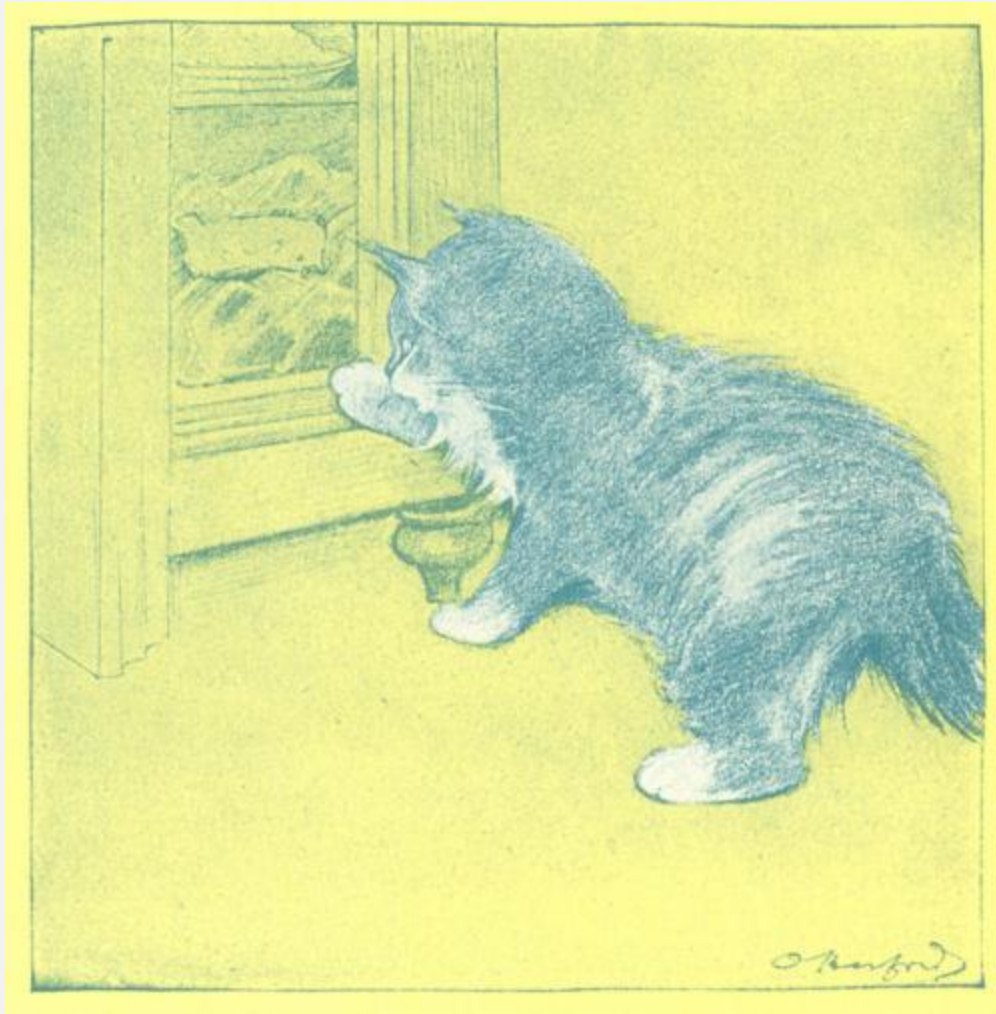
Impotent glimpses of the Game displayed  
Upon the Counter—temptingly  
arrayed; Hither and thither moved or checked or weighed,  
And one by one  
back in the Ice Chest laid.





What if the Sole could fling the Ice aside, And with me to some Area's haven  
glide—Were't not a Shame, were't not a shame for it In this Cold Prison  
crippled to abide?





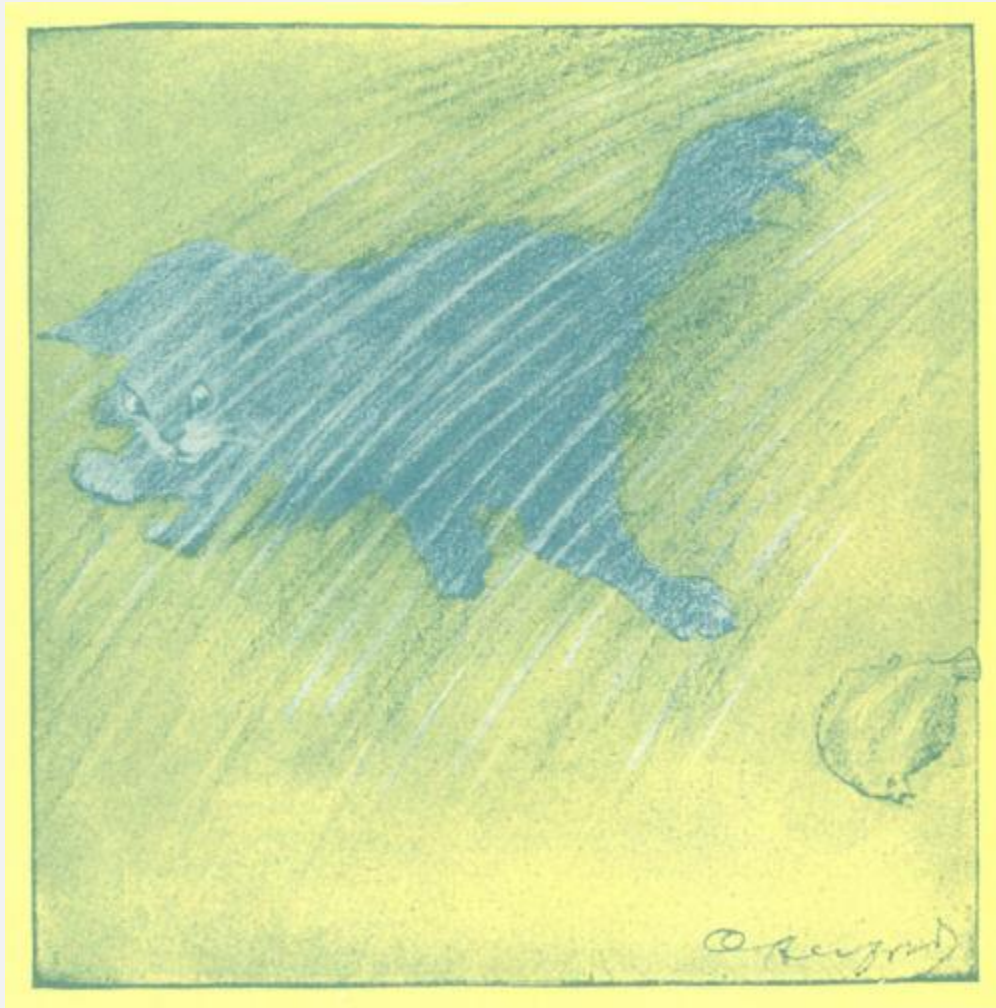
Some for the Glories of the Sole, and SomeMew for the proper Bowl of Milk to  
come.Ah, take the Fish and let your Credit go,And plead the rumble of an  
empty Tum.



One thing is certain: tho' this Stolen Bite  
Should be my last and Wrath  
consume me quite,  
One taste of It within the Area caught  
Better than at the  
Table lost outright.



Indeed, indeed Repentance oft before I swore, but was I hungry when I swore? And then and then came Cook—with Hose in hand—And drowned my glory in a sorry pour.



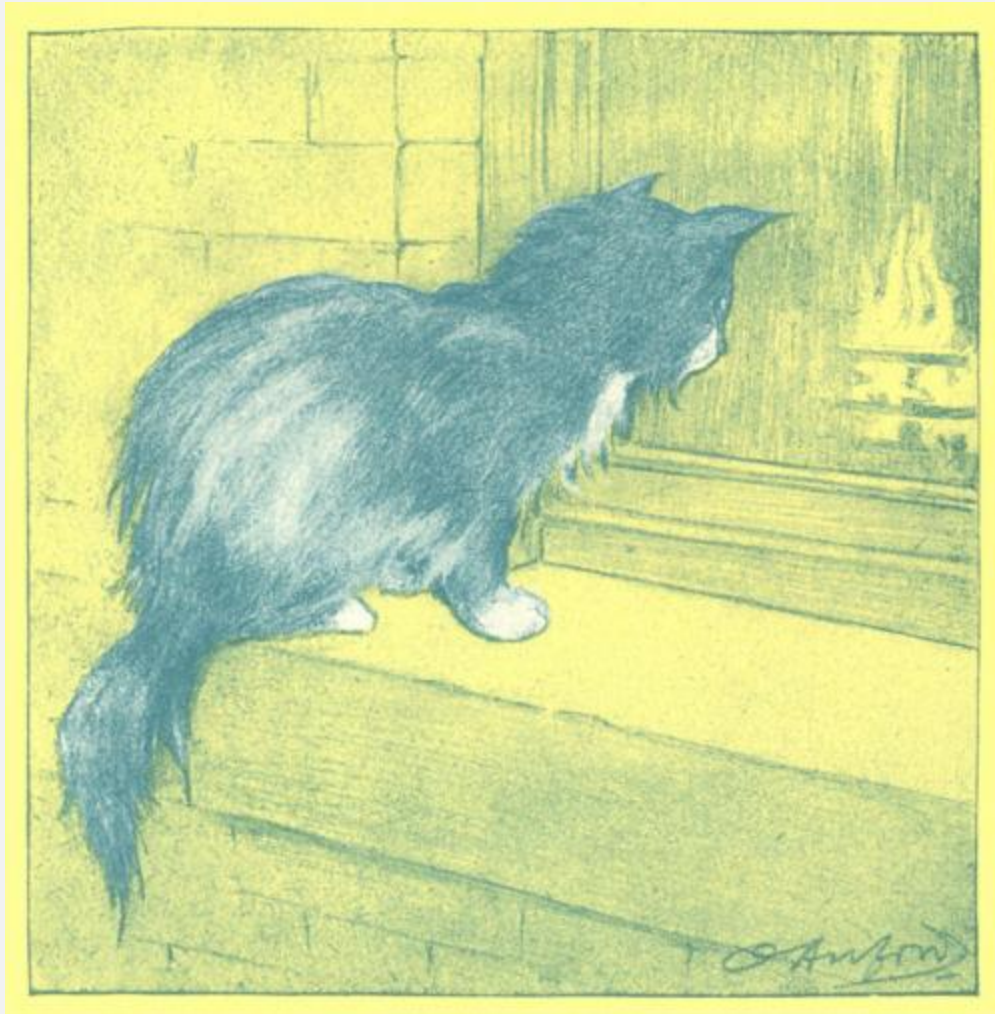
What without asking hither harried whence, And without asking whither  
harried hence—O, many a taste of that forbidden Sole Must down the memory  
of that Insolence.





Heaven, but the vision of a Flowing Bowl; And Hell, the sizzle of a Frying  
Sole Heard in the hungry Darkness, where Myself, So rudely cast, must  
impotently roll.





The Vine has a tough Fibre which about  
While clings my Being;—let the Canine  
FloutTill his Bass Voice be pitched to such loud keyIt shall unlock the door I  
mew without.



Up from the Basement to the Seventh Flat I rose, and on the Crown of Fashion  
sat, And many a Ball unravelled by the way—But not the Master's angry Bawl  
of "Scat!"



Then to the Well of Wisdom I—and lo! With my own Paw I wrought to make it  
flow, And This was all the Harvest that I reaped: We come like Kittens and like  
Cats we go.





Why be this Ink the Fount of Wit?—who dare Blaspheme the glistening Pen-  
drink as a snare? A Blessing?—I should spread it, should I not? And if a Curse—  
why, then upset it!—there!



A moment's Halt, a momentary TasteOf Bitter, and amid the Trickling Wastel wrought strange shapes from Máh to Máhi, yetI know not what I wrote, nor why they chased.

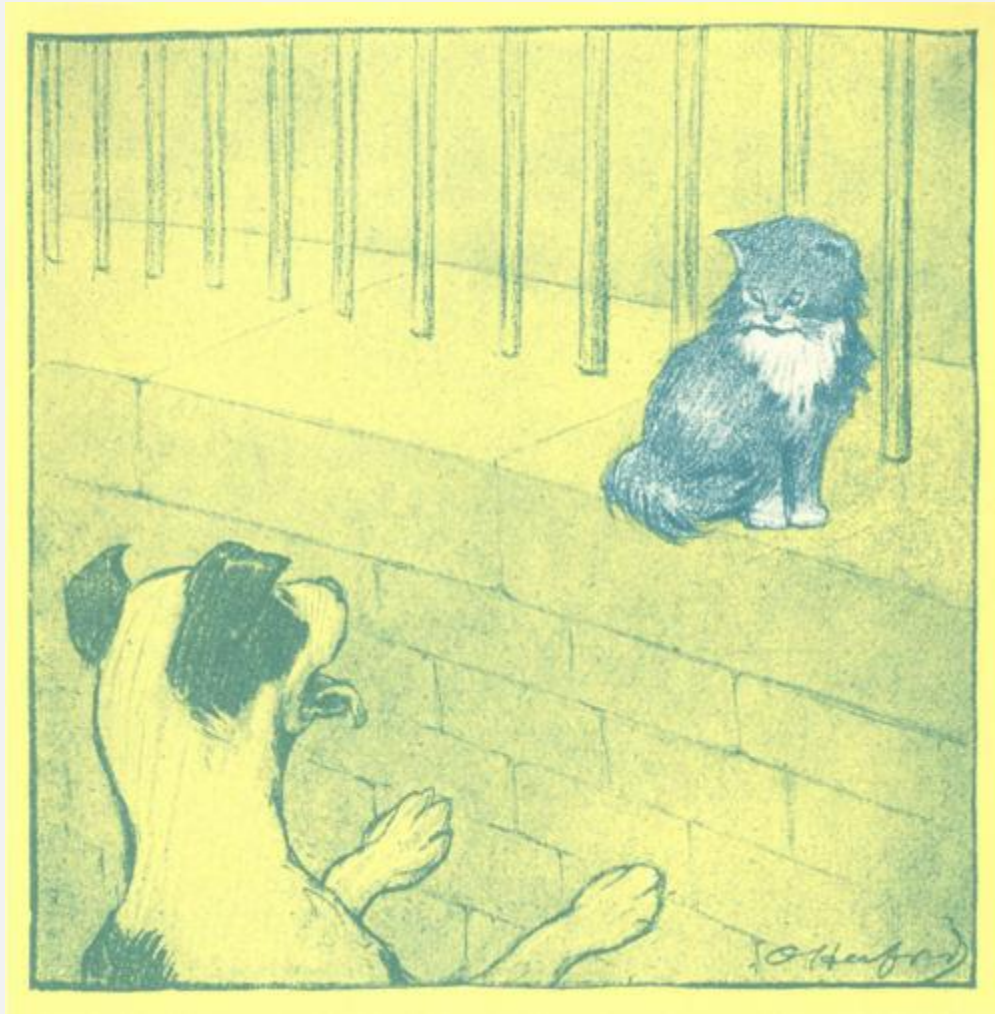




Now I beyond the Pale am safely past.O, but the long, long time their Rage  
shall last,Which, tho' they call to supper, I shall heedAs a Stone Cat should  
heed a Pebble cast.



And that perverted Soul beneath the Sky  
They call the Dog—Heed not his  
angry Cry; Not all his Threats can make me budge one bit,  
Nor all his Empty  
Bluster terrify.



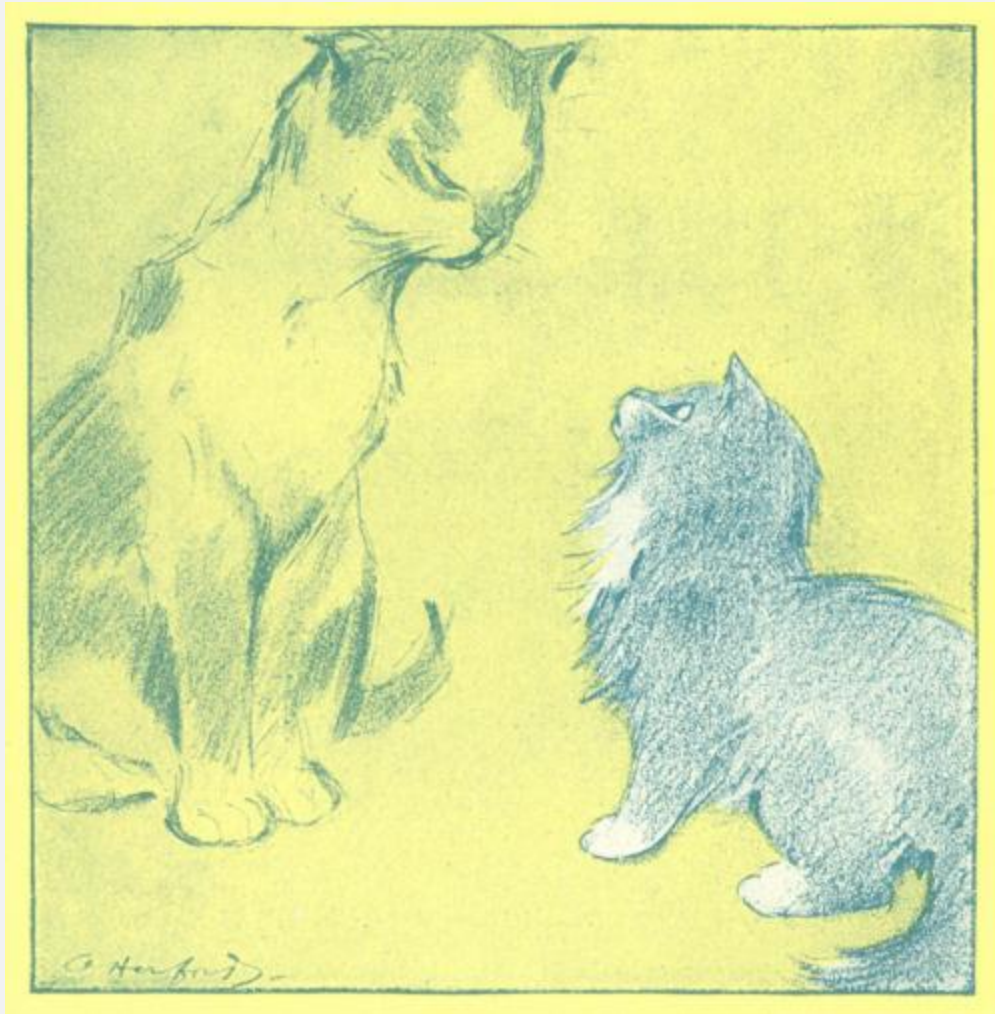
They are no other than a moving ShowOf whirling Shadow Shapes that come  
and goMe-ward thro' Moon illumined Darkness hurled,In midnight, by the  
Lodgers in the Row.





Myself when young did eagerly frequent  
The Backyard Fence and heard great  
Argument About it, and About, yet evermore  
Came out with Fewer Fur than in I  
went.

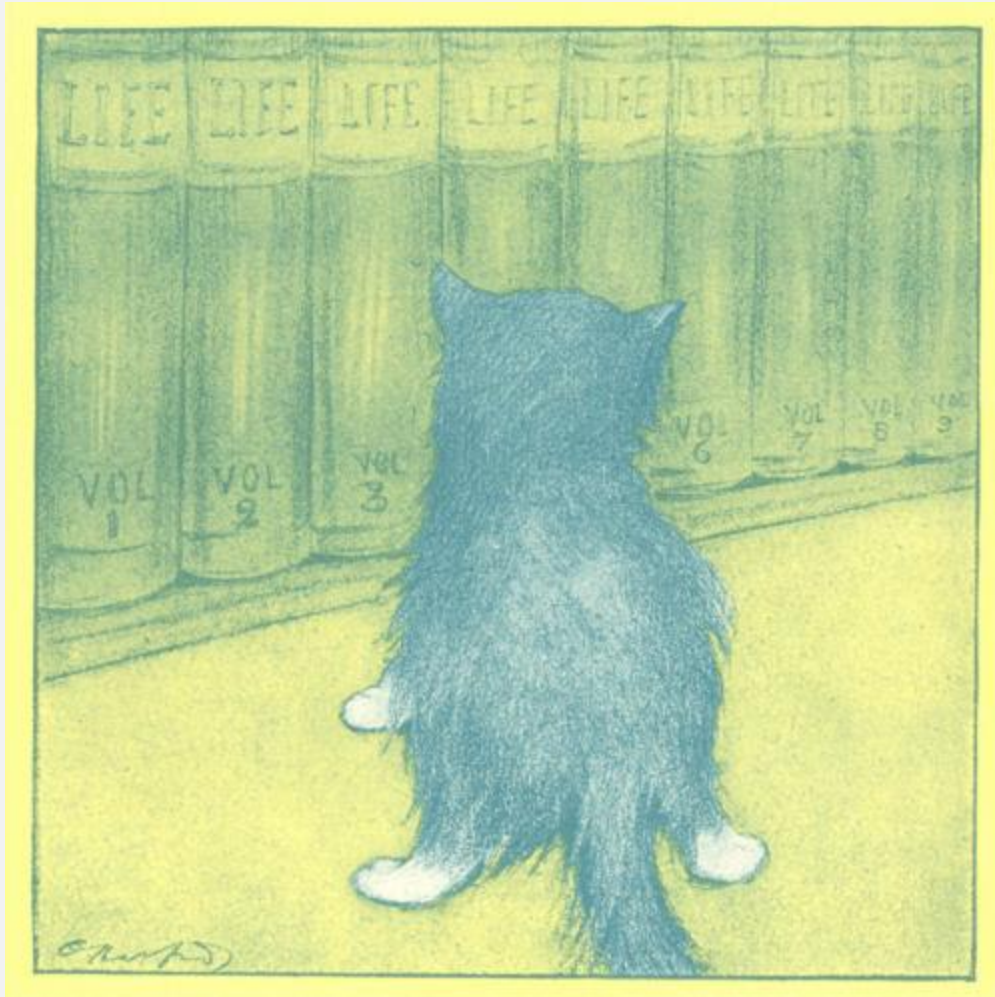




Ah, me! if you and I could but conspire  
To grasp this Sorry Scheme of things  
entire, Would we not shatter it to bits, and then  
Enfold it nearer to our Heart's  
Desire?



Tho' Two and Two make Four by rule of line, Or they make Twenty-two by  
Logic fine, Of all the Figures one may fathom, I Shall ne'er be floored by  
anything but Nine.

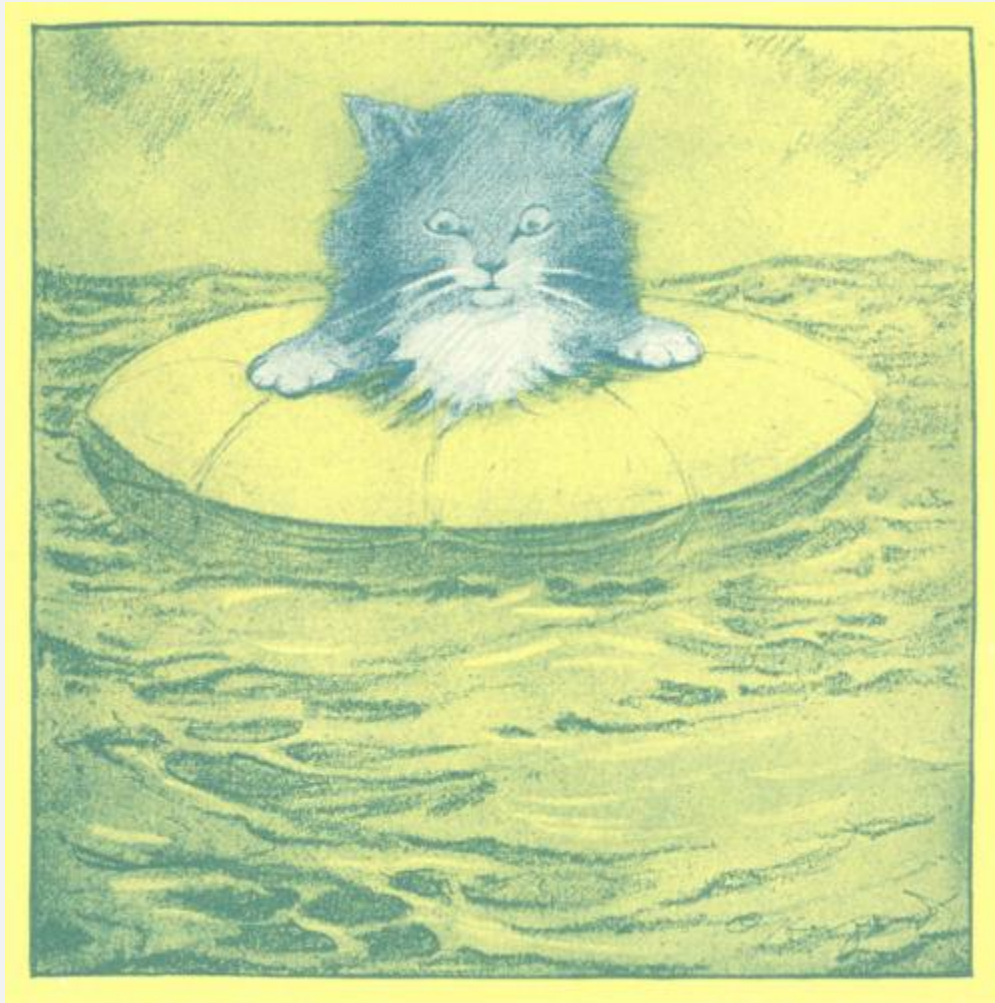


And fear not lest Existence shut the Door  
On You and Me, to open it no  
more. The Cream of Life from out your Bowl shall pour  
Nine times—ere it lie  
broken on the Floor.



So, if the Fish you Steal—the Cream you drink—Ends in what all begins and ends in, Think, Unless the Stern Recorder points to Nine, Tho' They would drown you—still you shall not sink.





BOOKS BY OLIVER HERFORD

*WITH PICTURES BY THE AUTHOR*

PUBLISHED BY CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

THE BASHFUL EARTHQUAKE	\$1.25
A CHILD'S PRIMER OF NATURAL HISTORY	\$1.25
OVERHEARD IN A GARDEN	\$1.25
MORE ANIMALS	<i>net</i> , \$1.00
THE RUBAIYAT OF A PERSIAN KITTEN	<i>net</i> , \$1.00
THE FAIRY GODMOTHER-IN-LAW	<i>net</i> , \$1.00

## **Transcriber's Note**

The unusual capitalisation is as it appears in the original text.

Advertising material has been moved to the end of the text.

\*\*\* END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE RUBÁIYÁT OF A PERSIAN KITTEN \*\*\*

Updated editions will replace the previous one—the old editions will be renamed.

Creating the works from print editions not protected by U.S. copyright law means that no one owns a United States copyright in these works, so the Foundation (and you!) can copy and distribute it in the United States without permission and without paying copyright royalties. Special rules, set forth in the General Terms of Use part of this license, apply to copying and distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works to protect the PROJECT GUTENBERG™ concept and trademark. Project Gutenberg is a registered trademark, and may not be used if you charge for an eBook, except by following the terms of the trademark license, including paying royalties for use of the Project Gutenberg trademark. If you do not charge anything for copies of this eBook, complying with the trademark license is very easy. You may use this eBook for nearly any purpose such as creation of derivative works, reports, performances and research. Project Gutenberg eBooks may be modified and printed and given away—you may do practically ANYTHING in the United States with eBooks not protected by U.S. copyright law. Redistribution is subject to the trademark license, especially commercial redistribution.

## **START: FULL LICENSE**

### **THE FULL PROJECT GUTENBERG LICENSE**

PLEASE READ THIS BEFORE YOU DISTRIBUTE OR USE THIS WORK

To protect the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting the free distribution of electronic works, by using or distributing this work (or any other work associated in any way with the phrase “Project Gutenberg”), you agree to comply with all the terms of the Full Project Gutenberg™ License available with this file or online at [www.gutenberg.org/license](http://www.gutenberg.org/license).

### **Section 1. General Terms of Use and Redistributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works**

1.A. By reading or using any part of this Project Gutenberg™ electronic work, you indicate that you have read, understand, agree to and accept all the terms of this license and intellectual property (trademark/copyright) agreement. If you do not agree to abide by all the terms of this agreement, you must cease using and return or destroy all copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in your possession. If you paid a fee for obtaining a copy of or access to a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work and you do not agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement, you may obtain a refund from the person or entity to whom you paid the fee as set forth in paragraph 1.E.8.

1.B. “Project Gutenberg” is a registered trademark. It may only be used on or associated in any way with an electronic work by people who agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement. There are a few things that you can do with most Project Gutenberg™ electronic works even without complying with the full terms of this agreement. See paragraph 1.C below. There are a lot of things you can do with Project

Gutenberg™ electronic works if you follow the terms of this agreement and help preserve free future access to Project Gutenberg™ electronic works. See paragraph 1.E below.

1.C. The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation (“the Foundation” or PGLAF), owns a compilation copyright in the collection of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works. Nearly all the individual works in the collection are in the public domain in the United States. If an individual work is unprotected by copyright law in the United States and you are located in the United States, we do not claim a right to prevent you from copying, distributing, performing, displaying or creating derivative works based on the work as long as all references to Project Gutenberg are removed. Of course, we hope that you will support the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting free access to electronic works by freely sharing Project Gutenberg™ works in compliance with the terms of this agreement for keeping the Project Gutenberg™ name associated with the work. You can easily comply with the terms of this agreement by keeping this work in the same format with its attached full Project Gutenberg™ License when you share it without charge with others.

1.D. The copyright laws of the place where you are located also govern what you can do with this work. Copyright laws in most countries are in a constant state of change. If you are outside the United States, check the laws of your country in addition to the terms of this agreement before downloading, copying, displaying, performing, distributing or creating derivative works based on this work or any other Project Gutenberg™ work. The Foundation makes no representations concerning the copyright status of any work in any country other than the United States.

1.E. Unless you have removed all references to Project Gutenberg:

1.E.1. The following sentence, with active links to, or other immediate access to, the full Project Gutenberg™ License must appear prominently whenever any copy of a Project Gutenberg™ work (any work on which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” appears, or with which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” is associated) is accessed, displayed, performed, viewed, copied or distributed:

This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at [www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org). If you are not located in the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

1.E.2. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is derived from texts not protected by U.S. copyright law (does not contain a notice indicating that it is posted with permission of the copyright holder), the work can be copied and distributed to anyone in the United States without paying any fees or charges. If you are redistributing or providing access to a work with the phrase “Project Gutenberg” associated with or appearing on the work, you must comply either with the requirements of paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 or obtain permission for the use of the work and the Project Gutenberg™ trademark as set forth in paragraphs 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.3. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is posted with the permission of the copyright holder, your use and distribution must comply with both paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 and any additional terms imposed by the copyright holder. Additional terms will be linked to the Project

Gutenberg™ License for all works posted with the permission of the copyright holder found at the beginning of this work.

1.E.4. Do not unlink or detach or remove the full Project Gutenberg™ License terms from this work, or any files containing a part of this work or any other work associated with Project Gutenberg™.

1.E.5. Do not copy, display, perform, distribute or redistribute this electronic work, or any part of this electronic work, without prominently displaying the sentence set forth in paragraph 1.E.1 with active links or immediate access to the full terms of the Project Gutenberg™ License.

1.E.6. You may convert to and distribute this work in any binary, compressed, marked up, nonproprietary or proprietary form, including any word processing or hypertext form. However, if you provide access to or distribute copies of a Project Gutenberg™ work in a format other than “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other format used in the official version posted on the official Project Gutenberg™ website ([www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org)), you must, at no additional cost, fee or expense to the user, provide a copy, a means of exporting a copy, or a means of obtaining a copy upon request, of the work in its original “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other form. Any alternate format must include the full Project Gutenberg™ License as specified in paragraph 1.E.1.

1.E.7. Do not charge a fee for access to, viewing, displaying, performing, copying or distributing any Project Gutenberg™ works unless you comply with paragraph 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.8. You may charge a reasonable fee for copies of or providing access to or distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works provided that:

- • You pay a royalty fee of 20% of the gross profits you derive from the use of Project Gutenberg™ works calculated using the method you already use to calculate your applicable taxes. The fee is owed to the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, but he has agreed to donate royalties under this paragraph to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation. Royalty payments must be paid within 60 days following each date on which you prepare (or are legally required to prepare) your periodic tax returns. Royalty payments should be clearly marked as such and sent to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation at the address specified in Section 4, “Information about donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation.”
- • You provide a full refund of any money paid by a user who notifies you in writing (or by e-mail) within 30 days of receipt that s/he does not agree to the terms of the full Project Gutenberg™ License. You must require such a user to return or destroy all copies of the works possessed in a physical medium and discontinue all use of and all access to other copies of Project Gutenberg™ works.
- • You provide, in accordance with paragraph 1.F.3, a full refund of any money paid for a work or a replacement copy, if a defect in the electronic work is discovered and reported to you within 90 days of receipt of the work.
- • You comply with all other terms of this agreement for free distribution of Project Gutenberg™ works.

1.E.9. If you wish to charge a fee or distribute a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work or group of works on different terms than are set forth in this agreement, you must obtain permission in writing from the



Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the manager of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark. Contact the Foundation as set forth in Section 3 below.

1.F.

1.F.1. Project Gutenberg volunteers and employees expend considerable effort to identify, do copyright research on, transcribe and proofread works not protected by U.S. copyright law in creating the Project Gutenberg™ collection. Despite these efforts, Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, and the medium on which they may be stored, may contain “Defects,” such as, but not limited to, incomplete, inaccurate or corrupt data, transcription errors, a copyright or other intellectual property infringement, a defective or damaged disk or other medium, a computer virus, or computer codes that damage or cannot be read by your equipment.

1.F.2. LIMITED WARRANTY, DISCLAIMER OF DAMAGES - Except for the “Right of Replacement or Refund” described in paragraph 1.F.3, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, and any other party distributing a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work under this agreement, disclaim all liability to you for damages, costs and expenses, including legal fees. YOU AGREE THAT YOU HAVE NO REMEDIES FOR NEGLIGENCE, STRICT LIABILITY, BREACH OF WARRANTY OR BREACH OF CONTRACT EXCEPT THOSE PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH 1.F.3. YOU AGREE THAT THE FOUNDATION, THE TRADEMARK OWNER, AND ANY DISTRIBUTOR UNDER THIS AGREEMENT WILL NOT BE LIABLE TO YOU FOR ACTUAL, DIRECT, INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, PUNITIVE OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES EVEN IF YOU GIVE NOTICE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGE.

1.F.3. LIMITED RIGHT OF REPLACEMENT OR REFUND - If you discover a defect in this electronic work within 90 days of receiving it, you can receive a refund of the money (if any) you paid for it by sending a written explanation to the person you received the work from. If you received the work on a physical medium, you must return the medium with your written explanation. The person or entity that provided you with the defective work may elect to provide a replacement copy in lieu of a refund. If you received the work electronically, the person or entity providing it to you may choose to give you a second opportunity to receive the work electronically in lieu of a refund. If the second copy is also defective, you may demand a refund in writing without further opportunities to fix the problem.

1.F.4. Except for the limited right of replacement or refund set forth in paragraph 1.F.3, this work is provided to you ‘AS-IS’, WITH NO OTHER WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR ANY PURPOSE.

1.F.5. Some states do not allow disclaimers of certain implied warranties or the exclusion or limitation of certain types of damages. If any disclaimer or limitation set forth in this agreement violates the law of the state applicable to this agreement, the agreement shall be interpreted to make the maximum disclaimer or limitation permitted by the applicable state law. The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of this agreement shall not void the remaining provisions.

1.F.6. INDEMNITY - You agree to indemnify and hold the Foundation, the trademark owner, any agent or employee of the Foundation, anyone providing copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in accordance with this agreement, and any volunteers associated with the production, promotion and distribution of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, harmless from all liability, costs and expenses, including legal fees, that arise directly or indirectly from any of the following which you do or cause to

occur: (a) distribution of this or any Project Gutenberg™ work, (b) alteration, modification, or additions or deletions to any Project Gutenberg™ work, and (c) any Defect you cause.

## **Section 2. Information about the Mission of Project Gutenberg™**

Project Gutenberg™ is synonymous with the free distribution of electronic works in formats readable by the widest variety of computers including obsolete, old, middle-aged and new computers. It exists because of the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and donations from people in all walks of life.

Volunteers and financial support to provide volunteers with the assistance they need are critical to reaching Project Gutenberg™'s goals and ensuring that the Project Gutenberg™ collection will remain freely available for generations to come. In 2001, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation was created to provide a secure and permanent future for Project Gutenberg™ and future generations. To learn more about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation and how your efforts and donations can help, see Sections 3 and 4 and the Foundation information page at [www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org).

## **Section 3. Information about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation**

The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) educational corporation organized under the laws of the state of Mississippi and granted tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service. The Foundation's EIN or federal tax identification number is 64-6221541. Contributions to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation are tax deductible to the full extent permitted by U.S. federal laws and your state's laws.

The Foundation's business office is located at 809 North 1500 West, Salt Lake City, UT 84116, (801) 596-1887. Email contact links and up to date contact information can be found at the Foundation's website and official page at [www.gutenberg.org/contact](http://www.gutenberg.org/contact)

## **Section 4. Information about Donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation**

Project Gutenberg™ depends upon and cannot survive without widespread public support and donations to carry out its mission of increasing the number of public domain and licensed works that can be freely distributed in machine-readable form accessible by the widest array of equipment including outdated equipment. Many small donations (\$1 to \$5,000) are particularly important to maintaining tax exempt status with the IRS.

The Foundation is committed to complying with the laws regulating charities and charitable donations in all 50 states of the United States. Compliance requirements are not uniform and it takes a considerable effort, much paperwork and many fees to meet and keep up with these requirements. We do not solicit donations in locations where we have not received written confirmation of compliance. To SEND DONATIONS or determine the status of compliance for any particular state visit [www.gutenberg.org/donate](http://www.gutenberg.org/donate).

While we cannot and do not solicit contributions from states where we have not met the solicitation requirements, we know of no prohibition against accepting unsolicited donations from donors in such states who approach us with offers to donate.

International donations are gratefully accepted, but we cannot make any statements concerning tax treatment of donations received from outside the United States. U.S. laws alone swamp our small staff.

Please check the Project Gutenberg web pages for current donation methods and addresses. Donations are accepted in a number of other ways including checks, online payments and credit card donations. To donate, please visit: [www.gutenberg.org/donate](http://www.gutenberg.org/donate)

## **Section 5. General Information About Project Gutenberg™ electronic works**

Professor Michael S. Hart was the originator of the Project Gutenberg™ concept of a library of electronic works that could be freely shared with anyone. For forty years, he produced and distributed Project Gutenberg™ eBooks with only a loose network of volunteer support.

Project Gutenberg™ eBooks are often created from several printed editions, all of which are confirmed as not protected by copyright in the U.S. unless a copyright notice is included. Thus, we do not necessarily keep eBooks in compliance with any particular paper edition.

Most people start at our website which has the main PG search facility: [www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org).

This website includes information about Project Gutenberg™, including how to make donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, how to help produce our new eBooks, and how to subscribe to our email newsletter to hear about new eBooks.