

THE AKOND OF SWAT.

by

EDWARD LEAR

Who, or why, or which, or *what*,

Is the Akond of SWAT?



Is he tall or short, or dark or fair?

Does he sit on a stool or a sofa or chair,

or SQUAT?



The Akond of Swat?

Is he wise or foolish, young or old?

Does he drink his soup and his coffee cold,

or HOT,

The Akond of Swat?

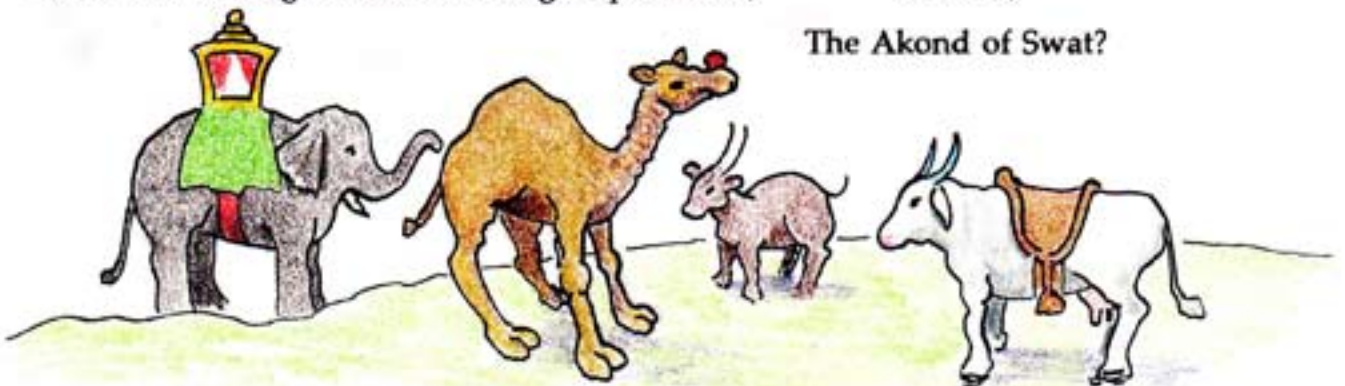


Does he sing or whistle, jabber or talk,

And when riding abroad does he gallop or walk,

or TROT,

The Akond of Swat?

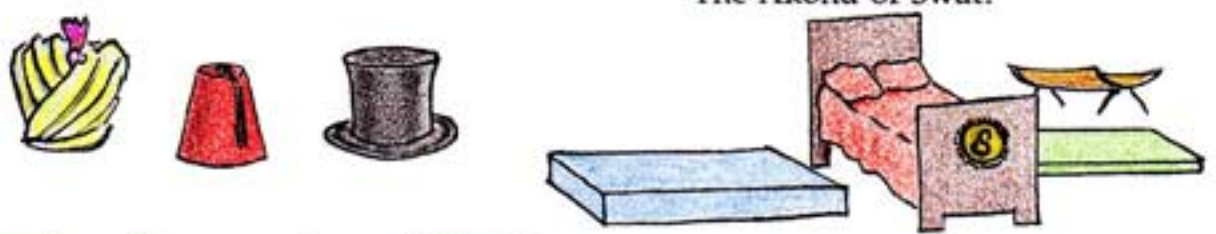


Does he wear a turban, a fez, or a hat?

Does he sleep on a mattress, a bed, or a mat,

or a COT,

The Akond of Swat?



When he writes a copy in round-hand size,

Does he cross his T's and finish his I's

with a DOT,

The Akond of Swat?

the Nazim of Hyderabad is certainly not the Akond of Swat!



Can he write a letter concisely clear

Without a speck or a smudge or smear

OR BLOT,

The Akond of Swat?

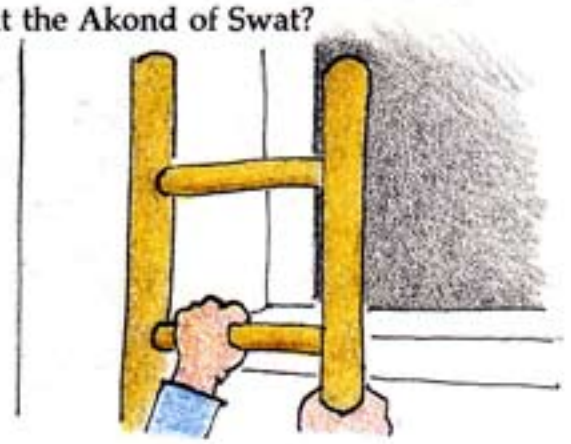
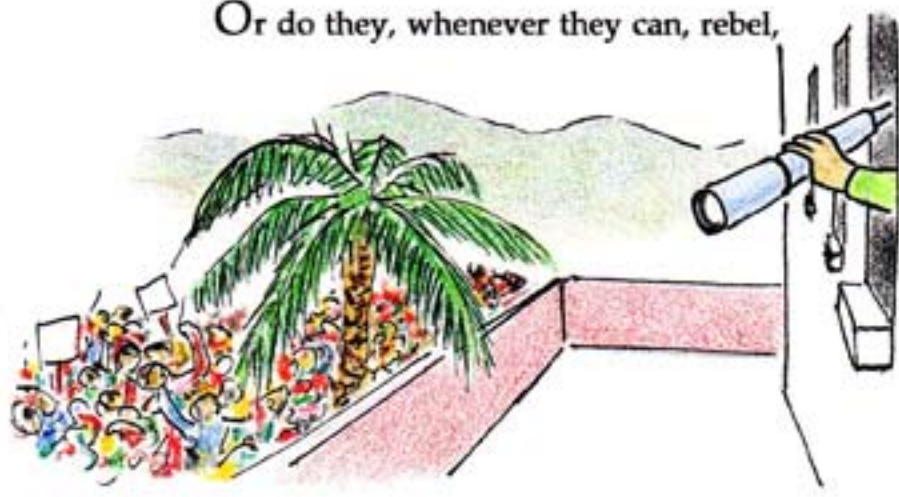


Do his people like him extremely well?

Or do they, whenever they can, rebel,

OR PLOT,

At the Akond of Swat?

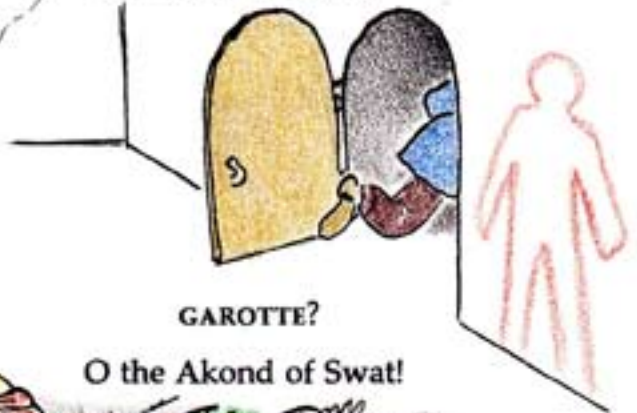
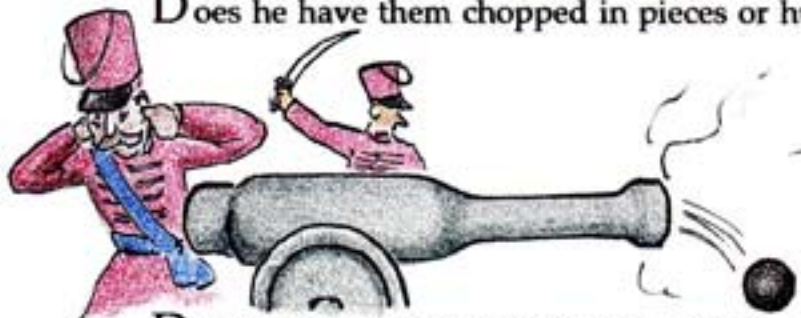


If he catches them then, either old or young,

Does he have them chopped in pieces or hung,

or shot,

The Akond of Swat?

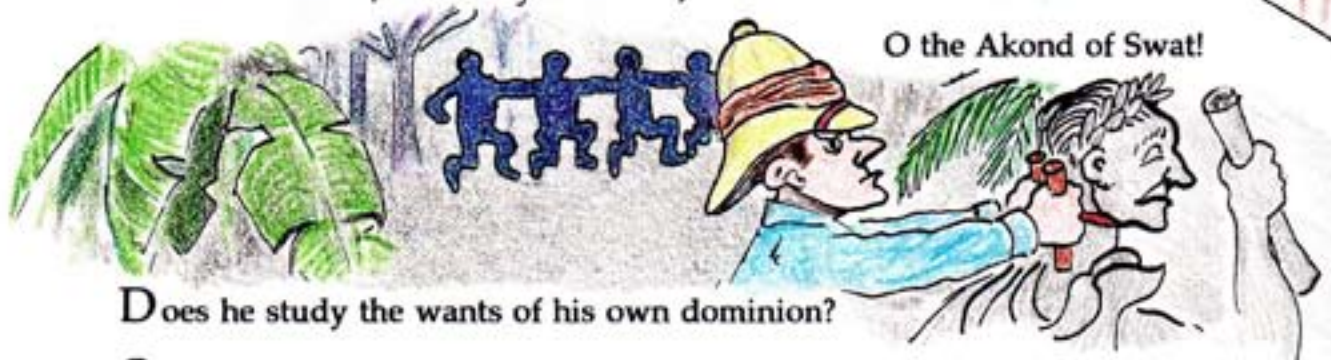


Do his people prig in the lanes or park?

Or even at times, when days are dark,

GAROTTE?

O the Akond of Swat!



Does he study the wants of his own dominion?

Or does n't he care for public opinion

a JOT,

The Akond of Swat?

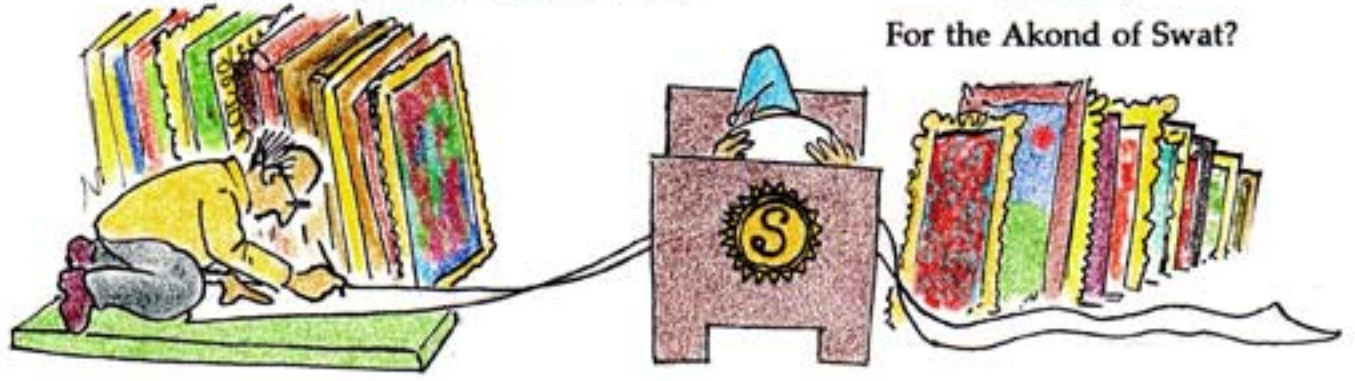


To amuse his mind do his people show him

Pictures, or any one's last new poem,

or WHAT,

For the Akond of Swat?



At night if he suddenly screams and wakes,

Do they bring him only a few small cakes,

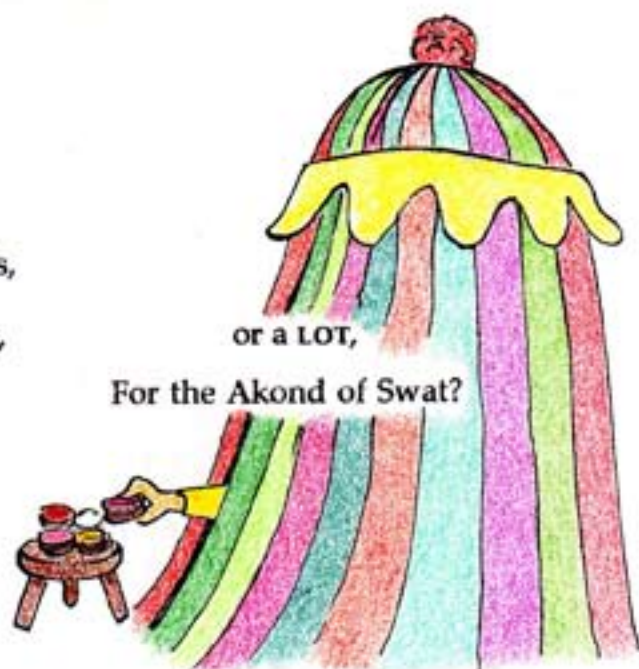


Does he live on turnips, tea, or tripe?

Does he like his shawl to be marked with a stripe,

or a LOT,

For the Akond of Swat?



Does he like to lie on his back in a boat

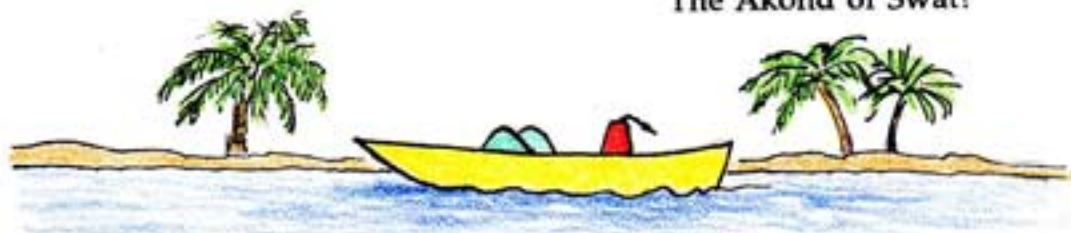
or a DOT,
The Akond of Swat?



Does he like to lie on his back in a boat

Like the lady who lived in that isle remote,

SHALLOTT,
The Akond of Swat?



Is he quiet, or always making a fuss?

Is his steward a Swiss or a Swede or a Russ,

or a SCOT,
The Akond of Swat?



Does he like to sit by the calm blue wave?

Or to sleep and snore in a dark green cave,

or a GROT,

The Akond of Swat?



Does he drink small beer from a silver jug?

Or a bowl? or a glass? or a cup? or a mug?

or a POT,

The Akond of Swat?



Does he beat his wife with a gold-topped pipe,

When she lets the gooseberries grow too ripe,

or ROT,

The Akond of Swat?



Does he wear a white tie when he dines with friends,

And tie it neat in a bow with ends,

or a KNOT,

The Akond of Swat?



Does he like new cream, and hate mince-pies?

When he looks at the sun does he wink his eyes, or NOT,
The Akond of Swat?



Does he teach his subjects to roast and bake?

Does he sail about on an inland lake, in a YACHT,
The Akond of Swat?



Some one, or nobody, knows I wot

Who or which or why or what

Is the Akond of Swat!



NOTE: — For the existence of this potentate see Indian newspapers, *passim*.
The proper way to read the verses is to make an immense emphasis on the monosyllabic rhymes, which indeed ought to be shouted out by a chorus.

The poem was illustrated (if not illuminated) by Robert D. Sutherland, having himself returned from a trip to India in 1997.