



Tom Tit Tot, An Essay on Savage Philosophy in Folk-Tale

Edward Clodd

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IN commenting on the prominent example of the conversion of the old epics into allegories which is supplied by Tennyson's Idylls of the King, whereby the legends 'lose their dream reality without gaining the reality of ordinary life,' Mr. Leslie Stephen remarks that 'as soon as the genuine inhabitants of Fairyland can be interpreted as three virtues or three graces, they cease to fascinate' him. With that confession most people will agree. For alike to those who told the story, and to their hearers, these 'inhabitants of Fairyland' were no buckram-clad personifications of Moralities like the characters in the Mystery Plays of four centuries ago.

About the Author:

"Edward Clodd (b. Margate, Kent 1840-07-01 – d. 1930) was an English banker, writer and anthropologist. He cultivated a very wide circle of literary and scientific friends, who periodically met at Whitsun gatherings at his home at Aldeburgh, Suffolk.

Although born in Margate, where his father was captain of a trading brig, the family moved soon afterwards to Aldeburgh, his father's ancestors deriving from Parham and Framlingham in Suffolk. Born to a Baptist family, his parents wished him to become a minister, but he declined and instead went into accountancy and banking, moving to London in 1855. He worked for the London Joint Stock Bank from 1872 to 1915, and had residences both in London and Suffolk.

Clodd was an early follower of the work of Charles Darwin and had personal acquaintance with Thomas Huxley and Herbert Spencer. He wrote biographies of all three men, and worked to popularise evolution through books like *The Childhood of the World* and *The Story of Creation: A Plain Account of Evolution*.

He was also a keen folklorist, joining the Folklore Society from 1878, and later becoming its president. He was chairman of the Rationalist Press Association from 1906 to 1913. He was a Suffolk Secretary of the Prehistoric Society of East Anglia from 1914-1916. He was a prominent member and officer of the Omar Khayyam Club or 'O.K. Club', and organized the planting of the rose from Omar Khayyam's tomb onto the grave of Edward Fitzgerald at Boulge, Suffolk, at the Centenary gathering.

Clodd had a talent for friendship, and liked to entertain his friends at literary gatherings in Aldeburgh at his seafront home there, Strafford House, at Whitsuntide. Prominent among his literary friends and correspondents were Grant Allen, George Meredith, Thomas Hardy, George Gissing, Edward Fitzgerald, Andrew Lang, Cotter Morison, Samuel Butler, Mary Kingsley and Mrs Lynn Linton: he also counted Sir Henry Thompson, Sir William Huggins, Sir Laurence Gomme, Sir John Rhys, Paul du Chailly, Edward Whymper, Alfred Comyn Lyall, York Powell, William Holman Hunt, Sir E. Ray Lankester and many others in his immediate circle. His hospitality and friendship was an important cement in the development of their social connections."

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