

**SETTLING THE SCORE WITH MR. OGDEN NASH  
FOR THE SEVEN SPIRITUAL AGES OF MRS. MARMADUKE MOORE  
AND THEREBY ACHIEVING  
IF NOT A BETTER VERSE AT LEAST A LONGER TITLE**

by Roger White

*from Another Song, Another Season*

George Ronald, Oxford, 1979

- L The Balete and others who speak Setswana  
should get along / but — they don't wanna.
- J The Afrikaner and the !Xhosa / are not drawing any Xclosa.
- L The French and Germans hate the Dutch / who don't like anybody much.
- J The British view is quite reprehensible; they find all others incomprehensible.  
Their Empire fell that fatal night / God proved not Anglican — nor white.  
They don't like each other, them's the grim facts / (It's a matter of 'aitches and  
syntax). Cockneys don't know a spondee<sup>1</sup> from a dactyl.<sup>2</sup>
- J (neither do I, as a matter of facty). [And] The Irish idea is even eerier — "The  
likes of them? Sure, we're superior!"
- L No doubt amid the Arctic snow / someone hates the Eskimo. Pity him, in his most  
important span, / only the walrus to feel more-important than.

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<sup>1</sup> A foot of two syllables, both of which are long in quantitative meter or stressed in accentual meter

<sup>2</sup> A foot of three syllables, one long followed by two short in quantitative meter, or one stressed followed by two unstressed in accentual meter, as in *gently* and *humanly*.

- J The Congo Pygmy's deeply loathed / by Africans more fully clothed.
- L So 'spit-in-yer-eye' is the loud retort.
- J (hard for the Pygmy, he's so short).
- L Canada is a hate-free nation / But just don't mention miscegenation. For white man's standards one preserves / by putting Indians on reserves / and placing Blacks in a sorry plight:
- J 'You are equal—I am right!'
- L Americans discard all such priorities, democratically mistreating all minorities.
- J Some think the Vietnamese are nice / though its rather a case of let-'em-eat-rice.
- L There are those who have aversion / to anybody speaking Persian; / no doubt one day a foe will sunder them / pulling their carpets out from under them.
- J Persian calligraphy gives Arabs the giggles, / they much preferring their own strange squiggles.
- L The Iroquois and Navaho hate lots of folks they don't even know while Polynesians (with which little rhymes) / say it's best if you're like Heinz.. Swedes and Finns and other Caucasians / suffer each other / and loathe all Asians.
- J Historically, Brahmans detest the untouchable / which some find rather much-

too-muchable.

L Those whose script is Sinhalese / quite detest the Japanese / who, in turn, avoid  
the sainted / Lapplander, though not acquainted.

J Samoans feel if you meet a Papuan / it's almost a cinch to be your ruin, / while  
Papuan say if you meet a Samoan / he's bound to hit you, / at least for a loan.

L Time-honoured tongues are declared now extraneous  
to the woe of the Sard and the Alsace-Lorraineous.

J The Tlingit dimly view the Haida / and other groups they can't abaida.

L Some [said] the Negro freedom fighter / could come to dine — if he were whiter.

J One view that there was no appeal from / whites existed for Blacks to steal from.

L Yellow hates brown and in addition, / both deplore the beige Mauritian.

J Israelis love all people, though — ask the Arabs, they should know /  
but gentile heathens they eschew / which seems the Kosher thing to do  
their theory being, if you can buy it, / that God prescribed the Jewish diet,

L while Orientals think themselves most pious / because he designed their eyes on  
the bias.

J In Latin climes the noble Quechua / dislike the Spanish you can betchua.

L Loving the Russian is no longer vogue, / once hailed as hero, / now seen as

rogue.)

The problem one gathers is largely political, /allegiances being essentially cyclical.

J For a trustworthy guide on whom to vent pique /  
consult current issues of *Newsweek* /  
or write a best-seller called, let's say,  
*Whom to Snub on Five Dollars a Day*.

L Mention the British to the Buganda / and in the hospital you may landa.

J Cannibals manners are highly reproachable /  
(they want to know if you're par-boil or poachable).  
If asked to dine think twice or then you / may find yourself on tomorrow's menu.  
Their customs being so detestable / one can only hope to prove indigestible.  
They should concentrate on erudition / and not so much on deglutition<sup>3</sup>.

L We race to the planets to spread racial blight  
who'll be the first anti-Venusianite?

J Altogether the world's a mess, / it's rife with tension, / J it's in distress.  
Called into being a strange fate awaits you:  
the moment you're born, / somebody hates you.

L Now, none can impersonate Ogden Nash / but somebody had to settle his hash  
(his skill's a fact over which I'm not wrangling;  
none left participles more amusingly dangling)  
and though the result may be deplorable / it's brings us directly

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<sup>3</sup> The act or process of swallowing.

J (at last!)

L to the morable  
and if morals are something you just can't endure  
reflect on the fate of Mrs. Marmaduke Moore.

J Dare one pay heed to the heavenly call?

L become a Baha'i

L/J and love them all!