

## *ii. A Helping Hand.*

The lurking child explores,  
as I watch and fully understand  
the burden of parental chores -  
sailing up and down the coast,  
building homes and salting fish.

It is my earnest wish,  
to offer a helping hand  
as every neighbour should,  
but I warn the children not to boast  
about our antics in the mud.

I lie still as a fallen tree,  
as all the children eagerly  
run up and down my back.  
At times they pretend  
there is a fortress to defend  
and crouch behind my battlements  
ready for some barbarous attack.

Some will go for a ride –  
sitting astride  
as I amble peaceably  
and, if they have the sense  
to hold on very tight,  
I just might  
take them for a swim.

It wounds me horribly  
to see my noble intentions  
impugned by faces grim  
with lurid inventions.

It is so libellous and quite unfair.  
Who invents these overstated fears?  
Why all this half-baked reasoning?

I am quite aware  
that only with the passing years  
can human flesh acquire due seasoning.

I like my meat  
tough decrepit flavoursome and sweet.

