

**Kubla Khan comically butcher'd on the occasion of
the sixtieth birthday of Prof A. C. Fabian FRS OBE
FRAS PhD MA BSc Esq. with sincerest apologies to
Mr Samuel Taylor Coleridge Esq.**

Kubla Khan

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A software stratagem decree:
Where hot, reflecting plasma ran
Through cosmos measureless to man
Down to a singularity.

So Kubla's mind, that fertile ground
With lines of code was girdled round:
And there were jet-lobes bright with sinuous rills,
Where blossomed many a buoyant radio bubble;
And here were quasars older than the hills,
and controversy, and trouble.

But oh! that deep potential well which slanted
Down the disc athwart a hot corona!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er amid the dragging frames was haunted
By multiple disc images of a higher order!
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,
As if space-time in ecstasy were breathing,
A mighty fountain momentarily was forced:

*In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree:
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.*

*So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round:
And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills,
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.*

*But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momentarily was forced:*

Amid whose swift half-intermittent burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Up the radio jet and into the tail:
And mid these dancing blobs were implications
That flung up multitudes of publications.
Six decades laboured he in ceaseless motion
Until his vast citations ran
Across the cosmos measureless to man
And papers flowed from every notion:
And mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
The funding body prophesying war!

Not for him the grandee's leisure,
Though committees fill some days;
The cosmos still remains his pleasure,
With its hot, enticing ways;
And that is his miracle of rare device:
A mastership of science, and of vice!¹

Some students at a terminal
In a vision he once saw;
They were a numerous brigade.
Whilst at the terminal they played,
He blinked his eyes, and there were more;

*Amid whose swift half-intermittent burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
It flung up momentarily the sacred river.
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war!*

*The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves;
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!*

*A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw:
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on her dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Abora.*

¹ 'Vice-master' of Darwin college

The sound of joyous typing,
Their symphony and song,
To such deep delight did win them
That with music loud and long
They issued forth from Kubla's lair;
In such numbers as would soon suffice
To spread his empire everywhere!
And they did cry, Beware! Beware!
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice
And close your eyes with holy dread.
For he on honey-dew hath fed
And drunk the milk of paradise.

Alex Blustin with a lot of help from Samuel Taylor
Coleridge

*Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win me
That with music loud and long
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome! those caves of ice!
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed
And drunk the milk of Paradise.*

Samuel Taylor Coleridge