

FATHER WILLIAM

By Rev. J. Stainer (apologies to Lewis Carol)

**"You are old, Father William and raised in the day
of Matins, Long sermons and Greek:
And yet your short talks are both pungent and gay:
Can you account for the hep talk you speak?"**

**"In my youth," Father William replied, "I was taught
All languages strange, dull, and dead;
But today, vice versa, I know that I ought
To try living language instead."**

**"You are old, Father William, as I mentioned before,
And your bones are arthritic and thin:
How come that you genuflect twice to the floor
Both when you go out and come in?"**

**"In college," said the sage, "I was early constrained
To a disciplined spiritual life;
And now that I've stature and dignity gained,
I'm kept to the same by my wife."**

**"You are old, Father William, but your ways are not set;
In the Service, I note, you don't falter;
How can it be that so modern you get
As to face us behind the new altar?"**

**"In my youth," said the canon, " I was trusting and green;
On the people I turned then my back;
But later I found, if my eyes could be seen,
The choir were not nearly so slack!"**

**"You are grey," said the youth, "and yet in your age
You preach with uncomfortable vigour;
How is it that Sunday by Sunday your rage
Makes of Woolwich so twisted a figure?"**

**"Be off," said the cleric, "to the follies of youth
You have added no dimness of wit;
Since the days of my cradle I've fought for the truth,
So now are you hearing me? git !"**

Presented to Rev. W. S. Beames on the occasion of his retirement as Rector of St. Saviour's Parish, Penticton. B.C. and Rural Dean of South Okanagan. 30th June, 1956.