

## **Chapter 3** **Illustrators of the Grotesque and the Gothic**

*Probably no images are utterly silent.*<sup>236</sup>

The main aim of the present dissertation is to show that Burton's works can be considered as a remediation of a past tradition of grotesque and Gothic illustrations for children. I have identified this tradition with the work of some illustrators who lived between the nineteenth and the twenty-first century. The first two chapters, thus, are meant to provide a historical and theoretical background to the development of the works specifically discussed in the following chapters. As a matter of fact, I am convinced that it would be almost impossible to understand in which ways Burton remediates the grotesque and Gothic tradition of children's book illustrations without taking into consideration, at once, its origin, development and main features.

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<sup>236</sup> Callois, Roger, *The Writing of Stones*, Translated by Barbara Bray, Charlottesville, University Press of Virginia, 1985 (*L'Écriture des pierres*, Genève, Editions d'Art Albert Skira, 1970), in Warner, Marina, *Phantasmagoria: Spirit Visions, Metaphors, and Media into the Twenty-first Century*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 1.

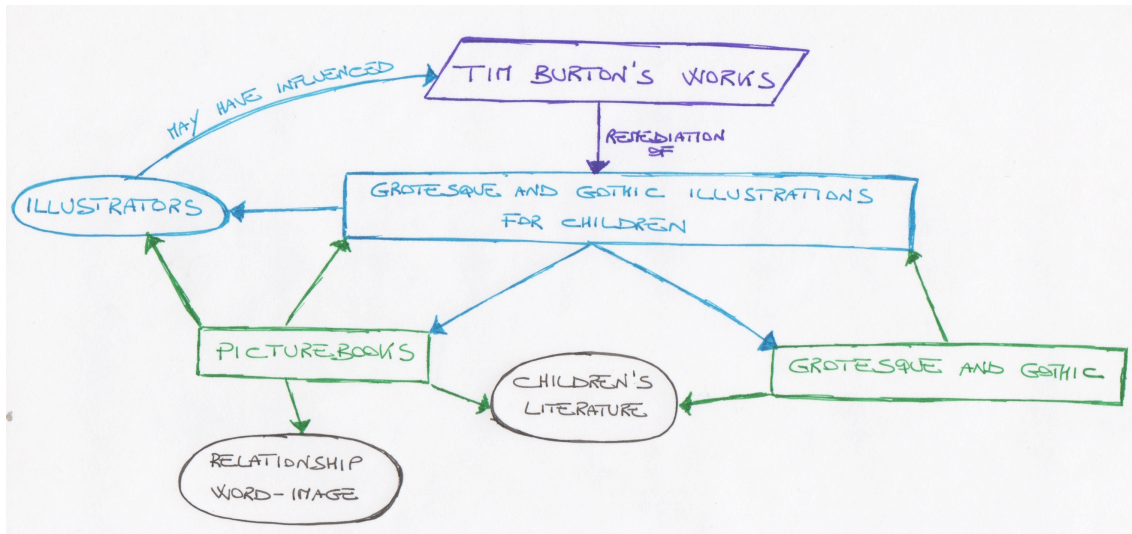


Figure 17 - Conceptual Map

In the present chapter I examine the works of some illustrators who lived between the nineteenth and the twenty-first century. These artists, as well as their works, have not been chosen at random. As far as the lapse of time is concerned, Whalley and Chester remark that from about the middle of the nineteenth century onwards “current artistic motifs began to appear in children’s books, as they tended to reflect more closely the situation in adult illustrated books, or in paintings and prints – the artist-illustrator was at work.”<sup>237</sup> This is also the period in which adults try to cut out grotesque and Gothic elements from children’s books. Contrary to this trend, all the illustrators here discussed allow the grotesque and the Gothic to survive, and the trend extends to the present day, becoming one of the most important features in children’s literature. Their style, in fact, is strongly characterised by the presence of grotesque and Gothic elements and it is my intention to show that their imaginative universe may have influenced the Burtonesque style.

The illustrators will be examined in chronological order, according to their date of birth. I shall briefly dwell on their lives and take into consideration their most significant work. My selection has focused on those books which, most significantly, provide common features with Burton’s artistic production.

<sup>237</sup> Whalley, Joyce Irene, Chester, Tessa Rose, *A History of Children’s Book Illustration*, cit., p. 53.

### 3.1 Alfred Crowquill



Figure 18 - Alfred Crowquill

#### 3.1.1 Life

Alfred Crowquill is the pseudonym of the illustrator and writer Alfred Henry Forrester, born in London on September 10, 1804. Literally the term ‘crowquill’ refers to the quill taken from a crow, used for writing and drawing, but we do not have any precise information concerning the reason behind the choice of this pseudonym or its exact meaning. It is known, however, that originally this pseudonym concealed the identity both of Alfred and of his elder brother Charles Robert Forrester. When, in 1843, Charles decided to give up his literary career, the pseudonym started to be associated with Alfred only.<sup>238</sup>

The father of Charles and Alfred was a notary and after his death Charles succeeded in the business. Alfred was connected with his brother, but he never became a sworn notary and preferred to follow his bent for the art of drawing. He realised his first caricatures as an amateur before 1822. Between 1822 and 1823 he submitted some

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<sup>238</sup> Sources: Houfe, Simon. “Forrester, Alfred Henry (1804-1872).” In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, edited by H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison. Oxford University Press, 2004. <http://www.oxforddnb.com/index/101009893/Alfred-Forrester>. (accessed February 28, 2014); Stephen, Leslie, Lee, Sidney, eds., *The Dictionary of National Biography: From the Earliest Times to 1900*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1917, vol. VII. Rpt. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1993, pp. 445-447.

contributions to the illustrated periodicals *The Hive* and *The Mirror*. Subsequently, he applied himself to the study of drawing, wood-engraving, modelling and etching on steel and started to work as an engraver on several books. However, the success arrived with two single prints: *Beauties of Brighton* (1825) and *Dover Coach 5 O' Clock Morning* (1826).



Figure 19 - Alfred Crowquill, *Beauties of Brighton* (1825)



Figure 20 - Alfred Crowquill, *Dover Coach 5 O' Clock Morning* (1826)

From this moment on, he started a very prolific career as a book illustrator and cartoonist. As a cartoonist, he contributed to the most important illustrated periodicals of the time, such as *Bentley's Miscellany* (1840-41) and *Punch* (1842-44). The most lasting collaboration was with *The Illustrated London News*, from 1844 to 1870.



Figure 21 - Alfred Crowquill, *Whys for the Wise* (*The Illustrated London News* supplement, 1849)

As a book illustrator, instead, Crowquill's production can be divided into two groups: works only illustrated by him – sometimes in collaboration with other artists – and works written and illustrated by him. Among the books illustrated by Crowquill there are: *Absurdities in Prose and Verse* by Charles Robert Forrester (1827), *Comic Latin Grammar* by Percival Leigh (1840; with John Leech), *Phantasmagoria of Fun* by Charles Robert Forrester (1843), *The Book of Ballads* by Bon Gaultier (1849), and *The Travels of Baron Munchausen* by Rudolf Erich Raspe (1859). The books both written and illustrated by Crowquill include the following titles: *Alfred Crowquill's Guide to Wandering Places* (1839), *The Pictorial Grammar* (c1843; reprinted posthumously in 1875), *The Tutor's Assistant, or Comic Figures of Arithmetic* (1843), *Fun* (1854), *Picture Fables* (1854), *Fairy Tales* (1857), and *Tales for Children* (1860).

Between 1845 and 1846 he exhibited some of his pen-and-ink sketches at the Royal Academy. In that period he started to devote himself to theatre, realising stage sceneries and many pantomimes and transformation scenes. He also had a great success as a modeller. In 1851, for example, he produced a statuette of the Duke of Wellington which he presented to Queen Victoria. Between 1860s and 1870s he added to the profession of illustrator and cartoonist the activity of book covers and Christmas cards designer. Alfred Crowquill died in London on May 26, 1872.

### 3.1.2 Works

In *A History of Children's Book Illustration*, Whalley and Chester place Alfred Crowquill “among the well-known illustrators whose names appeared for the first time in children's books in the 1840s”<sup>239</sup> and they pinpoint his influence on the development of children's picturebooks. Crowquill's works, in fact, “showed a new tendency entering children's book illustration, a facetiousness that was to become quite marked in the later work of a number of book artists.”<sup>240</sup>

It may be suggested that this “facetiousness” comes from the taste for caricature that characterises not only the cartoons Crowquill realised for the illustrated periodicals,

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<sup>239</sup> Whalley, Joyce Irene, Chester, Tessa Rose, *A History of Children's Book Illustration*, cit. p. 56.

<sup>240</sup> *Ibid.*

but also his illustrations for children's books. As underlined before,<sup>241</sup> the spread of caricature, which occurred in England during the eighteenth century, contributed to a further development of the term grotesque, which started to be applied also to the literary field and which became synonymous with odd, unnatural, bizarre, strange and funny and caricatural. Caricature comes from the Italian verb *caricare* which means to load, to overload. The term started to be used in Italy during the early Baroque in relation to some drawings realised by Annibale Carracci.<sup>242</sup>



Figure 22 - Annibale Carracci, *Due Filosofi*

According to Carracci, the caricaturist's aim is the same of the classical artist because

Both see the lasting truth beneath the surface of mere outward appearance. The one may strive to visualise the perfect form and to realise it in his work, the other to

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<sup>241</sup> Cfr. pp. 43-44.

<sup>242</sup> Annibale Carracci was born in Bologna in 1560. His cousin Lodovico was a painter and he introduced Annibale and his older brother Agostino to the art of painting. Together they founded a school for artists called the Accademia degli Incamminati and they realised the frescoes in the Palazzo Magnani. In 1595 Annibale moved to Rome to work for the cardinal Odoardo Farnese who ordered him some frescoes for the principal floor of his palace. After the frescoes in the Palazzo Farnese, he realised his most famous religious paintings, *Domine, Quo Vadis?* (1601-1602) and *Pietà* (1607). He then worked to some paintings for the Palazzo Aldobrandini. He died in Rome in 1609. *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, s. v. "Annibale Carracci". <http://www.britannica.com/pros.lib.unimi.it/EBchecked/topic/96844/Annibale-Carracci>. (accessed February 28, 2014).

grasp the perfect deformity, and thus reveal the very essence of a personality. A good caricature, like every work of art, is more true than reality itself.<sup>243</sup>

Caricature spread in England thanks to the custom of the Grand Tour and thanks to the publication of the book *Imitations from Drawings – A Folio of caricatures after Italian Masters*. The volume, published in 1739 by Arthur Pond, included also some caricatures by Carracci. In *English Caricaturists and Graphic Humourists of the Nineteenth Century*, Graham Everitt notices that by the time in which Crowquill started his career, caricature had changed losing the coarseness and the exaggeration which had characterised it so far.<sup>244</sup> Everitt also underlines that the term caricature was gradually replaced by the word cartoon.<sup>245</sup> In Victorian times caricature became a key-feature of illustrated periodicals, serving the intentions of fun and satire. Alfie Bown states that British illustrated periodicals in the mid nineteenth century had “a debt to French traditions of comic journalism and caricature”,<sup>246</sup> as shown by the fact that when it was founded, in 1841, the illustrated periodical *Punch* carried the subtitle *The London Charivari*. That was a clear reference to *Le Charivari*, a daily paper started in Paris in 1832 by the caricaturists Charles Philippon.<sup>247</sup>

As already stated, caricature is the key-element in Crowquill’s production not only as a cartoonist, but also as a book illustrator and this is particularly evident in the two

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<sup>243</sup> Lambourne, Lionel, *An Introduction to Caricature*, London, Her Majesty’s Stationer’s Office, 1983, p. 7.

<sup>244</sup> Everitt, Graham, *English Caricaturists and Graphic Humourists of the Nineteenth Century: How They Illustrated and Interpreted Their Times*, London, Swan Sonnenschein & Co., 1893, pp. 2-5.

<sup>245</sup> A full-page illustration in a paper or periodical; esp. applied to those in the comic papers relating to current events. Now, a humorous or topical drawing (of any size) in a newspaper, etc. "cartoon, n.". OED Online. December 2013. Oxford University Press. <http://www.oed.com.pros.lib.unimi.it/view/Entry/28312?rkey=jzAdQ&result=1&isAdvanced=false> (accessed February 28, 2014).

<sup>246</sup> Brown, Alfie, “Caricature in Paris and London: Dickens, Daumier and Grandville”, in Leroy, Maxime, ed., *Charles Dickens and Europe*, Newcastle upon Tyne, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, pp. 168-182, p. 171.

<sup>247</sup> Charles Philippon was born in Lyon in 1806. In 1823 he moved to Paris where he began to draw caricatures for a living. In 1830 he published *La Caricature*, a journal of political satire which was suppressed five years later after having received several legal actions. In 1832 he also started to produce a daily paper called *Le Charivari* which contained a new caricature every day. His next publication of importance, *Le Journal pour Rire* (“The Journal for Laughing”; later *Le Journal Amusant*), appeared in 1848 in the form of large newspaper sheets filled with woodcuts. As an artist, his best-known invention was a drawing that depicted the gradual transformation of Louis-Philippe into the shape of a pear. *La Poire* became the common symbol of the king, and all Philippon’s artists used it in their caricatures. They were a notable group including Honoré Daumier and Gustave Doré. His effect on caricature in France, as well as in England, was considerable and decisive, as was his influence on the development of lithography as an artistic and commercial medium. *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, s. v. “**Charles Philippon**”. <http://www.britannica.com.pros.lib.unimi.it/EBchecked/topic/456298/Charles-Philippon>. (accessed February 28, 2014).



books I have decided to take into consideration, that is *The Pictorial Grammar* and *The Tutor's Assistant, or Comic Figures of Arithmetic*.

*The Pictorial Grammar*

*The Pictorial Grammar* was published in London by Harvey and Darton probably in 1843. As the title suggests, the book is an illustrated grammar. On the front cover there is a picture representing a jester on whose hat there are nine feathers, one for each part of speech.

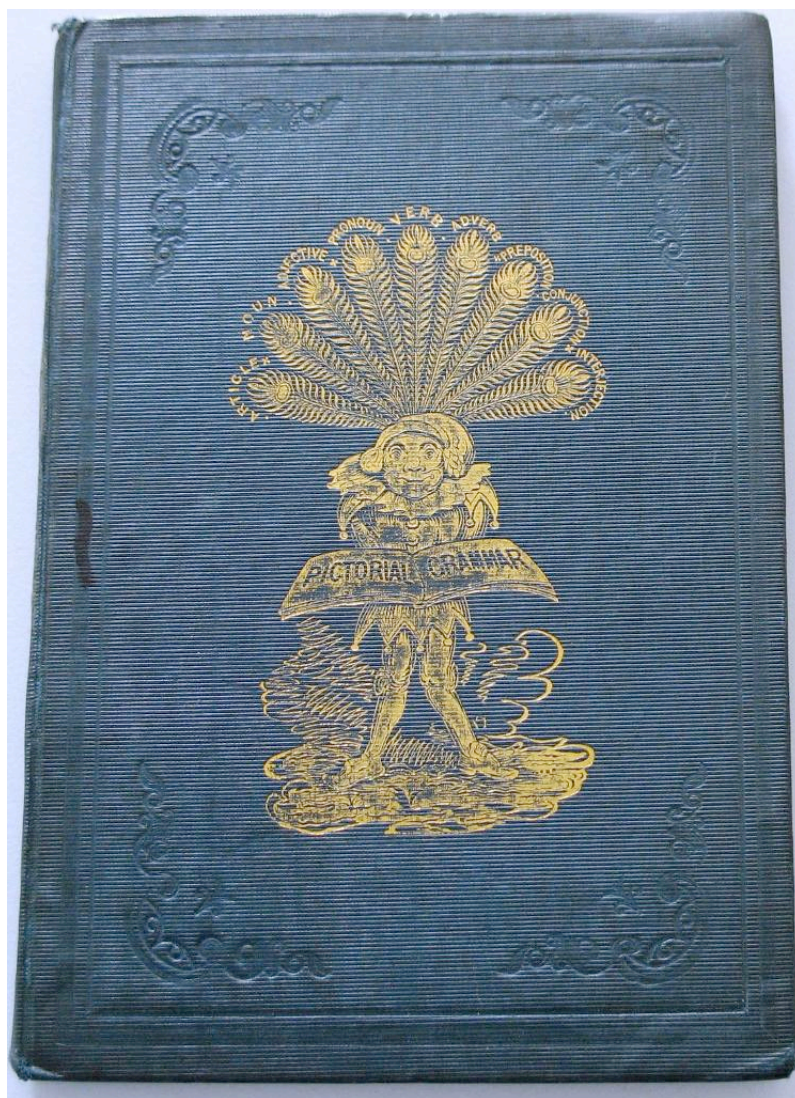


Figure 23 - Alfred Crowquill, *The Pictorial Grammar* (c.1843)

On the frontispiece there is the drawing of an owl holding a parchment in its beak. On the parchment there is a quotation taken from Boswell's *Life of Johnson*. In my opinion the quoted passage has not been chosen at random, because the sentence "these ornaments are useful, because they obtain an easier reception for truth", acts like a sort of declaration of intent, explaining to the readers that the presence of the illustrations is fundamental and actively contributing to the desired instruction.

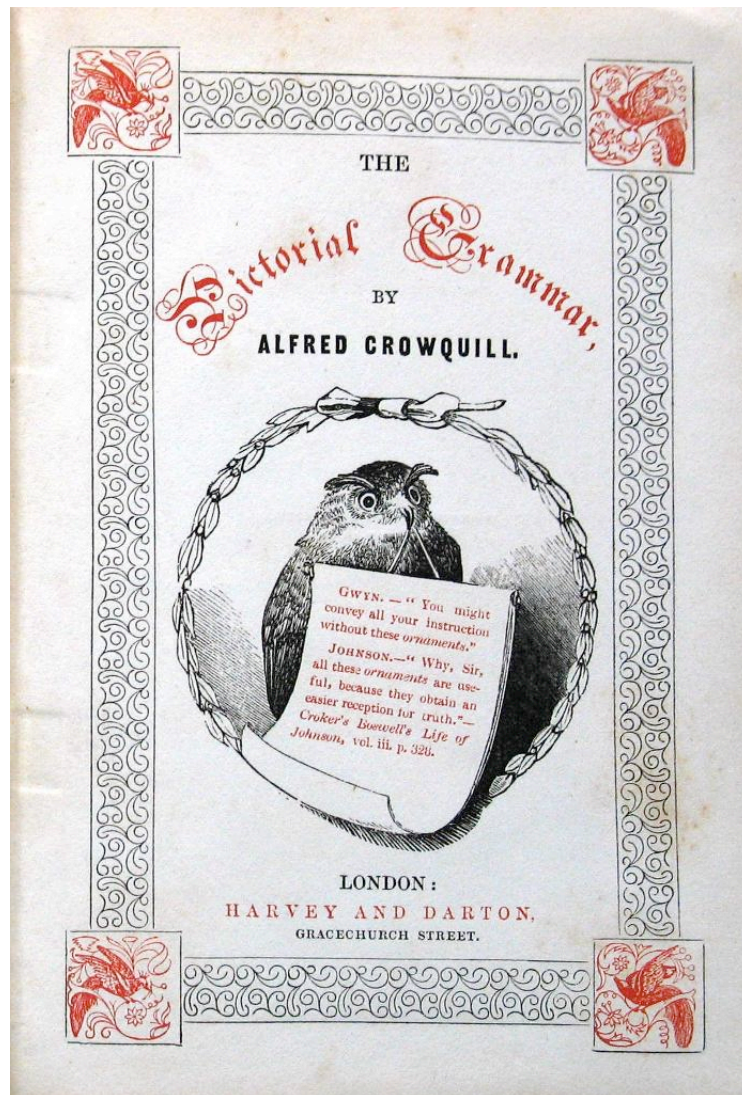


Figure 24 - Alfred Crowquill, *The Pictorial Grammar* (c.1843)

After the frontispiece, we find the following chapters:

- Article
- On Substantives
- On Genders
- Of Number
- Of Case
- On Adjectives
- Pronouns
  - Personal Pronouns
  - Relative Pronouns
  - Adjective Pronouns
- Verbs
  - Number and Person
  - Moods
  - Tenses
  - Of the Conjugation of Regular Verbs
  - Irregular Verbs
  - Adjective Verbs
- Adverbs
- Prepositions
- Conjunctions
- Interjections
- Of Derivation

Each chapter opens with the explanation of the specific grammar rule concerning its subject. The rule is then followed by a series of examples. Both the rule and the various examples are illustrated by black and white cartoons.

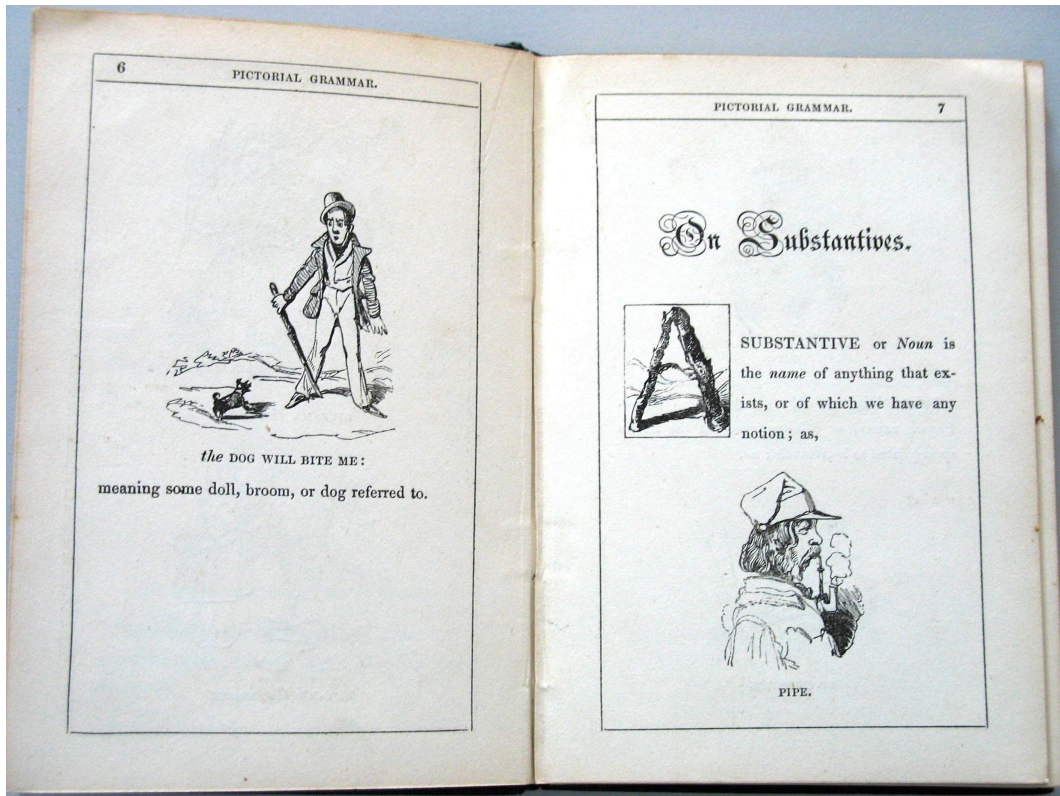


Figure 25 - Alfred Crowquill, *The Pictorial Grammar* (c.1843)

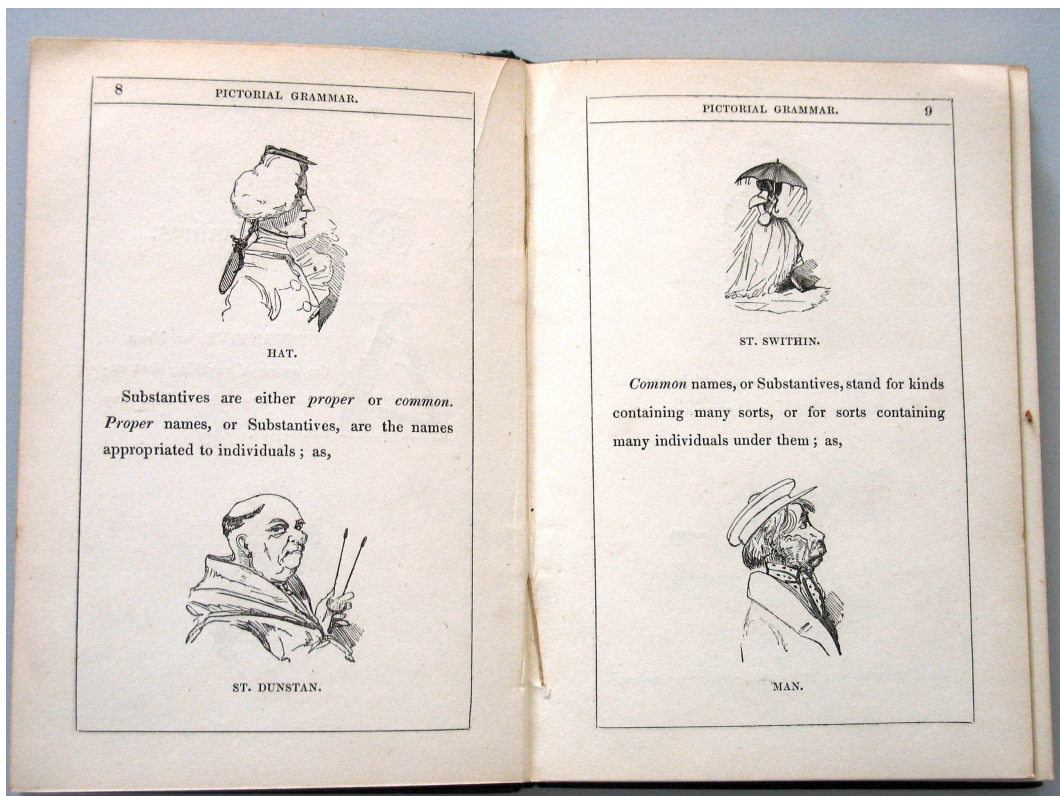


Figure 26 - Alfred Crowquill, *The Pictorial Grammar* (c.1843)

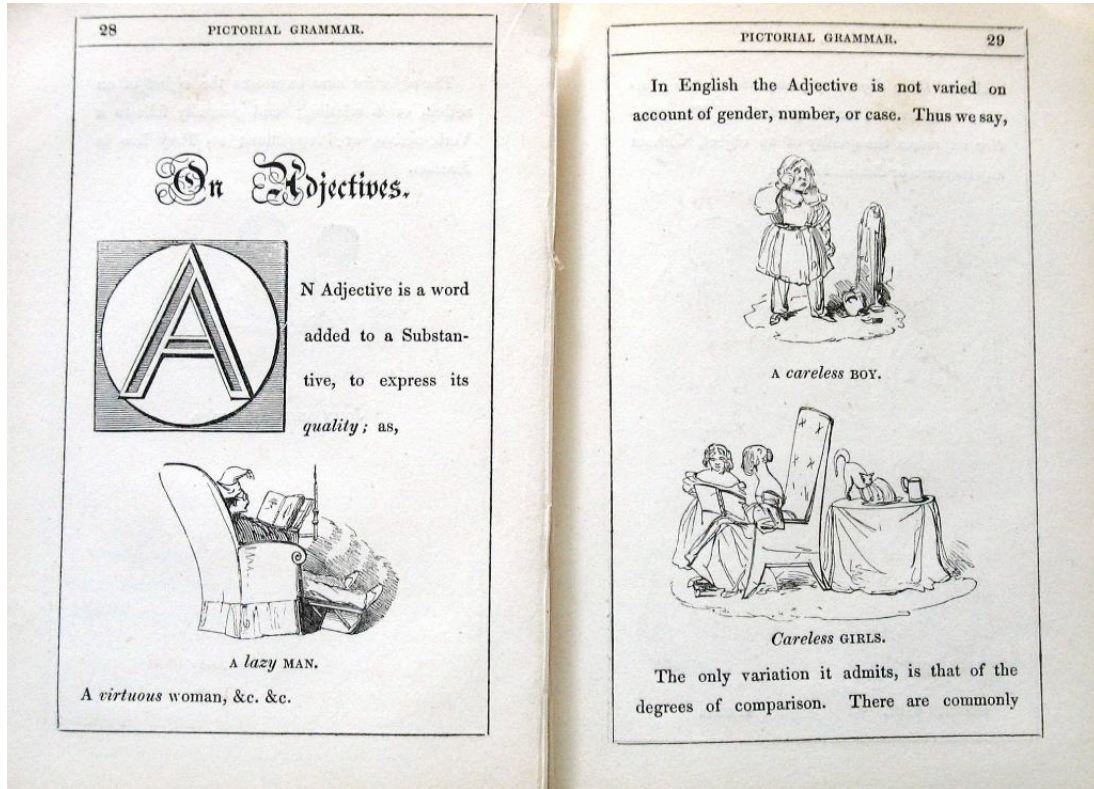


Figure 27 - Alfred Crowquill, *The Pictorial Grammar* (c.1843)



Figure 28 - Alfred Crowquill, *The Pictorial Grammar* (c.1843)

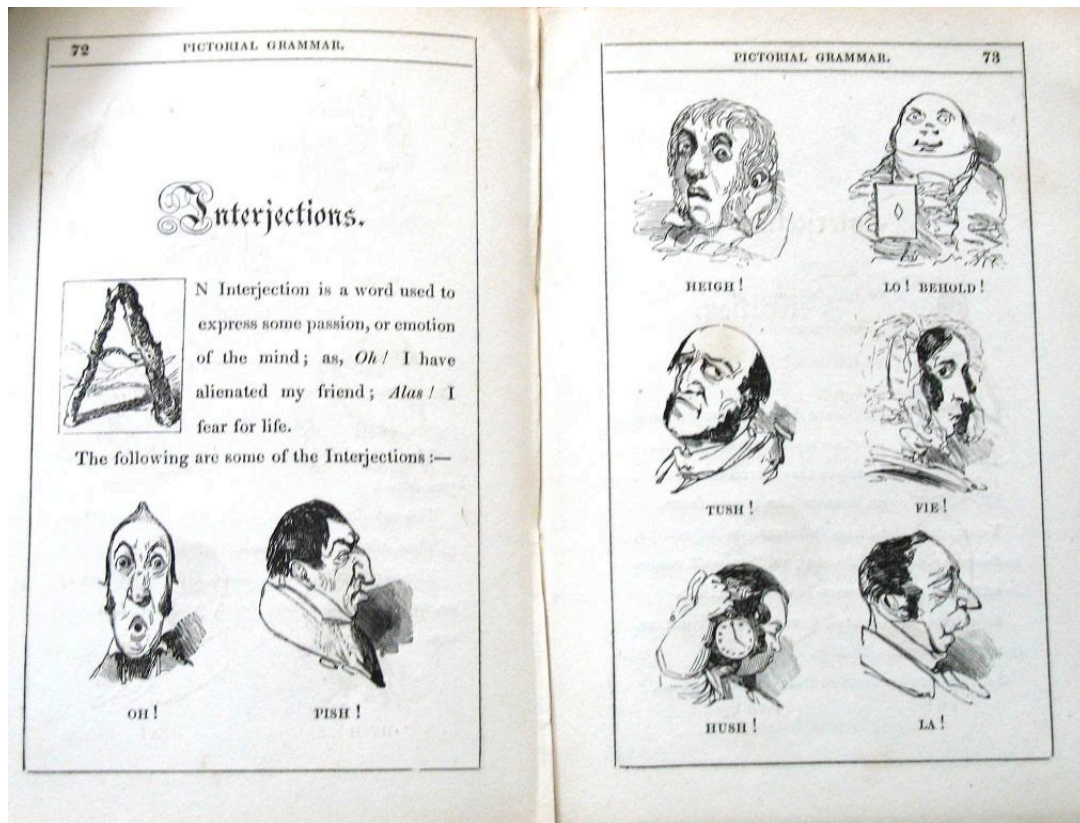


Figure 29 - Alfred Crowquill, *The Pictorial Grammar* (c.1843)

*The Tutor's Assistant, or Comic Figures of Arithmetic*

Always in 1843 Crowquill wrote and illustrated *The Tutor's Assistant, or Comic Figures of Arithmetic*, published in London by J. and F. Harwood. The structure is more or less the same of *The Pictorial Grammar*, but in this case the subject is not the English language but arithmetic. The frontispiece of the book introduces the readers to their tutor, Mr Cocher, who is surrounded by his family, that is, the numbers from 0 to 9. The numbers are personified because the figures represent the heads and bodies of what looks like a group of children.



Figure 30 - Alfred Crowquill, *The Tutor's Assistant* (1843)

In the Advertisement Crowquill explains his aim, saying that “the present ‘Comic Arithmetic’ is offered for the edification of the public, both great and small.” The book is divided into the following sections:

- Tables of Weights and Measures
- Definitions
- Explanation of the Characters Used in Arithmetic
- Arithmetic in Whole Numbers - The Introduction
- Notation and Numeration
- Simple Addition
- Subtraction of Integers

- Multiplication
- Division of Integers
- Tables of Money, Weights, Measures, and Time
- Addition of Several Denominations
- Subtraction of Money, Weights and Measures
- Multiplication of Several Denominations
- Compound Division
- Bills of Parcels
- Reduction
- The Single Rule of the Three Direct
- The Rule of Three Inverse
- The Double Rule of Three
- Practice
- Tare and Tret.
- Commission
- Brokerage
- Stocks
- Simple Interest
- Duodecimals, or Cross Multiplication

As in *The Pictorial Grammar* the illustrations accompany the rules and their examples.

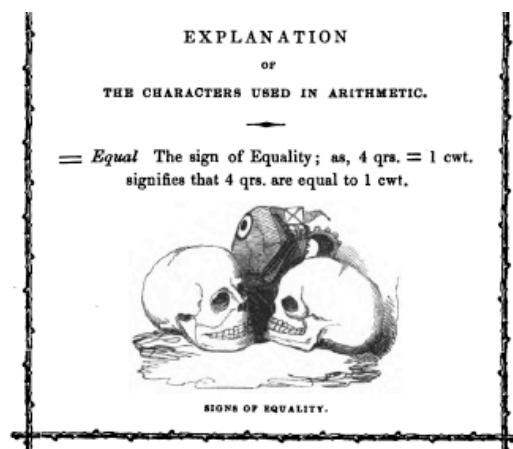
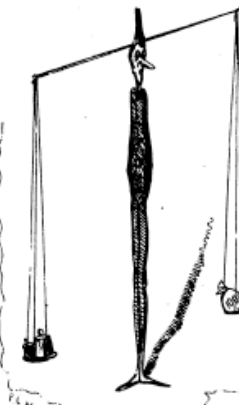


Figure 31 - Alfred Crowquill, *The Tutor's Assistant* (1843)



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### TABLES OF MONEY, WEIGHTS, MEASURES, & TIME.



	HE value sterling of a
Piastre is	0 0 2½
Real .....	0 0 5½
Franc .....	0 0 10
Florin ...	0 1 8
Ducat ...	0 3 4
Ruble ...	0 3 4
Dollar ...	0 4 6
Milreis...	0 4 8
Crown....	0 5 0
Noble ...	0 6 8
Angel....	0 10 0
Mark.....	0 13 4
Guinea...	1 1 0
Carolus...	1 3 0
Jacobus...	1 5 0
Moidore..	1 7 0
Rupee.....	0 2 0
Tale .....	0 6 8

#### STERLING MONEY.

4 Farthings	make	1 Penny	<i>d</i>
12 Pence	"	1 Shilling	<i>s</i>
20 Shillings	"	1 Pound	<i>£</i>

Notz.—*£* denotes pounds, from *libra*, the Latin for pounds; *s* shillings, from *solidi*; *d* pence, from *denarii*; *q* farthings, from *quadrantes*.  
 ¼ denotes one farthing, or one quarter of any thing.  
 ½ denotes a halfpenny, or the half of any thing.  
 ¾ denotes three farthings, or three quarters of any thing.


Figure 32 - Alfred Crowquill, *The Tutor's Assistant* (1843)

32      TABLES OF WEIGHTS.

For scientific purposes the grain only is used; and sets of weights are constructed in decimal progression from 10,000 grains downwards to  $\frac{1}{100}$  of a grain.

The *carat*, used for weighing diamonds, is  $3\frac{1}{4}$  grains. The term, however, when used to express the fineness of gold, has a relative meaning only. Every mass of alloyed gold is supposed to be divided into 24 equal parts: thus the standard for coin is 22 carats fine; that is, it consists of 22 parts of pure gold, and 2 parts of alloy. What is called the *new standard*, used for watch-cases, &c., is 15 carats fine.

#### THE LESSER AND GREATER WEIGHT.



#### WEIGHT OF A FOTHER OF LEAD AT SUNDRY PLACES.

At London 19½ cwt.	At Newcastle 21 cwt.
Leith 20 cwt.	Chester 21 cwt 1 qr. 20lb
Hull 20 cwt. 3 qr. 16 lb.	Stockton 22 cwt.

Figure 33 - Alfred Crowquill, *The Tutor's Assistant* (1843)



Figure 34 - Alfred Crowquill, *The Tutor's Assistant* (1843)

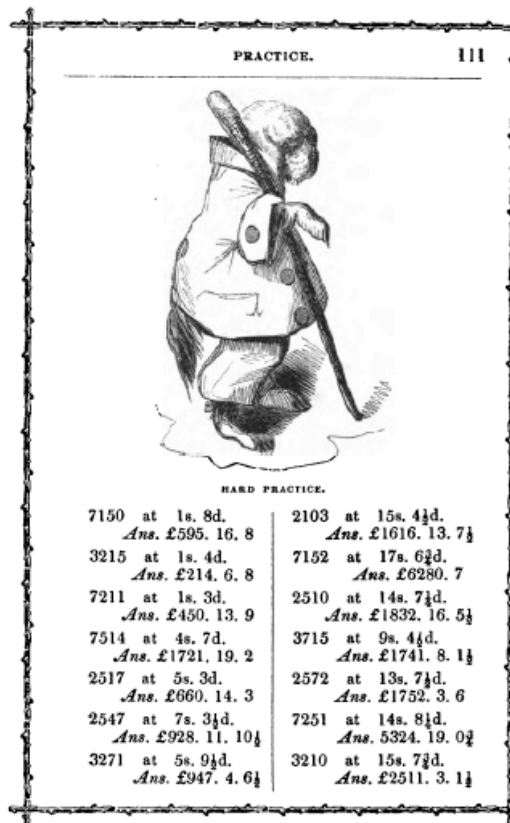


Figure 35 - Alfred Crowquill, *The Tutor's Assistant* (1843)

The great originality of *The Pictorial Grammar* and of *The Tutor's Assistant* consists in the choice of using cartoons to illustrate two didactic books. The choice is undoubtedly connected to the instruction-with-delight trend introduced by Newbery with the publication of *A Little Pretty-Pocket Book*. The illustrations in these two books have a double function: on the one hand they make the rules explained easier to understand; on the other, being cartoons, they entertain and amuse their young readers, lightening the arid activity of studying words and figures. According to the analysis provided by Nikolajeva and Scott,<sup>248</sup> who identify different types of word-picture dynamic in picturebooks, the relationship text-image in *The Pictorial Grammar* and in *The Tutor's Assistant* can be defined as symmetrical because words and pictures convey the same message, albeit in two different forms of communication. Another aspect which is relevant is the presence of frames containing both text and images, on each page of the books. According to Nodelman, when pictures in picturebooks are framed, it means that the author/illustrator wants to create an effect of detachment and objectivity.<sup>249</sup> In Crowquill's books, however, frames enclose not only the illustrations, but also the text. This suggests that Crowquill considered word and pictures as strictly interwoven. Moreover, using cartoons as illustrations, Crowquill promoted the development of the literacy of the imagination which is "the ability to visualize, to make pictures in the mind".<sup>250</sup> Indeed, as noticed by Max Beerbohm, "caricature, being so drastic in its methods, demands its beholders a keen faculty of imagination."<sup>251</sup> This is the same concept expressed by Alfie Bown, who states that "the caricature does not have a direct relationship with that which it is supposed to refer to."<sup>252</sup> As a consequence, caricature urges the readers to go beyond appearances because it is not "an art form that turns reality or the original into caricature, but one that shows that reality is caricatural, always signifying some other, unable to maintain the appearance of unity."<sup>253</sup> In *The Pictorial*

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<sup>248</sup> Cfr. p. 23.

<sup>249</sup> Nodelman, Perry, *Words about Pictures*, cit. p. 50.

<sup>250</sup> Cfr. p. 27.

<sup>251</sup> Beerbohm, Max, "The Spirit of Caricature", in *A Variety of Things*, London, William Heinemann, 1953, pp. 137-150.

<sup>252</sup> Brown, Alfie, "Caricature in Paris and London: Dickens, Daumier and Grandville", in Leroy, Maxime, ed., *Charles Dickens and Europe*, cit., p. 171.

<sup>253</sup> *Ibid.*

*Grammar* and *The Tutor's assistant*, Crowquill relies heavily on the potential of caricature to kindle the imagination of his young readers.

### 3.2 Heinrich Hoffmann



Figure 36 - Heinrich Hoffmann

#### 3.2.1 Life

Heinrich Hoffmann was born in 1809 in Frankfurt am Main. His father was an architect and engineer; his mother died one year after his birth. According to some letters written by Hoffmann's father, as a child Heinrich was undisciplined and frivolous.<sup>254</sup>

In 1829 he started to attend the Faculty of Medicine at the University in Heidelberg. After the graduation in 1833, he spent one year in Paris as an intern at a hospital then, in 1835, he came back to Frankfurt and helped to establish one of the first clinics for the poor. In 1840 he married Therese Donner. They had three children, Carl, Antoine Caroline and Eduard. During the early 1840s he became director of the state

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<sup>254</sup> Sources: *Encyclopaedia Britannica Online*, s. v. "Heinrich Hoffmann". <http://www.britannica.com/pros.lib.unimi.it/EBchecked/topic/268725/Heinrich-Hoffmann>. (accessed February 28, 2014); Zipes, Jack, *Sticks and Stones: The Troublesome Success of Children's Literature from Slovenly Peter to Harry Potter*, New York and London, Routledge, 2002, pp. 148-150; Chalou Smith, Barbara, *Struwwelpeter: Humor or Horror? 160 Years Later*, Plymouth, UK, Lexington Books, pp. 8-10.

mental hospital. Hoffman also loved writing songs, ditties and poems, published as a collection in 1842. He died in 1894.

### 3.2.2 *Der Struwwelpeter*

*Der Struwwelpeter* is the book which gave Hoffman great fame as a writer. It was such a success that it has never been out of print since its first publication. Yet the book was not originally intended for publication. In 1844, some time before Christmas, Hoffman was looking for a book to buy as a Christmas present for his three-year-old son Carl, but none of the books sold in Frankfurt bookshops caught his attention or was considered suitable. As a consequence, Hoffmann bought a notebook on which he wrote and illustrated five stories in verse. This was given to Carl as a Christmas present. The friends who saw and read it encouraged Hoffmann to have it published as a book.<sup>255</sup>

Originally titled *Lustige Geschichten und drollige Bilder (Pleasant and Funny Pictures)* the book appeared for the first time in 1845, the author adopting the pseudonym of Reimerich Kinderlieb. The book contained five tales in rhymed verse: “The Story about Naughty Frederick”, “The Story about the Black Boys”, “The Story about the Wild Hunter”, “The Story about the Thumbsucker”, “The Story about Soupy Caspar”. To a second edition published in 1846, Hoffmann added two tales, “The Very Sad Story about the Matches” and “The Story about Fidgety Philip”. Between 1846 and 1850 the book counted three more editions. The fifth edition of 1850 contained two more tales, “The Story about Hans Who Never Looked Where He Was Going” and “The Story about Flying Robert”. In 1850 Hoffman used his own name, and the book was titled *Der Struwwelpeter*. The title comes from the name of the character originally represented at the end of the book, whose picture was moved to the first page in the fifth edition. *Der Struwwelpeter* had a great success not only in Germany, but also abroad and in fact it was translated into many languages. The first English-language version was published in Leipzig in 1848 by Frederich Volkmar with the title *The English Struwwelpeter or Pretty*

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<sup>255</sup> Zipes, Jack, *Sticks and Stones*, cit., p. 150-151.

*Stories and Funny Pictures*. It soon became very popular in England and it kept the original illustrations of the early German editions.<sup>256</sup>

*Der Struwwelpeter* is a collection of what could be defined cautionary tales. As noticed by Barbara Smith Chalou,

Cautionary tales can be distinguished by the author's heavy-handed and overt didacticism, often spelling out to the reader both the moral of the story and the consequence of misbehaviour. With little or no focus on literary quality – plot, characterization, setting, theme, style, or point of view – the characters are flat and one dimensional and the events linear. These stories generally follow a simple pattern of *misdeed and punishment*, a favourite theme of nineteenth century authors of children's stories. The purpose of the cautionary tale is not to entertain its readers, but to frighten them into proper behaviour by graphically relating the sadistic and gruesome consequences of misbehaviour.<sup>257</sup>

Actually, all the little protagonist's of Hoffmann's tales are punished because they are naughty and they have disobeyed, ignoring the rules imposed upon them. As noticed by Ben Parrot,

These rules are occasionally stated explicitly in the text by an adult authority figure, but more often are simply implied as the accepted or recommended norms for safe, appropriate child behaviour. All of the children are punished for their misdeeds, either directly, by an adult authority figure or more frequently by the immediate 'natural' consequences of their own actions.<sup>258</sup>

Maybe that is why the book had a great success also in Victorian England, where grotesque and Gothic elements were allowed to enter children's books only as "terrifying

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<sup>256</sup> Blamires, David, *Telling Tales: The Impact of Germany on English Children's Books 1780-1918*, Cambridge, Open Book Publishers, 2009, pp. 327-328.

<sup>257</sup> Chalou Smith, Barbara, *Struwwelpeter: Humor or Horror? 160 Years Later*, Plymouth, UK, Lexington Books, p. 43.

<sup>258</sup> Parrot, Ben, "Aesthetic Tension: The Text-Image Relationship in Heinrich Hoffmann's *Struwwelpeter*", in *Monatshefte*, Vol. 102, No. 3, 2010, pp. 326-339, pp. 326-327.

warnings, which really only carried on an age-old tradition of scaring children into obedience and submission.”<sup>259</sup>

However, the original title of the book, *Lustige Geschichten und drollige Bilder* (*Pleasant and Funny Pictures*), suggests that Hoffmann’s aim was not only to teach his son the consequences of a bad behaviour, but also to do it in a pleasant way. Also the choice of writing the tales in verse could support this theory because, as observed by J.R. Townsend, “verse could sugar the instructional pill.”<sup>260</sup> Despite of these considerations, the fact the *Der Struwwelpeter* can be considered suitable for children is still a controversial issue. According to Ben Parrot, “the reaction’s to Hoffmann’s book fall primarily within two opposing camps, and the division is driven largely by different conceptions of the text-image relationship.”<sup>261</sup> It is worth noticing that Hoffman decided to illustrate his tales because he believed that children are more receptive to visual inputs than to verbal exhortations. In *Sticks and Stones*, Jack Zipes quotes a passage taken from Hoffmann’s autobiography in which this concept is clearly explained:

The child learns simply only through the eye, and it only understands that which it sees. It does not know anything whatsoever to do with moral prescripts. The warnings – Don’t get dirty! Be careful with matches and leave them alone! Behave yourself! – are empty words for the child. But the portrayal of the dirty slob, the burning dress, the inattentive child who has an accident – these scenes explain themselves just through the looking that also brings the teaching.<sup>262</sup>

The book opens with a frontispiece which, as observed by Elizabeth Wesseling, acts like a sort of “visual prologue”.<sup>263</sup> Both the texts and the pictures provide some references to the Christmas time, maybe to remind the readers the origin of the book meant as a present.

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<sup>259</sup> Casson, Andrew, *Funny Bodies*, cit. pp. 54-55.

<sup>260</sup> Townsend, J.R., *Written for Children: An Outline of English-Language Children’s Literature*, New York, Harper and Collins, 1992, p. 103.

<sup>261</sup> Parrot, Ben, “Aesthetic Tension: The Text-Image Relationship in Heinrich Hoffmann’s *Struwwelpeter*”, in *Monatshefte*, cit., p. 327.

<sup>262</sup> Zipes, Jack, *Sticks and Stones*, cit., p. 152-153.

<sup>263</sup> Wesseling, Elizabeth, “Visual Narrativity in the Picture Book: Heinrich Hoffmann’s *Der Struwwelpeter*”, in *Children’s Literature in Education*, Vol. 35, No. 4, December 2004, pp. 319-345, p. 321.

The lines also introduce the main theme of the tales, because they revolve around good and naughty children.



Figure 37 - Heinrich Hoffmann, *The English Struwwelpeter*



After the frontispiece, we find a picture representing Shock-headed Peter, who in a sense is the symbol of disobedience and misbehaviour, showing the young readers what they will look like if rules are not obeyed.



Figure 38- Heinrich Hoffmann, *The English Struwwelpeter*

Then there are the illustrated tales. As just pointed out, in his essay Ben Parrot states that the two opposite reactions to Hoffmann's book depend on the ways in which its text-image relationship is interpreted. According to some critics, words and pictures in *Der Struwwelpeter* are symmetrical and they reinforce each other because they tell the same story. Images literally describe what happens in the tales, so the same information is conveyed using two different forms of communication. This symmetrical interaction makes the book unsuitable for children because the graphic depictions of the punishments are too violent. Other critics, instead, think that the text-image relationship is counterpointing because words and images do not convey the same message.<sup>264</sup> Actually, both critical responses can be considered valid, because *Der Struwwelpeter* is characterised by multiple text-image dynamics. "The Dreadful Story about Harriet and the Matches" ("Die gar traurige Geschichte mit dem Feuerzeug") and "The Story of Little Suck-a-Thumb" ("Die Geschichte vom Daumenlutscher") are an example of symmetrical interaction, insofar as words and pictures perfectly work together. At the end of Harriet's tale, for example, the final picture representing the two pussy-cats (Minz and Maunz in the German version) crying near the ashes of little Harriet literally illustrates the verbal metaphor "Their tears ran down their cheeks so fast;/They made a little pond at last". In "The Story of Little Suck-a-Thumb" the threat of the tailor, who will come to cut Conrad's thumb if he does not stop sucking them, becomes real when the tailor suddenly makes his appearance not only in the text but also in the illustration. Here he holds in his hands a big pair of scissors, and his figure also looks like a pair of scissors. It is not a coincidence that these two tales are generally considered the most frightening, cruel and violent in the book. However, Harriet's tale can also be considered as an example of what Nikolajeva and Scott defines a counterpoint in style<sup>265</sup> because while the story told is extremely serious, the pictures, especially the last one, arouse hilarity. Another example of counterpoint in style is "The Story of Augustus Who Would Not Have Any Soup" ("Die

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<sup>264</sup> Parrot, Ben, "Aesthetic Tension: The Text-Image Relationship in Heinrich Hoffmann's *Struwwelpeter*", in *Monatshefte*, cit., p. 327; Nikolajeva, Maria, "The Verbal and the Visual: The Picturebook as a Medium", in Sell, Roger D., ed., *Children's Literature as Communication*, cit. p. 88.

<sup>265</sup> Nikolajeva, Maria, Scott, Carole, *How Picturebooks Work*, cit., p. 24.

Geschichte vom Suppen-Kaspar”): while the text describes a really sad story, “the drawings present these same events in an utterly implausible, exaggerated way.”<sup>266</sup>



Figure 39- Heinrich Hoffmann, *The English Struwwelpeter*

<sup>266</sup> Parrot, Ben, "Aesthetic Tension: The Text-Image Relationship in Heinrich Hoffmann's *Struwwelpeter*", in *Monatshefte*, cit., p. 328.



Figure 40a - Heinrich Hoffmann, *The English Struwwelpeter*



Figure 40b - *The English Struwwelpeter* (Routledge and Sons, 1909)

The great success that Hoffmann's book still enjoys even today is undoubtedly connected to its complex text-picture dynamic and to the fact that, as observed by Anna Smith, "to dispel the fascination for being terrified out of one's wits"<sup>267</sup> is almost impossible.

<sup>267</sup> Smith, Anna, "The Scary Tale Looks for a Family: Gary Crew's *Gothic Hospital* and Sonya Hatnett's *The Devil Latch*", in Jackson, Anna, Coats, Karen, McGillis, Roderick, *The Gothic in Children's Literature: Haunting the Borders*, cit., pp. 131-143, p. 131.