

*Editor's note:* I found the following undated ode, rolled up in an ancient, crumbling cylindrical aluminium cigar-case, off Chung Ying Street on an uncharted tidal sandbank in Starling Inlet (Sha Tau Kok Hui), while canoeing between the Colony of Hong Kong and the People's Republic of China on the stroke of midnight, 30 June 1997. Whether it is/was governed by the laws of British Hong Kong or of the Mainland of China is therefore a moot point. From internal evidence, and despite the virtually illegible signature, it is believed to have been penned by an eminent scholar of French literature.

WB

*Lines congratulatory adreffed to Wm BUTCHER, Esq., Scholar of the University and Citizen of the World, on the Occasion of the Appearance in Print of his New Entry to the Pantheon of Belles Lettres.*

*O BUTCHER! Tho' far removed from Europe's Shore  
That thou should'st publish more and more  
Is a Wonder of the rolling World which, tho' it turn,  
Ceaseth not to clamour for News of Verne.  
Jules wisely preferred to stay at home,  
Sent intrepid heroes forth to plumb Earth's depths and comb  
The Globe for Perils and solve its Myst'ries  
Which he then wrote up in exciting Hist'ries.  
But thy researches, based on track and trace,  
Tell fact from fiction and let us see his face*

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*O BUTCHER! stay not thy scribbling hand!  
Leave unturned no stone buried in the sand  
(Except the stone that lies on Hetzel,  
A first-class creep for whom I would not give a pretzel!)  
But go forth and multiply thy works  
And enlighten Brits and French, Africans and Turks,  
Until the Continents resound in Future  
With universal praise for the Name of BUTCHER!*

*Jean NEMO*