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HIS time of life. The King's argument was, that anything that had a head could be beheaded, and that you weren't to talk nonsense. The Queen's argument was, that if something wasn't done about it in less than no time she'd have everybody executed, all round. (It was this last remark that had made the whole party look so grave and anxious.) Alice could think of nothing else to say but 'It belongs to the Duchess: you'd better ask HER about it.' 'She's in prison,' the Queen said to the executioner: 'fetch her here.' And the executioner went off like an arrow. The Cat's head began fading away the moment he was gone, and, by the time he had come back with the Duchess, it had entirely disappeared; so the King and the executioner ran wildly up and down looking for it, while the rest of the party went back to the game. CHAPTER IX. The Mock Turtle's Story 'You can't think how glad I am to see you again, you dear old thing!' said the Duchess, as she tucked her arm affectionately into Alice's, and they walked off together. Alice was very glad to find her in such a pleasant temper, and thought to herself that perhaps it was only the pepper that had made her so savage when they met in the kitchen. 'When I'M a Duchess,' she said to herself, (not in a very hopeful tone though), 'I won't have any pepper in my kitchen AT ALL. Soup does very well without--Maybe it's always pepper that makes people hot-tempered,' she went on, very much pleased at having found out a new kind of rule, 'and vinegar that makes them sour--and camomile that makes them bitter--and--and barley-sugar and such things that make children sweet-tempered. I only wish people knew that: then they wouldn't be so stingy about it, you know--' She had quite forgotten the Duchess by this time, and was going off into a doze; but, on being pinched by the Hatter, it woke up again with a little shriek, and went on: '--that begins with an M, such as mouse-traps, and the moon, and memory, and muchness--you know you say things are "much of a muchness"--did you ever see such a thing as a drawing of a muchness?' 'Really, now you ask me,' said Alice, very much confused, 'I don't think--' 'Then you shouldn't talk,' said the Hatter. This piece of rudeness was more than Alice could bear: she got up in great disgust, and walked off; the Dormouse fell asleep instantly, and neither of the others took the least notice of her going, though she looked back once or twice, half hoping that they would call after her: the last time she saw them, they were trying to put the Dormouse into the teapot. 'At any rate I'll never go THERE again!' said Alice as she picked her way through the wood. 'It's the stupidest tea-party I ever was at in all my life!' Just as she said this, she noticed that one of the trees had a door leading right into it. 'That's very curious!' she thought. 'But everything's curious today. I think I may as well go in at once.' And in she went. Once more she found herself in the long hall, and close to the.