

Neil Innes

"Five Learned Scholars"

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Five Learned Scholars

One

Two

One, two, three, four

Five learned scholars

were each paid a dollar

to see if they could find out something new

but they met with some resistance

for accordin' to the distance

they noticed things got smaller or they grew

A ship far out at sea

looked no bigger than a flea

relatively speaking of its size

so they thought it more effective

to eliminate perspective

as all they had to do was close their eyes

Having thus removed illusion

they were thrown into confusion

for they found the darkness painful to their shins

so it met with their approval

to order the removal

of everything from elephants to pins

A passion in them burned

they left no worm unturned

they flattened all the bumps to fill in holes

and from Leicester to East Anglia

made continents rectangular

and evenly distributed the poles

Five Learned Scholars But still it was no use

from their sponsors came abuse

along with threats of "not a penny more!"

so in exasperation

they proclaimed imagination

the novelty they'd all been searching for

The five of them sat drinkin'

all alone amongst their thinkin'
but of the gab sadly each still had the gift
and so with each uncorkin'
the wine did all the talkin'
and as each one held forth, each one came fifth

And long into the night
they argued wrong and right
'til death itself called out "last orders please,"
so the five learned scholars
sang a song for five dollars
and left this life upon their hands and knees.

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