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| **The Blind Men and the Elephant****A Poem by John Godfrey Saxe** (1816-1887)It was six men of Indostan,To learning much inclined,Who went to see the Elephant(Though all of them were blind),That each by observationMight satisfy his mind.The *First* approach'd the Elephant,And happening to fallAgainst his broad and sturdy side,At once began to bawl:"God bless me! but the ElephantIs very like a wall!"The *Second*, feeling of the tusk,Cried, -"Ho! what have we hereSo very round and smooth and sharp?To me 'tis mighty clear,This wonder of an ElephantIs very like a spear!"The *Third* approach'd the animal,And happening to takeThe squirming trunk within his hands,Thus boldly up and spake:"I see," -quoth he- "the ElephantIs very like a snake!"The *Fourth* reached out an eager hand,And felt about the knee:"What most this wondrous beast is likeIs mighty plain," -quoth he,-"'Tis clear enough the ElephantIs very like a tree!"The *Fifth*, who chanced to touch the ear,Said- "E'en the blindest manCan tell what this resembles most;Deny the fact who can,This marvel of an ElephantIs very like a fan!"The *Sixth* no sooner had begunAbout the beast to grope,Then, seizing on the swinging tailThat fell within his scope,"I see," -quoth he,- "the ElephantIs very like a rope!"And so these men of IndostanDisputed loud and long,Each in his own opinionExceeding stiff and strong,Though each was partly in the right,And all were in the wrong! |