I CUE THE ALPHABET

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A is for apatite, often blue-green;
B for bizarre, where no goods can be seen.
C is for candied, which hardly is frank;
D for dessert, but don't run from your rank.

These four lines, and 'E is for earwig, keep it out of your hair; / F -- but I leave you to take it from there --' appear on the jacket of my book Word Games for Play and Power. Pondering the copy Eric Partridge gave me of his Comic Alphabets, I thought 'Frankly, however, that doesn't seem fair' and completed the verses, with annotations.

E is for earwig: if you're balding, it's vain.
F, the ruined folly exposed to the heir
If I would admire, but then I would feign.
G is a horse, which may be the French chair --
On one, Gilbert says, a General sat;

Chair is French for 'flesh' (in France, many butchers sell only horse flesh. In Gilbert and Sullivan's "The Pirates of Penzance", the Major-General declares: 'In short, when I've a smattering of elemental strategy / You'll say a better Major-General has never sat a gee'.

H: When I'm hoarse, hear me sing the G flat!
I say Ay, ay sir. Don't give her the eye,
J is the walker the Jane passes by
(His rhyme listing gives snap Lord Byron the lie.)

J. Walker wrote a Rhyming Dictionary which Lord Byron, for all his vaunted spontaneous composition, owned and used.

K-nine, consider: a bite, by my tooth!
Sir Kay in the kitchen: no knave, in good sooth.

Tennyson tells of Sir Kay's kitchen work at King Arthur's court.

L's not for Christmas, French play of our youth.
Noel, of course, is the French word for 'Christmas'.

M for the man whose mien shows he is mean;
N for the neighbor, observed, not obscene
(Bisect a word, fore thoughts teeter between).

Bisect a word: fore, because they come first; then bisect,
for the thoughts come, therefore you bisect. And four thoughts:
(1) he's a bore; (2) he's near (nigh), a neighbor, the basic
word; (3) he's not only disagreeable, he's disagreeing (nay, 
nay); (4) he talks like a horse.

O for an ode! It should promptly be paid;
P for the poet whose goateed but stayed.

Goateed, but also goat teed (tugged) but stayed (staid).

Q for the stalls where they're murdering Shakespeare.
R for the rumgudgeon's a roue that takes beer?
S is the so and sow bringing the litter.

So and sow: Chinese poetry has many "pivot-words" that have
one meaning with what precedes them, another with what follows.

T is the cozy young cute baby-sitter;
Tee on the golf course perhaps would be fitter;
Teetotalers might declare any drink bitter.

Tea cozy, as well as cozy young cute baby-sitter.

U, do you know the euphemious ewe
V- hement still in the vernal dawn dew?
Without much ado her soft pelt is due, too.
W for a guinea, said Jonathan Swift.
X-ray his Greek gamble and you'll get the drift:
He once won by punning the alphabet's shift.

Jonathan Swift once wagered that he could play on the word
guinea with every letter of the Greek alphabet -- and won!

Y is the reason you ought to grow wise;
Z 'neath your gaze hits the peak of all skies ... 
Pardon, it seems not enough has been said:
Alpha-Omega, soup to nuts, A to Zed.
Zedekiah tried treason, and soon he was dead.
Ampersand is as endless as tropic sea shore;
Flag me down, I am happy to waver no more.

The school of General Semantics maintains that ampersand (&)
should be understood at the end of every sentence (its journal
is named ETC).