

Classic Poetry Series

William Schwenck Gilbert
- poems -

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William Schwenck Gilbert(1836 - 1911)

William Schwenck Gilbert, born in London in 1836, was the son of a retired naval surgeon. Except for a kidnapping by Italian brigands in Italy at age two, and a ransomed release, he appears to have had a very normal upbringing. Beyond ordinary schooling, he took training as an artillery officer and was tutored in military science with hopes of participating in the Crimean War. Unfortunately for him, but not for us, he did not graduate until after the War was over. Gilbert subsequently joined the militia and was a member for 20 years.

After finishing his military training Gilbert worked in a government bureau job which he hated. Upon receiving a nice inheritance from an aunt, Gilbert indulged his fancy and became a barrister. Called to the bar at age 28, Gilbert's law career, with no "rich attorney's elderly, ugly daughter" to help him escape mediocrity, lasted just a few years. Before leaving his law practice, however, he married the daughter of an army officer.

Gilbert had shown a proclivity for caustic wit and sarcasm from an early age and it was this talent that put him on the path to greatness. Beginning in 1861, Gilbert contributed dramatic criticism and humorous verse (unsigned) to the popular British magazine FUN. Some of his work was accompanied by cartoons and sketches which were signed "Bab." Many of the characters in the G&S operas were modelled after some of Gilbert's "Bab" characters. A collection of these 'Bab Ballads' was later published in 1869.

The period from 1868 to 1875 was a very fruitful period for Gilbert, primarily because two plays which he wrote in 1871 netted him huge financial rewards. This was also the year that he collaborated briefly with a composer named Sullivan on a production entitled Thespis which did not bring the duo any notoriety. Their collaboration, however, spanned twenty-five years and produced a total of fourteen comic operas of which The Grand Duke, the last in the order, premiered in 1896.

Gilbert was knighted by Edward VII in 1907 and died in 1911, at age 74, while attempting to save a drowning woman.

A Classical Revival

At the outset I may mention it's my sovereign intention
To revive the classic memories of Athens at its best,
For my company possesses all the necessary dresses,
And a course of quiet cramming will supply us with the rest.
We've a choir hyporchematic (that is, ballet-operatic)
Who respond to the CHOREUTAE of that cultivated age,
And our clever chorus-master, all but captious criticaster,
Would accept as the CHOREGUS of the early Attic stage.
This return to classic ages is considered in their wages,
Which are always calculated by the day or by the week -
And I'll pay 'em (if they'll back me) all in OBOLOI and DRACHMAE,
Which they'll get (if they prefer it) at the Kalends that are
Greek!

(At this juncture I may mention
That this erudition sham
Is but classical pretension,
The result of steady "cram.":
Periphrastic methods spurning,
To my readers all discerning
I admit this show of learning
Is the fruit of steady cram."!)

In the period Socratic every dining-room was Attic
(Which suggests an architecture of a topsy-turvy kind),
There they'd satisfy their twist on a RECHERCHE cold [Greek text
which cannot be reproduced],
Which is what they called their lunch - and so may you, if you're
inclined.
As they gradually got on, they'd [Greek text which cannot be
reproduced]
(Which is Attic for a steady and a conscientious drink).
But they mixed their wine with water - which I'm sure they didn't
oughter -
And we Anglo-Saxons know a trick worth two of that, I think!
Then came rather risky dances (under certain circumstances)
Which would shock that worthy gentleman, the Licenser of Plays,
Corybantian maniac kick - Dionysiac or Bacchic -
And the Dithyrambic revels of those indecorous days.

(And perhaps I'd better mention
Lest alarming you I am,
That it isn't our intention
To perform a Dithyramb -
It displays a lot of stocking,
Which is always very shocking,
And of course I'm only mocking
At the prevalence of "cram.")

Yes, on reconsideration, there are customs of that nation
Which are not in strict accordance with the habits of our day,
And when I come to codify, their rules I mean to modify,
Or Mrs. Grundy, p'r'aps, may have a word or two to say:
For they hadn't macintoshes or umbrellas or goloshes -
And a shower with their dresses must have played the very deuce,
And it must have been displeasing when they caught a fit of
sneezing,
For, it seems, of pocket-handkerchiefs they didn't know the use.
They wore little underclothing - scarcely anything - or no-thing -
And their dress of Coan silk was quite transparent in design -
Well, in fact, in summer weather, something like the "altogether."
And it's THERE, I rather fancy, I shall have to draw the line!

(And again I wish to mention
That this erudition sham
Is but classical pretension,
The result of steady "cram."
Yet my classic love aggressive,
If you'll pardon the possessive,
Is exceedingly impressive
When you're passing an exam.)

William Schwenck Gilbert

A Discontented Sugar Broker

A gentleman of City fame
Now claims your kind attention;
East India broking was his game,
His name I shall not mention:
No one of finely-pointed sense
Would violate a confidence,
And shall I go
And do it? No!
His name I shall not mention.

He had a trusty wife and true,
And very cosy quarters,
A manager, a boy or two,
Six clerks, and seven porters.
A broker must be doing well
(As any lunatic can tell)
Who can employ
An active boy,
Six clerks, and seven porters.

His knocker advertised no dun,
No losses made him sulky,
He had one sorrow - only one -
He was extremely bulky.
A man must be, I beg to state,
Exceptionally fortunate
Who owns his chief
And only grief
Is - being very bulky.

"This load," he'd say, "I cannot bear;
I'm nineteen stone or twenty!
Henceforward I'll go in for air
And exercise in plenty."
Most people think that, should it come,
They can reduce a bulging tum
To measures fair
By taking air
And exercise in plenty.

In every weather, every day,
Dry, muddy, wet, or gritty,
He took to dancing all the way
From Brompton to the City.
You do not often get the chance
Of seeing sugar brokers dance
From their abode
In Fulham Road
Through Brompton to the City.

He braved the gay and guileless laugh
Of children with their nusses,
The loud uneducated chaff
Of clerks on omnibuses.
Against all minor things that rack
A nicely-balanced mind, I'll back
The noisy chaff
And ill-bred laugh
Of clerks on omnibuses.

His friends, who heard his money chink,
And saw the house he rented,
And knew his wife, could never think
What made him discontented.
It never entered their pure minds
That fads are of eccentric kinds,
Nor would they own
That fat alone
Could make one discontented.

"Your riches know no kind of pause,
Your trade is fast advancing;
You dance - but not for joy, because
You weep as you are dancing.
To dance implies that man is glad,
To weep implies that man is sad;
But here are you
Who do the two -
You weep as you are dancing!"

His mania soon got noised about

And into all the papers;
His size increased beyond a doubt
For all his reckless capers:
It may seem singular to you,
But all his friends admit it true -
The more he found
His figure round,
The more he cut his capers.

His bulk increased - no matter that -
He tried the more to toss it -
He never spoke of it as "fat,"
But "adipose deposit."
Upon my word, it seems to me
Unpardonable vanity
(And worse than that)
To call your fat
An "adipose deposit."

At length his brawny knees gave way,
And on the carpet sinking,
Upon his shapeless back he lay
And kicked away like winking.
Instead of seeing in his state
The finger of unswerving Fate,
He laboured still
To work his will,
And kicked away like winking.

His friends, disgusted with him now,
Away in silence wended -
I hardly like to tell you how
This dreadful story ended.
The shocking sequel to impart,
I must employ the limner's art -
If you would know,
This sketch will show
How his exertions ended.

MORAL.

I hate to preach - I hate to prate -

- I'm no fanatic croaker,
But learn contentment from the fate
Of this East India broker.
He'd everything a man of taste
Could ever want, except a waist;
And discontent
His size anent,
And bootless perseverance blind,
Completely wrecked the peace of mind
Of this East India broker.

William Schwenck Gilbert

A Man Who Would Woo A Fair Maid

A man who would woo a fair maid,
Should 'prentice himself to the trade;
And study all day,
In methodical way,
How to flatter, cajole, and persuade.
He should 'prentice himself at fourteen
And practise from morning to e'en;
And when he's of age,
If he will, I'll engage,
He may capture the heart of a queen!
It is purely a matter of skill,
Which all may attain if they will:
But every Jack
He must study the knack
If he wants to make sure of his Jill!

If he's made the best use of his time,
His twig he'll so carefully lime
That every bird
Will come down at his word.
Whatever its plumage and clime.
He must learn that the thrill of a touch
May mean little, or nothing, or much;
It's an instrument rare,
To be handled with care,
And ought to be treated as such.
It is purely a matter of skill,
Which all may attain if they will:
But every Jack,
He must study the knack
If he wants to make sure of his Jill!

Then a glance may be timid or free;
It will vary in mighty degree,
From an impudent stare
To a look of despair
That no maid without pity can see.
And a glance of despair is no guide -
It may have its ridiculous side;

It may draw you a tear
Or a box on the ear;
You can never be sure till you've tried.
It is purely a matter of skill,
Which all may attain if they will:
But every Jack
He must study the knack
If he wants to make sure of his Jill!

William Schwenck Gilbert

A Manager's Perplexities

Were I a king in very truth,
And had a son - a guileless youth -
In probable succession;
To teach him patience, teach him tact,
How promptly in a fix to act,
He should adopt, in point of fact,
A manager's profession.
To that condition he should stoop
(Despite a too fond mother),
With eight or ten "stars" in his troupe,
All jealous of each other!
Oh, the man who can rule a theatrical crew,
Each member a genius (and some of them two),
And manage to humour them, little and great,
Can govern a tuppenny-ha'penny State!

Both A and B rehearsal slight -
They say they'll be "all right at night"
(They've both to go to school yet);
C in each act MUST change her dress,
D WILL attempt to "square the press";
E won't play Romeo unless
His grandmother plays Juliet;
F claims all hoydens as her rights
(She's played them thirty seasons);
And G must show herself in tights
For two convincing reasons -
Two very well-shaped reasons!
Oh, the man who can drive a theatrical team,
With wheelers and leaders in order supreme,
Can govern and rule, with a wave of his fin,
All Europe and Asia - with Ireland thrown in!

William Schwenck Gilbert

A Merry Madrigal

Brightly dawns our wedding day;
Joyous hour, we give thee greeting!
Whither, whither art thou fleeting?
Fickle moment, prithee stay!
What though mortal joys be hollow?
Pleasures come, if sorrows follow.
Though the tocsin sound, ere long,
Ding dong! Ding dong!
Yet until the shadows fall
Over one and over all,
Sing a merry madrigal -
Fal la!

Let us dry the ready tear;
Though the hours are surely creeping,
Little need for woeful weeping
Till the sad sundown is near.
All must sip the cup of sorrow,
I to-day and thou to-morrow:
This the close of every song -
Ding dong! Ding dong!
What though solemn shadows fall,
Sooner, later, over all?
Sing a merry madrigal -
Fal la!

William Schwenck Gilbert

A Mirage

Were I thy bride,
Then the whole world beside
Were not too wide
To hold my wealth of love -
Were I thy bride!
Upon thy breast
My loving head would rest,
As on her nest
The tender turtle-dove -
Were I thy bride!

This heart of mine
Would be one heart with thine,
And in that shrine
Our happiness would dwell -
Were I thy bride!
And all day long
Our lives should be a song:
No grief, no wrong
Should make my heart rebel -
Were I thy bride!

The silvery flute,
The melancholy lute,
Were night-owl's hoot
To my low-whispered coo -
Were I thy bride!
The skylark's trill
Were but discordance shrill
To the soft thrill
Of wooing as I'd woo -
Were I thy bride!

The rose's sigh
Were as a carrion's cry
To lullaby
Such as I'd sing to thee -
Were I thy bride!
A feather's press

Were leaden heaviness
To my caress.
But then, unhappily,
I'm not thy bride!

William Schwenck Gilbert

A Nightmare

When you're lying awake with a dismal headache, and repose is
taboo'd by anxiety,
I conceive you may use any language you choose to indulge in
without impropriety;
For your brain is on fire - the bedclothes conspire of usual
slumber to plunder you:
First your counterpane goes and uncovers your toes, and your sheet
slips demurely from under you;
Then the blanketing tickles - you feel like mixed pickles, so
terribly sharp is the pricking,
And you're hot, and you're cross, and you tumble and toss till
there's nothing 'twixt you and the ticking.
Then the bedclothes all creep to the ground in a heap, and you pick
'em all up in a tangle;
Next your pillow resigns and politely declines to remain at its
usual angle!
Well, you get some repose in the form of a doze, with hot eyeballs
and head ever aching,
But your slumbering teems with such horrible dreams that you'd very
much better be waking;
For you dream you are crossing the Channel, and tossing about in a
steamer from Harwich,
Which is something between a large bathing-machine and a very small
second-class carriage;
And you're giving a treat (penny ice and cold meat) to a party of
friends and relations -
They're a ravenous horde - and they all came on board at Sloane
Square and South Kensington Stations.
And bound on that journey you find your attorney (who started that
morning from Devon);
He's a bit undersized, and you don't feel surprised when he tells
you he's only eleven.
Well, you're driving like mad with this singular lad (by the bye
the ship's now a four-wheeler),
And you're playing round games, and he calls you bad names when you
tell him that "ties pay the dealer";
But this you can't stand, so you throw up your hand, and you find
you're as cold as an icicle,
In your shirt and your socks (the black silk with gold clocks),

crossing Salisbury Plain on a bicycle:

And he and the crew are on bicycles too - which they've somehow or other invested in -

And he's telling the tars all the particuLARS of a company he's interested in -

It's a scheme of devices, to get at low prices, all goods from cough mixtures to cables

(Which tickled the sailors) by treating retailers, as though they were all vegeTABLES -

You get a good spadesman to plant a small tradesman (first take off his boots with a boot-tree),

And his legs will take root, and his fingers will shoot, and they'll blossom and bud like a fruit-tree -

From the greengrocer tree you get grapes and green pea, cauliflower, pineapple, and cranberries,

While the pastry-cook plant cherry-brandy will grant - apple puffs, and three-corners, and banberries -

The shares are a penny, and ever so many are taken by ROTHSCHILD and BARING,

And just as a few are allotted to you, you awake with a shudder despairing -

You're a regular wreck, with a crick in your neck, and no wonder you snore, for your head's on the floor, and you've needles and pins from your soles to your shins, and your flesh is a-creep, for your left leg's asleep, and you've cramp in your toes, and a fly on your nose, and some fluff in your lung, and a feverish tongue, and a thirst that's intense, and a general sense that you haven't been sleeping in clover;

But the darkness has passed, and it's daylight at last, and the night has been long - ditto, ditto my song - and thank goodness they're both of them over!

William Schwenck Gilbert

A Recipe

Take a pair of sparkling eyes,
Hidden, ever and anon,
In a merciful eclipse -
Do not heed their mild surprise -
Having passed the Rubicon.
Take a pair of rosy lips;
Take a figure trimly planned -
Such as admiration whets
(Be particular in this);
Take a tender little hand,
Fringed with dainty fingerettes,
Press it - in parenthesis; -
Take all these, you lucky man -
Take and keep them, if you can.

Take a pretty little cot -
Quite a miniature affair -
Hung about with trellised vine,
Furnish it upon the spot
With the treasures rich and rare
I've endeavoured to define.
Live to love and love to live -
You will ripen at your ease,
Growing on the sunny side -
Fate has nothing more to give.
You're a dainty man to please
If you are not satisfied.
Take my counsel, happy man:
Act upon it, if you can!

William Schwenck Gilbert

A Worm Will Turn

I love a man who'll smile and joke
When with misfortune crowned;
Who'll pun beneath a pauper's yoke,
And as he breaks his daily toke,
Conundrums gay propound.

Just such a man was Bernaqrd Jupp
He scoffed at Fortune's frown;
He gaily drained his bitter cup -
Though Fortune often threw him up,
It never cast him down.

Though years their share of sorrow bring,
We know that far above
All other griefs, are griefs that spring
From some misfortune happening
To those we really love.

E'en sorrow for another's woe
Our BERNARD failed to quell;
Though by this special form of blow
No person ever suffered so,
Or bore his grief so well.

His father, wealthy and well clad,
And owning house and park,
Lost every halfpenny he had,
And then became (extremely sad!)
A poor attorney's clerk.

All sons it surely would appal,
Except the passing meek,
To see a father lose his all,
And from an independence fall
To one pound ten a week!

But JUPP shook off this sorrow's weight,
And, like a Christian son,
Proved Poverty a happy fate -

Proved Wealth to be a devil's bait,
To lure poor sinners on.

With other sorrows Bernard coped,
For sorrows came in packs;
His cousins with their housemaids sloped -
His uncles forged - his aunts eloped -
His sisters married blacks.

But BERNARD, far from murmuring
(Exemplar, friends, to us),
Determined to his faith to cling, -
He made the best of everything,
And argued softly thus:

"'Twere harsh my uncles' forging knack
Too rudely to condemn -
My aunts, repentant, may come back,
And blacks are nothing like as black
As people colour them!"

Still Fate, with many a sorrow rife,
Maintained relentless fight:
His grandmamma next lost her life,
Then died the mother of his wife,
But still he seemed all right.

His brother fond (the only link
To life that bound him now)
One morning, overcome by drink,
He broke his leg (the right, I think)
In some disgraceful row.

But did my Bernard swear and curse?
Oh no - to murmur loth,
He only said, "Go, get a nurse:
Be thankful that it isn't worse;
You might have broken both!"

But worms who watch without concern
The cockchafer on thorns,
Or beetles smashed, themselves will turn

If, walking through the slippery fern,
You tread upon their corns.

One night as Bernard made his track
Through Brompton home to bed,
A footpad, with a vizor black,
Took watch and purse, and dealt a crack
On BERNARD'S saint-like head.

It was too much - his spirit rose,
He looked extremely cross.
Men thought him steeled to mortal foes,
But no - he bowed to countless blows,
But kicked against this loss.

He finally made up his mind
Upon his friends to call;
Subscription lists were largely signed,
For men were really glad to find
Him mortal, after all!

William Schwenck Gilbert

Ah Me!

When maiden loves, she sits and sighs,
She wanders to and fro;
Unbidden tear-drops fill her eyes,
And to all questions she replies,
With a sad heigho!
'Tis but a little word - "heigho!"
So soft, 'tis scarcely heard - "heigho!"
An idle breath -
Yet life and death
May hang upon a maid's "heigho!"

When maiden loves, she mopes apart,
As owl mopes on a tree;
Although she keenly feels the smart,
She cannot tell what ails her heart,
With its sad "Ah me!"
'Tis but a foolish sigh - "Ah me!"
Born but to droop and die - "Ah me!"
Yet all the sense
Of eloquence
Lies hidden in a maid's "Ah me!"

William Schwenck Gilbert

An Appeal

Oh! is there not one maiden breast
Which does not feel the moral beauty
Of making worldly interest
Subordinate to sense of duty?
Who would not give up willingly
All matrimonial ambition
To rescue such a one as I
From his unfortunate position?

Oh, is there not one maiden here,
Whose homely face and bad complexion
Have caused all hopes to disappear
Of ever winning man's affection?
To such a one, if such there be,
I swear by heaven's arch above you,
If you will cast your eyes on me, -
However plain you be - I'll love you!

William Schwenck Gilbert

An English Girl

A wonderful joy our eyes to bless,
In her magnificent comeliness,
Is an English girl of eleven stone two,
And five foot ten in her dancing shoe!
She follows the hounds, and on she pounds -
The "field" tails off and the muffs diminish -
Over the hedges and brooks she bounds -
Straight as a crow, from find to finish.
At cricket, her kin will lose or win -
She and her maids, on grass and clover,
Eleven maids out - eleven maids in -
(And perhaps an occasional "maiden over").
Go search the world and search the sea,
Then come you home and sing with me
There's no such gold and no such pearl
As a bright and beautiful English girl!

With a ten-mile spin she stretches her limbs,
She golfs, she punts, she rows, she swims -
She plays, she sings, she dances, too,
From ten or eleven till all is blue!
At ball or drum, till small hours come
(Chaperon's fan conceals her yawning),
She'll waltz away like a teetotum,
And never go home till daylight's dawning.
Lawn tennis may share her favours fair -
Her eyes a-dance and her cheeks a-glowing -
Down comes her hair, but what does she care?
It's all her own and it's worth the showing!
Go search the world and search the sea,
Then come you home and sing with me
There's no such gold and no such pearl
As a bright and beautiful English girl!

Her soul is sweet as the ocean air,
For prudery knows no haven there;
To find mock-modesty, please apply
To the conscious blush and the downcast eye.
Rich in the things contentment brings,

In every pure enjoyment wealthy,
Blithe as a beautiful bird she sings,
For body and mind are hale and healthy.
Her eyes they thrill with right goodwill -
Her heart is light as a floating feather -
As pure and bright as the mountain rill
That leaps and laughs in the Highland heather!
Go search the world and search the sea,
Then come you home and sing with me
There's no such gold and no such pearl
As a bright and beautiful English girl!

William Schwenck Gilbert

An Unfortunate Likeness

I'VE painted SHAKESPEARE all my life -
"An infant" (even then at "play"!)
"A boy," with stage-ambition rife,
Then "Married to ANN HATHAWAY."

"The bard's first ticket night" (or "ben."),
His "First appearance on the stage,"
His "Call before the curtain" - then
"Rejoicings when he came of age."

The bard play-writing in his room,
The bard a humble lawyer's clerk.
The bard a lawyer (3) - parson (4) - groom (5) -
The bard deer-stealing, after dark.

The bard a tradesman (6) - and a Jew (7) -
The bard a botanist (8) - a beak (9) -
The bard a skilled musician (10) too -
A sheriff (11) and a surgeon (12) eke!

Yet critics say (a friendly stock)
That, though it's evident I try,
Yet even I can barely mock
The glimmer of his wondrous eye!

One morning as a work I framed,
There passed a person, walking hard:
"My gracious goodness," I exclaimed,
"How very like my dear old bard!

"Oh, what a model he would make!"
I rushed outside - impulsive me! -
"Forgive the liberty I take,
But you're so very" - "Stop!" said he.

"You needn't waste your breath or time, -
I know what you are going to say, -
That you're an artist, and that I'm
Remarkably like SHAKESPEARE. Eh?"

"You wish that I would sit to you?"
I clasped him madly round the waist,
And breathlessly replied, "I do!"
"All right," said he, "but please make haste."

I led him by his hallowed sleeve,
And worked away at him apace,
I painted him till dewy eve, -
There never was a nobler face!

"Oh, sir," I said, "a fortune grand
Is yours, by dint of merest chance, -
To sport HIS brow at second-hand,
To wear HIS cast-off countenance!

"To rub HIS eyes whene'er they ache -
To wear HIS baldness ere you're old -
To clean HIS teeth when you awake -
To blow HIS nose when you've a cold!"

His eyeballs glistened in his eyes -
I sat and watched and smoked my pipe;
"Bravo!" I said, "I recognize
The phrensy of your prototype!"

His scanty hair he wildly tore:
"That's right," said I, "it shows your breed."
He danced - he stamped - he wildly swore -
"Bless me, that's very fine indeed!"

"Sir," said the grand Shakesperian boy
(Continuing to blaze away),
"You think my face a source of joy;
That shows you know not what you say.

"Forgive these yells and cellar-flaps:
I'm always thrown in some such state
When on his face well-meaning chaps
This wretched man congratulate.

"For, oh! this face - this pointed chin -

This nose - this brow - these eyeballs too,
Have always been the origin
Of all the woes I ever knew!

"If to the play my way I find,
To see a grand Shakesperian piece,
I have no rest, no ease of mind
Until the author's puppets cease.

"Men nudge each other - thus - and say,
'This certainly is SHAKESPEARE'S son,'
And merry wags (of course in play)
Cry 'Author!' when the piece is done.

"In church the people stare at me,
Their soul the sermon never binds;
I catch them looking round to see,
And thoughts of SHAKESPEARE fill their minds.

"And sculptors, fraught with cunning wile,
Who find it difficult to crown
A bust with BROWN'S insipid smile,
Or TOMKINS'S unmannered frown,

"Yet boldly make my face their own,
When (oh, presumption!) they require
To animate a paving-stone
With SHAKESPEARE'S intellectual fire.

"At parties where young ladies gaze,
And I attempt to speak my joy,
'Hush, pray,' some lovely creature says,
'The fond illusion don't destroy!'

"Whene'er I speak, my soul is wrung
With these or some such whisperings:
'Tis pity that a SHAKESPEARE'S tongue
Should say such un-Shakesperian things!'

"I should not thus be criticised
Had I a face of common wont:
Don't envy me - now, be advised!"

And, now I think of it, I don't!

William Schwenck Gilbert

Anglicised Utopia

Society has quite forsaken all her wicked courses,
Which empties our police courts, and abolishes divorces.
(Divorce is nearly obsolete in England.)
No tolerance we show to undeserving rank and splendour;
For the higher his position is, the greater the offender.
(That's a maxim that is prevalent in England.)
No Peeress at our Drawing-Room before the Presence passes
Who wouldn't be accepted by the lower-middle classes;
Each shady dame, whatever be her rank, is bowed out neatly.
In short, this happy country has been Anglicised completely!
It really is surprising
What a thorough Anglicising
We've brought about - Utopia's quite another land;
In her enterprising movements,
She is England - with improvements,
Which we dutifully offer to our mother-land!

Our city we have beautified - we've done it willy-nilly -
And all that isn't Belgrave Square is Strand and Piccadilly.
(They haven't any slummeries in England.)
We have solved the labour question with discrimination polished,
So poverty is obsolete and hunger is abolished -
(They are going to abolish it in England.)
The Chamberlain our native stage has purged, beyond a question,
Of "risky" situation and indelicate suggestion;
No piece is tolerated if it's costumed indiscreetly -
In short, this happy country has been Anglicised completely!
It really is surprising
What a thorough Anglicising
We've brought about - Utopia's quite another land;
In her enterprising movements,
She is England - with improvements,
Which we dutifully offer to our mother-land!

Our Peerage we've remodelled on an intellectual basis,
Which certainly is rough on our hereditary races -
(They are going to remodel it in England.)
The Brewers and the Cotton Lords no longer seek admission,
And Literary Merit meets with proper recognition -

(As Literary Merit does in England!)

Who knows but we may count among our intellectual chickens
Like them an Earl of Thackeray and p'raps a Duke of Dickens -
Lord Fildes and Viscount Millais (when they come) we'll welcome
sweetly -

And then, this happy country will be Anglicised completely!

It really is surprising

What a thorough Anglicising

We've brought about - Utopia's quite another land;

In her enterprising movements,

She is England - with improvements,

Which we dutifully offer to our mother-land!

William Schwenck Gilbert

Annie Protheroe. A Legend Of Stratford-Le-Bow

OH! listen to the tale of little ANNIE PROTHEROE.
She kept a small post-office in the neighbourhood of BOW;
She loved a skilled mechanic, who was famous in his day -
A gentle executioner whose name was GILBERT CLAY.

I think I hear you say, "A dreadful subject for your rhymes!"
O reader, do not shrink - he didn't live in modern times!
He lived so long ago (the sketch will show it at a glance)
That all his actions glitter with the lime-light of Romance.

In busy times he laboured at his gentle craft all day -
"No doubt you mean his Cal-craft," you amusingly will say -
But, no - he didn't operate with common bits of string,
He was a Public Headsman, which is quite another thing.

And when his work was over, they would ramble o'er the lea,
And sit beneath the frondage of an elderberry tree,
And ANNIE'S simple prattle entertained him on his walk,
For public executions formed the subject of her talk.

And sometimes he'd explain to her, which charmed her very much,
How famous operators vary very much in touch,
And then, perhaps, he'd show how he himself performed the trick,
And illustrate his meaning with a poppy and a stick.

Or, if it rained, the little maid would stop at home, and look
At his favourable notices, all pasted in a book,
And then her cheek would flush - her swimming eyes would dance with
joy
In a glow of admiration at the prowess of her boy.

One summer eve, at supper-time, the gentle GILBERT said
(As he helped his pretty ANNIE to a slice of collared head),
"This reminds me I must settle on the next ensuing day
The hash of that unmitigated villain PETER GRAY."

He saw his ANNIE tremble and he saw his ANNIE start,
Her changing colour trumpeted the flutter at her heart;
Young GILBERT'S manly bosom rose and sank with jealous fear,

And he said, "O gentle ANNIE, what's the meaning of this here?"

And ANNIE answered, blushing in an interesting way,
"You think, no doubt, I'm sighing for that felon PETER GRAY:
That I was his young woman is unquestionably true,
But not since I began a-keeping company with you."

Then GILBERT, who was irritable, rose and loudly swore
He'd know the reason why if she refused to tell him more;
And she answered (all the woman in her flashing from her eyes)
"You mustn't ask no questions, and you won't be told no lies!

"Few lovers have the privilege enjoyed, my dear, by you,
Of chopping off a rival's head and quartering him too!
Of vengeance, dear, to-morrow you will surely take your fill!"
And GILBERT ground his molars as he answered her, "I will!"

Young GILBERT rose from table with a stern determined look,
And, frowning, took an inexpensive hatchet from its hook;
And ANNIE watched his movements with an interested air -
For the morrow - for the morrow he was going to prepare!

He chipped it with a hammer and he chopped it with a bill,
He poured sulphuric acid on the edge of it, until
This terrible Avenger of the Majesty of Law
Was far less like a hatchet than a dissipated saw.

And ANNIE said, "O GILBERT, dear, I do not understand
Why ever you are injuring that hatchet in your hand?"
He said, "It is intended for to lacerate and flay
The neck of that unmitigated villain PETER GRAY!"

"Now, GILBERT," ANNIE answered, "wicked headsman, just beware -
I won't have PETER tortured with that horrible affair;
If you appear with that, you may depend you'll rue the day."
But GILBERT said, "Oh, shall I?" which was just his nasty way.

He saw a look of anger from her eyes distinctly dart,
For ANNIE was a woman, and had pity in her heart!
She wished him a good evening - he answered with a glare;
She only said, "Remember, for your ANNIE will be there!"

The morrow GILBERT boldly on the scaffold took his stand,
With a vizor on his face and with a hatchet in his hand,
And all the people noticed that the Engine of the Law
Was far less like a hatchet than a dissipated saw.

The felon very coolly loosed his collar and his stock,
And placed his wicked head upon the handy little block.
The hatchet was uplifted for to settle PETER GRAY,
When GILBERT plainly heard a woman's voice exclaiming, "Stay!"

'Twas ANNIE, gentle ANNIE, as you'll easily believe.
"O GILBERT, you must spare him, for I bring him a reprieve,
It came from our Home Secretary many weeks ago,
And passed through that post-office which I used to keep at Bow.

"I loved you, loved you madly, and you know it, GILBERT CLAY,
And as I'd quite surrendered all idea of PETER GRAY,
I quietly suppressed it, as you'll clearly understand,
For I thought it might be awkward if he came and claimed my hand.

"In anger at my secret (which I could not tell before),
To lacerate poor PETER GRAY vindictively you swore;
I told you if you used that blunted axe you'd rue the day,
And so you will, young GILBERT, for I'll marry PETER GRAY!"

[AND SO SHE DID.]

William Schwenck Gilbert

At A Pantomime. By A Bilious One

An Actor sits in doubtful gloom,
His stock-in-trade unfurled,
In a damp funereal dressing-room
In the Theatre Royal, World.

He comes to town at Christmas-time,
And braves its icy breath,
To play in that favourite pantomime,
HARLEQUIN LIFE AND DEATH.

A hoary flowing wig his weird
Unearthly cranium caps,
He hangs a long benevolent beard
On a pair of empty chaps.

To smooth his ghastly features down
The actor's art he cribs, -
A long and a flowing padded gown.
Bedecks his rattling ribs.

He cries, "Go on - begin, begin!
Turn on the light of lime -
I'm dressed for jolly Old Christmas, in
A favourite pantomime!"

The curtain's up - the stage all black -
Time and the year nigh sped -
Time as an advertising quack -
The Old Year nearly dead.

The wand of Time is waved, and lo!
Revealed Old Christmas stands,
And little children chuckle and crow,
And laugh and clap their hands.

The cruel old scoundrel brightens up
At the death of the Olden Year,
And he waves a gorgeous golden cup,
And bids the world good cheer.

The little ones hail the festive King, -
No thought can make them sad.
Their laughter comes with a sounding ring,
They clap and crow like mad!

They only see in the humbug old
A holiday every year,
And handsome gifts, and joys untold,
And unaccustomed cheer.

The old ones, palsied, blear, and hoar,
Their breasts in anguish beat -
They've seen him seventy times before,
How well they know the cheat!

They've seen that ghastly pantomime,
They've felt its blighting breath,
They know that rollicking Christmas-time
Meant Cold and Want and Death, -

Starvation - Poor Law Union fare -
And deadly cramps and chills,
And illness - illness everywhere,
And crime, and Christmas bills.

They know Old Christmas well, I ween,
Those men of ripened age;
They've often, often, often seen
That Actor off the stage!

They see in his gay rotundity
A clumsy stuffed-out dress -
They see in the cup he waves on high
A tinselled emptiness.

Those aged men so lean and wan,
They've seen it all before,
They know they'll see the charlatan
But twice or three times more.

And so they bear with dance and song,

And crimson foil and green,
They wearily sit, and grimly long
For the Transformation Scene.

William Schwenck Gilbert

Babette's Love

BABETTE she was a fisher gal,
With jupon striped and cap in crimps.
She passed her days inside the Halle,
Or catching little nimble shrimps.
Yet she was sweet as flowers in May,
With no professional bouquet.

JACOT was, of the Customs bold,
An officer, at gay Boulogne,
He loved BABETTE - his love he told,
And sighed, "Oh, soyez vous my own!"
But "Non!" said she, "JACOT, my pet,
Vous etes trop scraggy pour BABETTE.

"Of one alone I nightly dream,
An able mariner is he,
And gaily serves the Gen'ral Steam-
Boat Navigation Companee.
I'll marry him, if he but will -
His name, I rather think, is BILL.

"I see him when he's not aware,
Upon our hospitable coast,
Reclining with an easy air
Upon the PORT against a post,
A-thinking of, I'll dare to say,
His native Chelsea far away!"

"Oh, mon!" exclaimed the Customs bold,
"Mes yeux!" he said (which means "my eye")
"Oh, chere!" he also cried, I'm told,
"Par Jove," he added, with a sigh.
"Oh, mon! oh, chere! mes yeux! par Jove!
Je n'aime pas cet enticing cove!"

The PANTHER'S captain stood hard by,
He was a man of morals strict
If e'er a sailor winked his eye,
Straightway he had that sailor licked,

Mast-headed all (such was his code)
Who dashed or jiggered, blessed or blowed.

He wept to think a tar of his
Should lean so gracefully on posts,
He sighed and sobbed to think of this,
On foreign, French, and friendly coasts.
"It's human natur', p'raps - if so,
Oh, isn't human natur' low!"

He called his BILL, who pulled his curl,
He said, "My BILL, I understand
You've captivated some young gurl
On this here French and foreign land.
Her tender heart your beauties jog -
They do, you know they do, you dog.

"You have a graceful way, I learn,
Of leaning airily on posts,
By which you've been and caused to burn
A tender flame on these here coasts.
A fisher gurl, I much regret, -
Her age, sixteen - her name, BABETTE.

"You'll marry her, you gentle tar -
Your union I myself will bless,
And when you matrimoned are,
I will appoint her stewardess."
But WILLIAM hitched himself and sighed,
And cleared his throat, and thus replied:

"Not so: unless you're fond of strife,
You'd better mind your own affairs,
I have an able-bodied wife
Awaiting me at Wapping Stairs;
If all this here to her I tell,
She'll larrup you and me as well.

"Skin-deep, and valued at a pin,
Is beauty such as VENUS owns -
HER beauty is beneath her skin,
And lies in layers on her bones.

The other sailors of the crew
They always calls her 'Whopping Sue!'"

"Oho!" the Captain said, "I see!
And is she then so very strong?"
"She'd take your honour's scruff," said he
"And pitch you over to Bolong!"
"I pardon you," the Captain said,
"The fair BABETTE you needn't wed."

Perhaps the Customs had his will,
And coaxed the scornful girl to wed,
Perhaps the Captain and his BILL,
And WILLIAM'S little wife are dead;
Or p'raps they're all alive and well:
I cannot, cannot, cannot tell.

William Schwenck Gilbert

Ben Allah Achmet, Or, The Fatal Tum

I once did know a Turkish man
Whom I upon a two-pair-back met,
His name it was EFFENDI KHAN
BACKSHEESH PASHA BEN ALLAH ACHMET.

A DOCTOR BROWN I also knew -
I've often eaten of his bounty;
The Turk and he they lived at Hooe,
In Sussex, that delightful county!

I knew a nice young lady there,
Her name was EMILY MACPHERSON,
And though she wore another's hair,
She was an interesting person.

The Turk adored the maid of Hooe
(Although his harem would have shocked her).
But BROWN adored that maiden too:
He was a most seductive doctor.

They'd follow her where'er she'd go -
A course of action most improper;
She neither knew by sight, and so
For neither of them cared a copper.

BROWN did not know that Turkish male,
He might have been his sainted mother:
The people in this simple tale
Are total strangers to each other.

One day that Turk he sickened sore,
And suffered agonies oppressive;
He threw himself upon the floor
And rolled about in pain excessive.

It made him moan, it made him groan,
And almost wore him to a mummy.
Why should I hesitate to own
That pain was in his little tummy?

At length a doctor came, and rung
(As ALLAH ACHMET had desired),
Who felt his pulse, looked up his tongue,
And hemmed and hawed, and then inquired:

"Where is the pain that long has preyed
Upon you in so sad a way, sir?"
The Turk he giggled, blushed, and said:
I don't exactly like to say, sir."

"Come, nonsense!" said good DOCTOR BROWN.
"So this is Turkish coyness, is it?
You must contrive to fight it down -
Come, come, sir, please to be explicit."

The Turk he shyly bit his thumb,
And coyly blushed like one half-witted,
"The pain is in my little tum,"
He, whispering, at length admitted.

"Then take you this, and take you that -
Your blood flows sluggish in its channel -
You must get rid of all this fat,
And wear my medicated flannel.

"You'll send for me when you're in need -
My name is BROWN - your life I've saved it."
"My rival!" shrieked the invalid,
And drew a mighty sword and waved it:

"This to thy weazand, Christian pest!"
Aloud the Turk in frenzy yelled it,
And drove right through the doctor's chest
The sabre and the hand that held it.

The blow was a decisive one,
And DOCTOR BROWN grew deadly pasty,
"Now see the mischief that you've done -
You Turks are so extremely hasty.

"There are two DOCTOR BROWNS in Hooe -

HE'S short and stout, I'M tall and wizen;
You've been and run the wrong one through,
That's how the error has arisen."

The accident was thus explained,
Apologies were only heard now:
"At my mistake I'm really pained -
I am, indeed - upon my word now.

"With me, sir, you shall be interred,
A mausoleum grand awaits me."
"Oh, pray don't say another word,
I'm sure that more than compensates me.

"But p'r'aps, kind Turk, you're full inside?"
"There's room," said he, "for any number."
And so they laid them down and died.
In proud Stamboul they sleep their slumber.

William Schwenck Gilbert

Blue Blood

Spurn not the nobly born
With love affected,
Nor treat with virtuous scorn
The well connected.
High rank involves no shame -
We boast an equal claim
With him of humble name
To be respected!
Blue blood! Blue blood!
When virtuous love is sought,
Thy power is naught,
Though dating from the Flood,
Blue blood!

Spare us the bitter pain
Of stern denials,
Nor with low-born disdain
Augment our trials.
Hearts just as pure and fair
May beat in Belgrave Square
As in the lowly air
Of Seven Dials!
Blue blood! Blue blood!
Of what avail art thou
To serve me now?
Though dating from the Flood,
Blue blood!

William Schwenck Gilbert

Bob Polter

BOB POLTER was a navvy, and
His hands were coarse, and dirty too,
His homely face was rough and tanned,
His time of life was thirty-two.

He lived among a working clan
(A wife he hadn't got at all),
A decent, steady, sober man -
No saint, however - not at all.

He smoked, but in a modest way,
Because he thought he needed it;
He drank a pot of beer a day,
And sometimes he exceeded it.

At times he'd pass with other men
A loud convivial night or two,
With, very likely, now and then,
On Saturdays, a fight or two.

But still he was a sober soul,
A labour-never-shirking man,
Who paid his way - upon the whole
A decent English working man.

One day, when at the Nelson's Head
(For which he may be blamed of you),
A holy man appeared, and said,
"Oh, ROBERT, I'm ashamed of you."

He laid his hand on ROBERT'S beer
Before he could drink up any,
And on the floor, with sigh and tear,
He poured the pot of "thruppenny."

"Oh, ROBERT, at this very bar
A truth you'll be discovering,
A good and evil genius are
Around your noddle hovering.

"They both are here to bid you shun
The other one's society,
For Total Abstinence is one,
The other, Inebriety."

He waved his hand - a vapour came -
A wizard POLTER reckoned him;
A boggy rose and called his name,
And with his finger beckoned him.

The monster's salient points to sum, -
His heavy breath was portery:
His glowing nose suggested rum:
His eyes were gin-and-WORtery.

His dress was torn - for dregs of ale
And slops of gin had rusted it;
His pimpled face was wan and pale,
Where filth had not encrusted it.

"Come, POLTER," said the fiend, "begin,
And keep the bowl a-flowing on -
A working man needs pints of gin
To keep his clockwork going on."

BOB shuddered: "Ah, you've made a miss
If you take me for one of you:
You filthy beast, get out of this -
BOB POLTER don't want none of you."

The demon gave a drunken shriek,
And crept away in stealthiness,
And lo! instead, a person sleek,
Who seemed to burst with healthiness.

"In me, as your adviser hints,
Of Abstinence you've got a type -
Of MR. TWEEDIE'S pretty prints
I am the happy prototype.

"If you abjure the social toast,

And pipes, and such frivolities,
You possibly some day may boast
My prepossessing qualities!"

BOB rubbed his eyes, and made 'em blink:
"You almost make me tremble, you!
If I abjure fermented drink,
Shall I, indeed, resemble you?"

"And will my whiskers curl so tight?
My cheeks grow smug and muttony?
My face become so red and white?
My coat so blue and buttony?"

"Will trousers, such as yours, array
Extremities inferior?
Will chubbiness assert its sway
All over my exterior?"

"In this, my unenlightened state,
To work in heavy boots I comes;
Will pumps henceforward decorate
My tiddle toddle tootsicums?"

"And shall I get so plump and fresh,
And look no longer seedily?
My skin will henceforth fit my flesh
So tightly and so TWEEDIE-ly?"

The phantom said, "You'll have all this,
You'll know no kind of huffiness,
Your life will be one chubby bliss,
One long unruffled puffiness!"

"Be off!" said irritated BOB.
"Why come you here to bother one?
You pharisaical old snob,
You're wuss almost than t'other one!"

"I takes my pipe - I takes my pot,
And drunk I'm never seen to be:
I'm no teetotaller or sot,

And as I am I mean to be!"

William Schwenck Gilbert

Braid The Raven Hair

Braid the raven hair,
Weave the supple tress,
Deck the maiden fair
In her loveliness;
Paint the pretty face,
Dye the coral lip,
Emphasise the grace
Of her ladyship!
Art and nature, thus allied,
Go to make a pretty bride!

Sit with downcast eye,
Let it brim with dew;
Try if you can cry,
We will do so, too.
When you're summoned, start
Like a frightened roe;
Flutter, little heart,
Colour, come and go!
Modesty at marriage tide
Well becomes a pretty bride!

William Schwenck Gilbert

Brave Alum Bey

Oh, big was the bosom of brave ALUM BEY,
And also the region that under it lay,
In safety and peril remarkably cool,
And he dwelt on the banks of the river Stamboul.

Each morning he went to his garden, to cull
A bunch of zenana or sprig of bul-bul,
And offered the bouquet, in exquisite bloom,
To BACKSHEESH, the daughter of RAHAT LAKOUM.

No maiden like BACKSHEESH could tastily cook
A kettle of kismet or joint of tchibouk,
As ALUM, brave fellow! sat pensively by,
With a bright sympathetic ka-bob in his eye.

Stern duty compelled him to leave her one day -
(A ship's supercargo was brave ALUM BEY) -
To pretty young BACKSHEESH he made a salaam,
And sailed to the isle of Seringapatam.

"O ALUM," said she, "think again, ere you go -
Hareems may arise and Moguls they may blow;
You may strike on a fez, or be drowned, which is wuss!"
But ALUM embraced her and spoke to her thus:

"Cease weeping, fair BACKSHEESH! I willingly swear
Cork jackets and trousers I always will wear,
And I also throw in a large number of oaths
That I never - no, NEVER - will take off my clothes!"

*

They left Madagascar away on their right,
And made Clapham Common the following night,
Then lay on their oars for a fortnight or two,
Becalmed in the ocean of Honololu.

One day ALUM saw, with alarm in his breast,
A cloud on the nor-sow-sow-nor-sow-nor-west;

The wind it arose, and the crew gave a scream,
For they knew it - they knew it! - the dreaded Hareem!!

The mast it went over, and so did the sails,
Brave ALUM threw over his casks and his bales;
The billows arose as the weather grew thick,
And all except ALUM were terribly sick.

The crew were but three, but they holloa'd for nine,
They howled and they blubbered with wail and with whine:
The skipper he fainted away in the fore,
For he hadn't the heart for to skip any more.

"Ho, coward!" said ALUM, "with heart of a child!
Thou son of a party whose grave is defiled!
Is ALUM in terror? is ALUM afeard?
Ho! ho! If you had one I'd laugh at your beard."

His eyeball it gleamed like a furnace of coke;
He boldly inflated his clothes as he spoke;
He daringly felt for the corks on his chest,
And he recklessly tightened the belt at his breast.

For he knew, the brave ALUM, that, happen what might,
With belts and cork-jacketing, HE was all right;
Though others might sink, he was certain to swim, -
No Hareem whatever had terrors for him!

They begged him to spare from his personal store
A single cork garment - they asked for no more;
But he couldn't, because of the number of oaths
That he never - no, never! - would take off his clothes.

The billows dash o'er them and topple around,
They see they are pretty near sure to be drowned.
A terrible wave o'er the quarter-deck breaks,
And the vessel it sinks in a couple of shakes!

The dreadful Hareem, though it knows how to blow,
Expend all its strength in a minute or so;
When the vessel had foundered, as I have detailed,
The tempest subsided, and quiet prevailed.

One seized on a cork with a yelling "Ha! ha!"
(Its bottle had 'prisoned a pint of Pacha) -
Another a toothpick - another a tray -
"Alas! it is useless!" said brave ALUM BEY.

"To holloa and kick is a very bad plan:
Get it over, my tulips, as soon as you can;
You'd better lay hold of a good lump of lead,
And cling to it tightly until you are dead.

"Just raise your hands over your pretty heads - so -
Right down to the bottom you're certain to go.
Ta! ta! I'm afraid we shall not meet again" -
For the truly courageous are truly humane.

Brave ALUM was picked up the very next day -
A man-o'-war sighted him smoking away;
With hunger and cold he was ready to drop,
So they sent him below and they gave him a chop.

O reader, or readress, whichever you be,
You weep for the crew who have sunk in the sea?
O reader, or readress, read farther, and dry
The bright sympathetic ka-bob in your eye.

That ship had a grapple with three iron spikes, -
It's lowered, and, ha! on a something it strikes!
They haul it aboard with a British "heave-ho!"
And what it has fished the drawing will show.

There was WILSON, and PARKER, and TOMLINSON, too -
(The first was the captain, the others the crew) -
As lively and spry as a Malabar ape,
Quite pleased and surprised at their happy escape.

And ALUM, brave fellow, who stood in the fore,
And never expected to look on them more,
Was really delighted to see them again,
For the truly courageous are truly humane.

Captain Reece

Of all the ships upon the blue,
No ship contained a better crew
Than that of worthy CAPTAIN REECE,
Commanding of THE MANTELPIECE.

He was adored by all his men,
For worthy CAPTAIN REECE, R.N.,
Did all that lay within him to
Promote the comfort of his crew.

If ever they were dull or sad,
Their captain danced to them like mad,
Or told, to make the time pass by,
Droll legends of his infancy.

A feather bed had every man,
Warm slippers and hot-water can,
Brown windsor from the captain's store,
A valet, too, to every four.

Did they with thirst in summer burn,
Lo, seltzogenes at every turn,
And on all very sultry days
Cream ices handed round on trays.

Then currant wine and ginger pops
Stood handily on all the "tops;"
And also, with amusement rife,
A "Zoetrope, or Wheel of Life."

New volumes came across the sea
From MISTER MUDIE'S libraree;
THE TIMES and SATURDAY REVIEW
Beguiled the leisure of the crew.

Kind-hearted CAPTAIN REECE, R.N.,
Was quite devoted to his men;
In point of fact, good CAPTAIN REECE
Beatified THE MANTELPIECE.

One summer eve, at half-past ten,
He said (addressing all his men):
"Come, tell me, please, what I can do
To please and gratify my crew.

"By any reasonable plan
I'll make you happy if I can;
My own convenience count as NIL:
It is my duty, and I will."

Then up and answered WILLIAM LEE
(The kindly captain's coxswain he,
A nervous, shy, low-spoken man),
He cleared his throat and thus began:

"You have a daughter, CAPTAIN REECE,
Ten female cousins and a niece,
A Ma, if what I'm told is true,
Six sisters, and an aunt or two.

"Now, somehow, sir, it seems to me,
More friendly-like we all should be,
If you united of 'em to
Unmarried members of the crew.

"If you'd ameliorate our life,
Let each select from them a wife;
And as for nervous me, old pal,
Give me your own enchanting gal!"

Good CAPTAIN REECE, that worthy man,
Debated on his coxswain's plan:
"I quite agree," he said, "O BILL;
It is my duty, and I will.

"My daughter, that enchanting gurl,
Has just been promised to an Earl,
And all my other familiee
To peers of various degree.

"But what are dukes and viscounts to

The happiness of all my crew?
The word I gave you I'll fulfil;
It is my duty, and I will.

"As you desire it shall befall,
I'll settle thousands on you all,
And I shall be, despite my hoard,
The only bachelor on board."

The boatswain of THE MANTELPIECE,
He blushed and spoke to CAPTAIN REECE:
"I beg your honour's leave," he said;
"If you would wish to go and wed,

"I have a widowed mother who
Would be the very thing for you -
She long has loved you from afar:
She washes for you, CAPTAIN R."

The Captain saw the dame that day -
Addressed her in his playful way -
"And did it want a wedding ring?
It was a tempting ickle sing!

"Well, well, the chaplain I will seek,
We'll all be married this day week
At yonder church upon the hill;
It is my duty, and I will!"

The sisters, cousins, aunts, and niece,
And widowed Ma of CAPTAIN REECE,
Attended there as they were bid;
It was their duty, and they did.

William Schwenck Gilbert

Damon Vs. Pythias

Two better friends you wouldn't pass
Throughout a summer's day,
Than DAMON and his PYTHIAS, -
Two merchant princes they.

At school together they contrived
All sorts of boyish larks;
And, later on, together thrived
As merry merchants' clerks.

And then, when many years had flown,
They rose together till
They bought a business of their own -
And they conduct it still.

They loved each other all their lives,
Dissent they never knew,
And, stranger still, their very wives
Were rather friendly too.

Perhaps you think, to serve my ends,
These statements I refute,
When I admit that these dear friends
Were parties to a suit?

But 'twas a friendly action, for
Good PYTHIAS, as you see,
Fought merely as executor,
And DAMON as trustee.

They laughed to think, as through the throng
Of suitors sad they passed,
That they, who'd lived and loved so long,
Should go to law at last.

The junior briefs they kindly let
Two sucking counsel hold;
These learned persons never yet
Had fingered suitors' gold.

But though the happy suitors two
Were friendly as could be,
Not so the junior counsel who
Were earning maiden fee.

They too, till then, were friends. At school
They'd done each other's sums,
And under Oxford's gentle rule
Had been the closest chums.

But now they met with scowl and grin
In every public place,
And often snapped their fingers in
Each other's learned face.

It almost ended in a fight
When they on path or stair
Met face to face. They made it quite
A personal affair.

And when at length the case was called
(It came on rather late),
Spectators really were appalled
To see their deadly hate.

One junior rose - with eyeballs tense,
And swollen frontal veins:
To all his powers of eloquence
He gave the fullest reins.

His argument was novel - for
A verdict he relied
On blackening the junior
Upon the other side.

"Oh," said the Judge, in robe and fur,
"The matter in dispute
To arbitration pray refer -
This is a friendly suit."

And PYTHIAS, in merry mood,

Digged DAMON in the side;
And DAMON, tickled with the feud,
With other digs replied.

But oh! those deadly counsel twain,
Who were such friends before,
Were never reconciled again -
They quarrelled more and more.

At length it happened that they met
On Alpine heights one day,
And thus they paid each one his debt,
Their fury had its way -

They seized each other in a trice,
With scorn and hatred filled,
And, falling from a precipice,
They, both of them, were killed.

William Schwenck Gilbert

Disillusioned - By An Ex-Enthusiast

Oh, that my soul its gods could see
As years ago they seemed to me
When first I painted them;
Invested with the circumstance
Of old conventional romance:
Exploded theorem!

The bard who could, all men above,
Inflame my soul with songs of love,
And, with his verse, inspire
The craven soul who feared to die
With all the glow of chivalry
And old heroic fire;

I found him in a beerhouse tap
Awaking from a gin-born nap,
With pipe and sloven dress;
Amusing chums, who fooled his bent,
With muddy, maudlin sentiment,
And tipsy foolishness!

The novelist, whose painting pen
To legions of fictitious men
A real existence lends,
Brain-people whom we rarely fail,
Whene'er we hear their names, to hail
As old and welcome friends;

I found in clumsy snuffy suit,
In seedy glove, and blucher boot,
Uncomfortably big.
Particularly commonplace,
With vulgar, coarse, stockbroking face,
And spectacles and wig.

My favourite actor who, at will,
With mimic woe my eyes could fill
With unaccustomed brine:
A being who appeared to me

(Before I knew him well) to be
A song incarnadine;

I found a coarse unpleasant man
With speckled chin - unhealthy, wan -
Of self-importance full:
Existing in an atmosphere
That reeked of gin and pipes and beer -
Conceited, fractious, dull.

The warrior whose ennobled name
Is woven with his country's fame,
Triumphant over all,
I found weak, palsied, bloated, blear;
His province seemed to be, to leer
At bonnets in Pall Mall.

Would that ye always shone, who write,
Bathed in your own innate limelight,
And ye who battles wage,
Or that in darkness I had died
Before my soul had ever sighed
To see you off the stage!

William Schwenck Gilbert

Don'T Forget!

Now, Marco, dear,
My wishes hear:
While you're away
It's understood
You will be good,
And not too gay.
To every trace
Of maiden grace
You will be blind,
And will not glance
By any chance
On womankind!
If you are wise,
You'll shut your eyes
Till we arrive,
And not address
A lady less
Than forty-five;
You'll please to frown
On every gown
That you may see;
And O, my pet,
You won't forget
You've married me!

O, my darling, O, my pet,
Whatever else you may forget,
In yonder isle beyond the sea,
O, don't forget you've married me!

You'll lay your head
Upon your bed
At set of sun.
You will not sing
Of anything
To any one:
You'll sit and mope
All day, I hope,
And shed a tear

Upon the life
Your little wife
Is passing here!
And if so be
You think of me,
Please tell the moon;
I'll read it all
In rays that fall
On the lagoon:
You'll be so kind
As tell the wind
How you may be,
And send me words
By little birds
To comfort me!

And O, my darling, O, my pet,
Whatever else you may forget,
In yonder isle beyond the sea,
O, don't forget you've married me!

William Schwenck Gilbert

Eheu Fugaces -- !

The air is charged with amatory numbers -
Soft madrigals, and dreamy lovers' lays.
Peace, peace, old heart! Why waken from its slumbers
The aching memory of the old, old days?

Time was when Love and I were well acquainted;
Time was when we walked ever hand in hand;
A saintly youth, with worldly thought untainted,
None better loved than I in all the land!
Time was, when maidens of the noblest station,
Forsaking even military men,
Would gaze upon me, rapt in adoration -
Ah me, I was a fair young curate then!

Had I a headache? sighed the maids assembled;
Had I a cold? welled forth the silent tear;
Did I look pale? then half a parish trembled;
And when I coughed all thought the end was near!
I had no care - no jealous doubts hung o'er me -
For I was loved beyond all other men.
Fled gilded dukes and belted earls before me -
Ah me, I was a pale young curate then!

William Schwenck Gilbert

Ellen Mcjones Aberdeen

MACPHAIRSON CLONGLOCKETTY ANGUS McCLAN
Was the son of an elderly labouring man;
You've guessed him a Scotchman, shrewd reader, at sight,
And p'r'aps altogether, shrewd reader, you're right.

From the bonnie blue Forth to the lovely Deeside,
Round by Dingwall and Wrath to the mouth of the Clyde,
There wasn't a child or a woman or man
Who could pipe with CLONGLOCKETTY ANGUS McCLAN.

No other could wake such detestable groans,
With reed and with chaunter - with bag and with drones:
All day and ill night he delighted the chieils
With sniggering pibrochs and jiggety reels.

He'd clamber a mountain and squat on the ground,
And the neighbouring maidens would gather around
To list to the pipes and to gaze in his een,
Especially ELLEN McJONES ABERDEEN.

All loved their McCLAN, save a Sassenach brute,
Who came to the Highlands to fish and to shoot;
He dressed himself up in a Highlander way,
Tho' his name it was PATTISON CORBY TORBAY.

TORBAY had incurred a good deal of expense
To make him a Scotchman in every sense;
But this is a matter, you'll readily own,
That isn't a question of tailors alone.

A Sassenach chief may be bonily built,
He may purchase a sporran, a bonnet, and kilt;
Stick a skein in his hose - wear an acre of stripes -
But he cannot assume an affection for pipes.

CLONGLOCKETTY'S pipings all night and all day
Quite frenzied poor PATTISON CORBY TORBAY;
The girls were amused at his singular spleen,
Especially ELLEN McJONES ABERDEEN,

"MACPHAIRSON CLONGLOCKETTY ANGUS, my lad,
With pibrochs and reels you are driving me mad.
If you really must play on that cursed affair,
My goodness! play something resembling an air."

Boiled over the blood of MACPHAIRSON McCLAN -
The Clan of Clongloketty rose as one man;
For all were enraged at the insult, I ween -
Especially ELLEN McJONES ABERDEEN.

"Let's show," said McCLAN, "to this Sassenach loon
That the bagpipes CAN play him a regular tune.
Let's see," said McCLAN, as he thoughtfully sat,
"'IN MY COTTAGE' is easy - I'll practise at that."

He blew at his "Cottage," and blew with a will,
For a year, seven months, and a fortnight, until
(You'll hardly believe it) McCLAN, I declare,
Elicited something resembling an air.

It was wild - it was fitful - as wild as the breeze -
It wandered about into several keys;
It was jerky, spasmodic, and harsh, I'm aware;
But still it distinctly suggested an air.

The Sassenach screamed, and the Sassenach danced;
He shrieked in his agony - bellowed and pranced;
And the maidens who gathered rejoiced at the scene -
Especially ELLEN McJONES ABERDEEN.

"Hech gather, hech gather, hech gather around;
And fill a' ye lugs wi' the exquisite sound.
An air fra' the bagpipes - beat that if ye can!
Hurrah for CLONGLOCKETTY ANGUS McCLAN!"

The fame of his piping spread over the land:
Respectable widows proposed for his hand,
And maidens came flocking to sit on the green -
Especially ELLEN McJONES ABERDEEN.

One morning the fidgety Sassenach swore

He'd stand it no longer - he drew his claymore,
And (this was, I think, in extremely bad taste)
Divided CLONGLOCKETTY close to the waist.

Oh! loud were the wailings for ANGUS McCLAN,
Oh! deep was the grief for that excellent man;
The maids stood aghast at the horrible scene -
Especially ELLEN McJONES ABERDEEN.

It sorrowed poor PATTISON CORBY TORBAY
To find them "take on" in this serious way;
He pitied the poor little fluttering birds,
And solaced their souls with the following words:

"Oh, maidens," said PATTISON, touching his hat,
"Don't blubber, my dears, for a fellow like that;
Observe, I'm a very superior man,
A much better fellow than ANGUS McCLAN."

They smiled when he winked and addressed them as "dears,"
And they all of them vowed, as they dried up their tears,
A pleasanter gentleman never was seen -
Especially ELLEN McJONES ABERDEEN.

William Schwenck Gilbert

Emily, John, James, And I

EMILY JANE was a nursery maid,
JAMES was a bold Life Guard,
JOHN was a constable, poorly paid
(And I am a doggerel bard).

A very good girl was EMILY JANE,
JIMMY was good and true,
JOHN was a very good man in the main
(And I am a good man too).

Rivals for EMMIE were JOHNNY and JAMES,
Though EMILY liked them both;
She couldn't tell which had the strongest claims
(And I couldn't take my oath).

But sooner or later you're certain to find
Your sentiments can't lie hid -
JANE thought it was time that she made up her mind
(And I think it was time she did).

Said JANE, with a smirk, and a blush on her face,
"I'll promise to wed the boy
Who takes me to-morrow to Epsom Race!"
(Which I would have done, with joy).

From JOHNNY escaped an expression of pain,
But Jimmy said, "Done with you!
I'll take you with pleasure, my EMILY JANE!"
(And I would have said so too).

JOHN lay on the ground, and he roared like mad
(For JOHNNY was sore perplexed),
And he kicked very hard at a very small lad
(Which I often do, when vexed).

For JOHN was on duty next day with the Force,
To punish all Epsom crimes;
Young people WILL cross when they're clearing the course
(I do it myself, sometimes).

The Derby Day sun glittered gaily on cads,
On maidens with gamboge hair,
On sharpers and pickpockets, swindlers and pads,
(For I, with my harp, was there).

And JIMMY went down with his JANE that day,
And JOHN by the collar or nape
Seized everybody who came in his way
(And I had a narrow escape).

He noticed his EMILY JANE with JIM,
And envied the well-made elf;
And people remarked that he muttered "Oh, dim!"
(I often say "dim!" myself).

JOHN dogged them all day, without asking their leaves;
For his sergeant he told, aside,
That JIMMY and JANE were notorious thieves
(And I think he was justified).

But JAMES wouldn't dream of abstracting a fork,
And JENNY would blush with shame
At stealing so much as a bottle or cork
(A bottle I think fair game).

But, ah! there's another more serious crime!
They wickedly strayed upon
The course, at a critical moment of time
(I pointed them out to JOHN).

The constable fell on the pair in a crack -
And then, with a demon smile,
Let JENNY cross over, but sent JIMMY back
(I played on my harp the while).

Stern JOHNNY their agony loud derides
With a very triumphant sneer -
They weep and they wail from the opposite sides
(And I shed a silent tear).

And JENNY is crying away like mad,
And JIMMY is swearing hard;
And JOHNNY is looking uncommonly glad
(And I am a doggerel bard).

But JIMMY he ventured on crossing again
The scenes of our Isthmian Games -
JOHN caught him, and collared him, giving him pain
(I felt very much for JAMES).

JOHN led him away with a victor's hand,
And JIMMY was shortly seen
In the station-house under the grand Grand Stand
(As many a time I'VE been).

And JIMMY, bad boy, was imprisoned for life,
Though EMILY pleaded hard;
And JOHNNY had EMILY JANE to wife
(And I am a doggerel bard).

William Schwenck Gilbert

Etiquette

The BALLYSHANNON foundered off the coast of Cariboo,
And down in fathoms many went the captain and the crew;
Down went the owners - greedy men whom hope of gain allured:
Oh, dry the starting tear, for they were heavily insured.

Besides the captain and the mate, the owners and the crew,
The passengers were also drowned excepting only two:
Young PETER GRAY, who tasted teas for BAKER, CROOP, AND CO.,
And SOMERS, who from Eastern shores imported indigo.

These passengers, by reason of their clinging to a mast,
Upon a desert island were eventually cast.
They hunted for their meals, as ALEXANDER SELKIRK used,
But they couldn't chat together - they had not been introduced.

For PETER GRAY, and SOMERS too, though certainly in trade,
Were properly particular about the friends they made;
And somehow thus they settled it without a word of mouth -
That GRAY should take the northern half, while SOMERS took the south.

On PETER'S portion oysters grew - a delicacy rare,
But oysters were a delicacy PETER couldn't bear.
On SOMERS' side was turtle, on the shingle lying thick,
Which SOMERS couldn't eat, because it always made him sick.

GRAY gnashed his teeth with envy as he saw a mighty store
Of turtle unmolested on his fellow-creature's shore.
The oysters at his feet aside impatiently he shoved,
For turtle and his mother were the only things he loved.

And SOMERS sighed in sorrow as he settled in the south,
For the thought of PETER'S oysters brought the water to his mouth.
He longed to lay him down upon the shelly bed, and stuff:
He had often eaten oysters, but had never had enough.

How they wished an introduction to each other they had had
When on board the BALLYSHANNON! And it drove them nearly mad
To think how very friendly with each other they might get,
If it wasn't for the arbitrary rule of etiquette!

One day, when out a-hunting for the MUS RIDICULUS,
GRAY overheard his fellow-man soliloquizing thus:
"I wonder how the playmates of my youth are getting on,
M'CONNELL, S. B. WALTERS, PADDY BYLES, and ROBINSON?"

These simple words made PETER as delighted as could be,
Old chummies at the Charterhouse were ROBINSON and he!
He walked straight up to SOMERS, then he turned extremely red,
Hesitated, hummed and hawed a bit, then cleared his throat, and said:

I beg your pardon - pray forgive me if I seem too bold,
But you have breathed a name I knew familiarly of old.
You spoke aloud of ROBINSON - I happened to be by.
You know him?" "Yes, extremely well." "Allow me, so do I."

It was enough: they felt they could more pleasantly get on,
For (ah, the magic of the fact!) they each knew ROBINSON!
And Mr. SOMERS' turtle was at PETER'S service quite,
And Mr. SOMERS punished PETER'S oyster-beds all night.

They soon became like brothers from community of wrongs:
They wrote each other little odes and sang each other songs;
They told each other anecdotes disparaging their wives;
On several occasions, too, they saved each other's lives.

They felt quite melancholy when they parted for the night,
And got up in the morning soon as ever it was light;
Each other's pleasant company they reckoned so upon,
And all because it happened that they both knew ROBINSON!

They lived for many years on that inhospitable shore,
And day by day they learned to love each other more and more.
At last, to their astonishment, on getting up one day,
They saw a frigate anchored in the offing of the bay.

To PETER an idea occurred. "Suppose we cross the main?
So good an opportunity may not be found again."
And SOMERS thought a minute, then ejaculated, "Done!
I wonder how my business in the City's getting on?"

"But stay," said Mr. PETER: "when in England, as you know,

I earned a living tasting teas for BAKER, CROOP, AND CO.,
I may be superseded - my employers think me dead!"
"Then come with me," said SOMERS, "and taste indigo instead."

But all their plans were scattered in a moment when they found
The vessel was a convict ship from Portland, outward bound;
When a boat came off to fetch them, though they felt it very kind,
To go on board they firmly but respectfully declined.

As both the happy settlers roared with laughter at the joke,
They recognized a gentlemanly fellow pulling stroke:
'Twas ROBINSON - a convict, in an unbecoming frock!
Condemned to seven years for misappropriating stock!!!

They laughed no more, for SOMERS thought he had been rather rash
In knowing one whose friend had misappropriated cash;
And PETER thought a foolish tack he must have gone upon
In making the acquaintance of a friend of ROBINSON.

At first they didn't quarrel very openly, I've heard;
They nodded when they met, and now and then exchanged a word:
The word grew rare, and rarer still the nodding of the head,
And when they meet each other now, they cut each other dead.

To allocate the island they agreed by word of mouth,
And PETER takes the north again, and SOMERS takes the south;
And PETER has the oysters, which he hates, in layers thick,
And SOMERS has the turtle - turtle always makes him sick.

William Schwenck Gilbert

Ferdinando And Elvira

PART I.

At a pleasant evening party I had taken down to supper
One whom I will call ELVIRA, and we talked of love and TUPPER,

MR. TUPPER and the Poets, very lightly with them dealing,
For I've always been distinguished for a strong poetic feeling.

Then we let off paper crackers, each of which contained a motto,
And she listened while I read them, till her mother told her not
to.

Then she whispered, "To the ball-room we had better, dear, be
walking;
If we stop down here much longer, really people will be talking."

There were noblemen in coronets, and military cousins,
There were captains by the hundred, there were baronets by dozens.

Yet she heeded not their offers, but dismissed them with a
blessing,
Then she let down all her back hair, which had taken long in
dressing.

Then she had convulsive sobbings in her agitated throttle,
Then she wiped her pretty eyes and smelt her pretty smelling-
bottle.

So I whispered, "Dear ELVIRA, say, - what can the matter be with
you?
Does anything you've eaten, darling POPSY, disagree with you?"

But spite of all I said, her sobs grew more and more distressing,
And she tore her pretty back hair, which had taken long in
dressing.

Then she gazed upon the carpet, at the ceiling, then above me,
And she whispered, "FERDINANDO, do you really, REALLY love me?"

"Love you?" said I, then I sighed, and then I gazed upon her
sweetly -
For I think I do this sort of thing particularly neatly.

"Send me to the Arctic regions, or illimitable azure,
On a scientific goose-chase, with my COXWELL or my GLAISHER!

"Tell me whither I may hie me - tell me, dear one, that I may know
-
Is it up the highest Andes? down a horrible volcano?"

But she said, "It isn't polar bears, or hot volcanic grottoes:
Only find out who it is that writes those lovely cracker mottoes!"

PART II.

"Tell me, HENRY WADSWORTH, ALFRED POET CLOSE, or MISTER TUPPER,
Do you write the bon bon mottoes my ELVIRA pulls at supper?"

But HENRY WADSWORTH smiled, and said he had not had that honour;
And ALFRED, too, disclaimed the words that told so much upon her.

"MISTER MARTIN TUPPER, POET CLOSE, I beg of you inform us;"
But my question seemed to throw them both into a rage enormous.

MISTER CLOSE expressed a wish that he could only get anigh to me;
And MISTER MARTIN TUPPER sent the following reply to me:

"A fool is bent upon a twig, but wise men dread a bandit," -
Which I know was very clever; but I didn't understand it.

Seven weary years I wandered - Patagonia, China, Norway,
Till at last I sank exhausted at a pastrycook his doorway.

There were fuchsias and geraniums, and daffodils and myrtle,
So I entered, and I ordered half a basin of mock turtle.

He was plump and he was chubby, he was smooth and he was rosy,
And his little wife was pretty and particularly cosy.

And he chirped and sang, and skipped about, and laughed with
laughter hearty -

He was wonderfully active for so very stout a party.

And I said, "O gentle pieman, why so very, very merry?
Is it purity of conscience, or your one-and-seven sherry?"

But he answered, "I'm so happy - no profession could be dearer -
If I am not humming 'Tra! la! la!' I'm singing 'Tirer, lirer!'

"First I go and make the patties, and the puddings, and the
jellies,
Then I make a sugar bird-cage, which upon a table swell is;

"Then I polish all the silver, which a supper-table lacquers;
Then I write the pretty mottoes which you find inside the
crackers." -

"Found at last!" I madly shouted. "Gentle pieman, you astound me!"
Then I waved the turtle soup enthusiastically round me.

And I shouted and I danced until he'd quite a crowd around him -
And I rushed away exclaiming, "I have found him! I have found
him!"

And I heard the gentle pieman in the road behind me trilling,
"'Tira, lira!' stop him, stop him! 'Tra! la! la!' the soup's a
shilling!"

But until I reached ELVIRA'S home, I never, never waited,
And ELVIRA to her FERDINAND'S irrevocably mated!

William Schwenck Gilbert

First Love

A clergyman in Berkshire dwelt,
The REVEREND BERNARD POWLES,
And in his church there weekly knelt
At least a hundred souls.

There little ELLEN you might see,
The modest rustic belle;
In maidenly simplicity,
She loved her BERNARD well.

Though ELLEN wore a plain silk gown
Untrimmed with lace or fur,
Yet not a husband in the town
But wished his wife like her.

Though sterner memories might fade,
You never could forget
The child-form of that baby-maid,
The Village Violet!

A simple frightened loveliness,
Whose sacred spirit-part
Shrank timidly from worldly stress,
And nestled in your heart.

POWLES woo'd with every well-worn plan
And all the usual wiles
With which a well-schooled gentleman
A simple heart beguiles.

The hackneyed compliments that bore
World-folks like you and me,
Appeared to her as if they wore
The crown of Poesy.

His winking eyelid sang a song
Her heart could understand,
Eternity seemed scarce too long
When BERNARD squeezed her hand.

He ordered down the martial crew
Of GODFREY'S Grenadiers,
And COOTE conspired with TINNEY to
Ecstaticise her ears.

Beneath her window, veiled from eye,
They nightly took their stand;
On birthdays supplemented by
The Covent Garden band.

And little ELLEN, all alone,
Enraptured sat above,
And thought how blest she was to own
The wealth of POWLES'S love.

I often, often wonder what
Poor ELLEN saw in him;
For calculated he was NOT
To please a woman's whim.

He wasn't good, despite the air
An M.B. waistcoat gives;
Indeed, his dearest friends declare
No greater humbug lives.

No kind of virtue decked this priest,
He'd nothing to allure;
He wasn't handsome in the least, -
He wasn't even poor.

No - he was cursed with acres fat
(A Christian's direst ban),
And gold - yet, notwithstanding that,
Poor ELLEN loved the man.

As unlike BERNARD as could be
Was poor old AARON WOOD
(Disgraceful BERNARD'S curate he):
He was extremely good.

A BAYARD in his moral pluck

Without reproach or fear,
A quiet venerable duck
With fifty pounds a year.

No fault had he - no fad, except
A tendency to strum,
In mode at which you would have wept,
A dull harmonium.

He had no gold with which to hire
The minstrels who could best
Convey a notion of the fire
That raged within his breast.

And so, when COOTE and TINNEY'S Own
Had tootled all they knew,
And when the Guards, completely blown,
Exhaustedly withdrew,

And NELL began to sleepy feel,
Poor AARON then would come,
And underneath her window wheel
His plain harmonium.

He woke her every morn at two,
And having gained her ear,
In vivid colours AARON drew
The sluggard's grim career.

He warbled Apiarian praise,
And taught her in his chant
To shun the dog's pugnacious ways,
And imitate the ant.

Still NELL seemed not, how much he played,
To love him out and out,
Although the admirable maid
Respected him, no doubt.

She told him of her early vow,
And said as BERNARD'S wife
It might be hers to show him how

To rectify his life.

"You are so pure, so kind, so true,
Your goodness shines so bright,
What use would ELLEN be to you?
Believe me, you're all right."

She wished him happiness and health,
And flew on lightning wings
To BERNARD with his dangerous wealth
And all the woes it brings.

William Schwenck Gilbert

General John

The bravest names for fire and flames
And all that mortal durst,
Were GENERAL JOHN and PRIVATE JAMES,
Of the Sixty-seventy-first.

GENERAL JOHN was a soldier tried,
A chief of warlike dons;
A haughty stride and a withering pride
Were MAJOR-GENERAL JOHN'S.

A sneer would play on his martial phiz,
Superior birth to show;
"Pish!" was a favourite word of his,
And he often said "Ho! ho!"

FULL-PRIVATE JAMES described might be,
As a man of a mournful mind;
No characteristic trait had he
Of any distinctive kind.

From the ranks, one day, cried PRIVATE JAMES,
"Oh! MAJOR-GENERAL JOHN,
I've doubts of our respective names,
My mournful mind upon.

"A glimmering thought occurs to me
(Its source I can't unearth),
But I've a kind of a notion we
Were cruelly changed at birth.

"I've a strange idea that each other's names
We've each of us here got on.
Such things have been," said PRIVATE JAMES.
"They have!" sneered GENERAL JOHN.

"My GENERAL JOHN, I swear upon
My oath I think 'tis so - "
"Pish!" proudly sneered his GENERAL JOHN,
And he also said "Ho! ho!"

"My GENERAL JOHN! my GENERAL JOHN!
My GENERAL JOHN!" quoth he,
"This aristocratical sneer upon
Your face I blush to see!

"No truly great or generous cove
Deserving of them names,
Would sneer at a fixed idea that's drove
In the mind of a PRIVATE JAMES!"

Said GENERAL JOHN, "Upon your claims
No need your breath to waste;
If this is a joke, FULL-PRIVATE JAMES,
It's a joke of doubtful taste.

"But, being a man of doubtless worth,
If you feel certain quite
That we were probably changed at birth,
I'll venture to say you're right."

So GENERAL JOHN as PRIVATE JAMES
Fell in, parade upon;
And PRIVATE JAMES, by change of names,
Was MAJOR-GENERAL JOHN.

William Schwenck Gilbert

Gentle Alice Brown

It was a robber's daughter, and her name was ALICE BROWN,
Her father was the terror of a small Italian town;
Her mother was a foolish, weak, but amiable old thing;
But it isn't of her parents that I'm going for to sing.

As ALICE was a-sitting at her window-sill one day,
A beautiful young gentleman he chanced to pass that way;
She cast her eyes upon him, and he looked so good and true,
That she thought, "I could be happy with a gentleman like you!"

And every morning passed her house that cream of gentlemen,
She knew she might expect him at a quarter unto ten;
A sorter in the Custom-house, it was his daily road
(The Custom-house was fifteen minutes' walk from her abode).

But ALICE was a pious girl, who knew it wasn't wise
To look at strange young sorters with expressive purple eyes;
So she sought the village priest to whom her family confessed,
The priest by whom their little sins were carefully assessed.

"Oh, holy father," ALICE said, "'t would grieve you, would it not,
To discover that I was a most disreputable lot?
Of all unhappy sinners I'm the most unhappy one!"
The padre said, "Whatever have you been and gone and done?"

"I have helped mamma to steal a little kiddy from its dad,
I've assisted dear papa in cutting up a little lad,
I've planned a little burglary and forged a little cheque,
And slain a little baby for the coral on its neck!"

The worthy pastor heaved a sigh, and dropped a silent tear,
And said, "You mustn't judge yourself too heavily, my dear:
It's wrong to murder babies, little corals for to fleece;
But sins like these one expiates at half-a-crown apiece.

"Girls will be girls - you're very young, and flighty in your mind;
Old heads upon young shoulders we must not expect to find:
We mustn't be too hard upon these little girlish tricks -
Let's see - five crimes at half-a-crown - exactly twelve-and-six."

"Oh, father," little Alice cried, "your kindness makes me weep,
You do these little things for me so singularly cheap -
Your thoughtful liberality I never can forget;
But, oh! there is another crime I haven't mentioned yet!

"A pleasant-looking gentleman, with pretty purple eyes,
I've noticed at my window, as I've sat a-catching flies;
He passes by it every day as certain as can be -
I blush to say I've winked at him, and he has winked at me!"

"For shame!" said FATHER PAUL, "my erring daughter! On my word
This is the most distressing news that I have ever heard.
Why, naughty girl, your excellent papa has pledged your hand
To a promising young robber, the lieutenant of his band!

"This dreadful piece of news will pain your worthy parents so!
They are the most remunerative customers I know;
For many many years they've kept starvation from my doors:
I never knew so criminal a family as yours!

"The common country folk in this insipid neighbourhood
Have nothing to confess, they're so ridiculously good;
And if you marry any one respectable at all,
Why, you'll reform, and what will then become of FATHER PAUL?"

The worthy priest, he up and drew his cowl upon his crown,
And started off in haste to tell the news to ROBBER BROWN -
To tell him how his daughter, who was now for marriage fit,
Had winked upon a sorter, who reciprocated it.

Good ROBBER BROWN he muffled up his anger pretty well:
He said, "I have a notion, and that notion I will tell;
I will nab this gay young sorter, terrify him into fits,
And get my gentle wife to chop him into little bits.

"I've studied human nature, and I know a thing or two:
Though a girl may fondly love a living gent, as many do -
A feeling of disgust upon her senses there will fall
When she looks upon his body chopped particularly small."

He traced that gallant sorter to a still suburban square;

He watched his opportunity, and seized him unaware;
He took a life-preserver and he hit him on the head,
And MRS. BROWN dissected him before she went to bed.

And pretty little ALICE grew more settled in her mind,
She never more was guilty of a weakness of the kind,
Until at length good ROBBER BROWN bestowed her pretty hand
On the promising young robber, the lieutenant of his band.

William Schwenck Gilbert

Girl Graduates

They intend to send a wire
To the moon;
And they'll set the Thames on fire
Very soon;
Then they learn to make silk purses
With their rigs
From the ears of LADY CIRCE'S
Piggy-wigs.
And weasels at their slumbers
They'll trepan;
To get sunbeams from cuCUMbers
They've a plan.
They've a firmly rooted notion
They can cross the Polar Ocean,
And they'll find Perpetual Motion
If they can!

These are the phenomena
That every pretty domina
Hopes that we shall see
At this Universitee!

As for fashion, they forswear it,
So they say,
And the circle - they will square it
Some fine day;
Then the little pigs they're teaching
For to fly;
And the niggers they'll be bleaching
By-and-by!
Each newly joined aspirant
To the clan
Must repudiate the tyrant
Known as Man;
They mock at him and flout him,
For they do not care about him,
And they're "going to do without him"
If they can!

These are the phenomena
That every pretty domina
Hopes that we shall see
At this Universitee!

William Schwenck Gilbert

Good Little Girls

Although of native maids the cream,
We're brought up on the English scheme -
The best of all
For great and small
Who modesty adore.
For English girls are good as gold,
Extremely modest (so we're told),
Demurely coy - divinely cold -
And we are that - and more.
To please papa, who argues thus -
All girls should mould themselves on us,
Because we are,
By furlongs far,
The best of all the bunch;
We show ourselves to loud applause
From ten to four without a pause -
Which is an awkward time because
It cuts into our lunch.

Oh, maids of high and low degree,
Whose social code is rather free,
Please look at us and you will see
What good young ladies ought to be!

And as we stand, like clockwork toys,
A lecturer papa employs
To puff and praise
Our modest ways
And guileless character -
Our well-known blush - our downcast eyes -
Our famous look of mild surprise
(Which competition still defies) -
Our celebrated "Sir!!!"
Then all the crowd take down our looks
In pocket memorandum books.
To diagnose,
Our modest pose
The kodaks do their best:
If evidence you would possess

Of what is maiden bashfulness,
You only need a button press -
And WE do all the rest.

William Schwenck Gilbert

Gregory Parable, LL.D.

A leafy cot, where no dry rot
Had ever been by tenant seen,
Where ivy clung and wopses stung,
Where bees hummed and drummed and strummed,
Where trees grew and breezes blew -
A thatchy roof, quite waterproof,
Where countless herds of dicky-birds
Built twiggy beds to lay their heads
(My mother begs I'll make it "eggs,"
But though it's true that dickies do
Construct a nest with chirpy noise,
With view to rest their egggy joys,
'Neath eavy sheds, yet eggs and beds,
As I explain to her in vain
Five hundred times, are faulty rhymes).
'Neath such a cot, built on a plot
Of freehold land, dwelt MARY and
Her worthy father, named by me
GREGORY PARABLE, LL.D.

He knew no guile, this simple man,
No worldly wile, or plot, or plan,
Except that plot of freehold land
That held the cot, and MARY, and
Her worthy father, named by me
GREGORY PARABLE, LL.D.

A grave and learned scholar he,
Yet simple as a child could be.
He'd shirk his meal to sit and cram
A goodish deal of Eton Gram.
No man alive could him nonplus
With vocative of FILIUS;
No man alive more fully knew
The passive of a verb or two;
None better knew the worth than he
Of words that end in B, D, T.
Upon his green in early spring
He might be seen endeavouring

To understand the hooks and crooks
Of HENRY and his Latin books;
Or calling for his "Caesar on
The Gallic War," like any don;
Or, p'raps, expounding unto all
How mythic BALBUS built a wall.
So lived the sage who's named by me
GREGORY PARABLE, LL.D.

To him one autumn day there came
A lovely youth of mystic name:
He took a lodging in the house,
And fell a-dodging snipe and grouse,
For, oh! that mild scholastic one
Let shooting for a single gun.

By three or four, when sport was o'er,
The Mystic One laid by his gun,
And made sheep's eyes of giant size,
Till after tea, at MARY P.
And MARY P. (so kind was she),
She, too, made eyes of giant size,
Whose every dart right through the heart
Appeared to run that Mystic One.
The Doctor's whim engrossing him,
He did not know they flirted so.
For, save at tea, "MUSA MUSAE,"
As I'm advised, monopolised
And rendered blind his giant mind.
But looking up above his cup
One afternoon, he saw them spoon.
"Aha!" quoth he, "you naughty lass!
As quaint old OVID says, 'Amas!'"

The Mystic Youth avowed the truth,
And, claiming ruth, he said, "In sooth
I love your daughter, aged man:
Refuse to join us if you can.
Treat not my offer, sir, with scorn,
I'm wealthy though I'm lowly born."
"Young sir," the aged scholar said,
"I never thought you meant to wed:

Engrossed completely with my books,
I little noticed lovers' looks.
I've lived so long away from man,
I do not know of any plan
By which to test a lover's worth,
Except, perhaps, the test of birth.
I've half forgotten in this wild
A father's duty to his child.
It is his place, I think it's said,
To see his daughters richly wed
To dignitaries of the earth -
If possible, of noble birth.
If noble birth is not at hand,
A father may, I understand
(And this affords a chance for you),
Be satisfied to wed her to
A BOUCICAULT or BARING - which
Means any one who's very rich.
Now, there's an Earl who lives hard by, -
My child and I will go and try
If he will make the maid his bride -
If not, to you she shall be tied."

They sought the Earl that very day;
The Sage began to say his say.
The Earl (a very wicked man,
Whose face bore Vice's blackest ban)
Cut short the scholar's simple tale,
And said in voice to make them quail,
"Pooh! go along! you're drunk, no doubt -
Here, PETERS, turn these people out!"

The Sage, rebuffed in mode uncouth,
Returning, met the Mystic Youth.
"My darling boy," the Scholar said,
"Take MARY - blessings on your head!"

The Mystic Boy undid his vest,
And took a parchment from his breast,
And said, "Now, by that noble brow,
I ne'er knew father such as thou!
The sterling rule of common sense

Now reaps its proper recompense.
Rejoice, my soul's unequalled Queen,
For I am DUKE OF GRETNA GREEN!"

William Schwenck Gilbert

Haunted

Haunted? Ay, in a social way
By a body of ghosts in dread array;
But no conventional spectres they -
Appalling, grim, and tricky:
I quail at mine as I'd never quail
At a fine traditional spectre pale,
With a turnip head and a ghostly wail,
And a splash of blood on the dickey!

Mine are horrible, social ghosts, -
Speeches and women and guests and hosts,
Weddings and morning calls and toasts,
In every bad variety:
Ghosts who hover about the grave
Of all that's manly, free, and brave:
You'll find their names on the architrave
Of that charnel-house, Society.

Black Monday - black as its school-room ink -
With its dismal boys that snivel and think
Of its nauseous messes to eat and drink,
And its frozen tank to wash in.
That was the first that brought me grief,
And made me weep, till I sought relief
In an emblematical handkerchief,
To choke such baby bosh in.

First and worst in the grim array-
Ghosts of ghosts that have gone their way,
Which I wouldn't revive for a single day
For all the wealth of PLUTUS -
Are the horrible ghosts that school-days scared:
If the classical ghost that BRUTUS dared
Was the ghost of his "Caesar" unprepared,
I'm sure I pity BRUTUS.

I pass to critical seventeen;
The ghost of that terrible wedding scene,
When an elderly Colonel stole my Queen,

And woke my dream of heaven.
No schoolgirl decked in her nurse-room curls
Was my gushing innocent Queen of Pearls;
If she wasn't a girl of a thousand girls,
She was one of forty-seven!

I see the ghost of my first cigar,
Of the thence-arising family jar -
Of my maiden brief (I was at the Bar,
And I called the Judge "Your wushup!")
Of reckless days and reckless nights,
With wrenched-off knockers, extinguished lights,
Unholy songs and tipsy fights,
Which I strove in vain to hush up.

Ghosts of fraudulent joint-stock banks,
Ghosts of "copy, declined with thanks,"
Of novels returned in endless ranks,
And thousands more, I suffer.
The only line to fitly grace
My humble tomb, when I've run my race,
Is, "Reader, this is the resting-place
Of an unsuccessful duffer."

I've fought them all, these ghosts of mine,
But the weapons I've used are sighs and brine,
And now that I'm nearly forty-nine,
Old age is my chiefest boggy;
For my hair is thinning away at the crown,
And the silver fights with the worn-out brown;
And a general verdict sets me down
As an irreclaimable foggy.

William Schwenck Gilbert

He And She

[HE.] I know a youth who loves a little maid -

(Hey, but his face is a sight for to see!)

Silent is he, for he's modest and afraid -

(Hey, but he's timid as a youth can be!)

[SHE.] I know a maid who loves a gallant youth -

(Hey, but she sickens as the days go by!)

SHE cannot tell him all the sad, sad truth -

(Hey, but I think that little maid will die!)

[BOTH.] Now tell me pray, and tell me true,

What in the world should the poor soul do?

[HE.] He cannot eat and he cannot sleep -

(Hey, but his face is a sight for to see!)

Daily he goes for to wail - for to weep -

(Hey, but he's wretched as a youth can be!)

[SHE.] She's very thin and she's very pale -

(Hey, but she sickens as the days go by!)

Daily she goes for to weep - for to wail -

(Hey, but I think that little maid will die!)

[BOTH.] Now tell me pray, and tell me true,

What in the world should the poor soul do?

[SHE.] If I were the youth I should offer her my name -

(Hey, but her face is a sight for to see!)

[HE.] If I were the maid I should fan his honest flame -

(Hey, but he's bashful as a youth can be!)

[SHE.] If I were the youth I should speak to her to-day -

(Hey, but she sickens as the days go by!)

[HE.] If I were the maid I should meet the lad half way -

(For I really do believe that timid youth will die!)

[BOTH.] I thank you much for your counsel true;

I've learnt what that poor soul ought to do!

William Schwenck Gilbert

He Loves!

He loves! If in the bygone years
Thine eyes have ever shed
Tears - bitter, unavailing tears,
For one untimely dead -
If in the eventide of life
Sad thoughts of her arise,
Then let the memory of thy wife
Plead for my boy - he dies!

He dies! If fondly laid aside
In some old cabinet,
Memorials of thy long-dead bride
Lie, dearly treasured yet,
Then let her hallowed bridal dress -
Her little dainty gloves -
Her withered flowers - her faded tress -
Plead for my boy - he loves!

William Schwenck Gilbert

Her Terms

My wedded life
Must every pleasure bring
On scale extensive!
If I'm your wife
I must have everything
That's most expensive -
A lady's-maid -
(My hair alone to do
I am not able) -
And I'm afraid
I've been accustomed to
A first-rate table.
These things one must consider when one marries -
And everything I wear must come from Paris!
Oh, think of that!
Oh, think of that!
I can't wear anything that's not from Paris!
From top to toes
Quite Frenchified I am,
If you examine.
And then - who knows? -
Perhaps some day a fam -
Perhaps a famine!
My argument's correct, if you examine,
What should we do, if there should come a f-famine!

Though in green pea
Yourself you needn't stint
In July sunny,
In Januaree
It really costs a mint -
A mint of money!
No lamb for us -
House lamb at Christmas sells
At prices handsome:
Asparagus,
In winter, parallels
A Monarch's ransom:
When purse to bread and butter barely reaches,

What is your wife to do for hot-house peaches?
Ah! tell me that!
Ah! tell me that!
What IS your wife to do for hot-house peaches?
Your heart and hand
Though at my feet you lay,
All others scorning!
As matters stand,
There's nothing now to say
Except - good morning!
Though virtue be a husband's best adorning,
That won't pay rates and taxes - so, good morning!

William Schwenck Gilbert

Hongree And Mahry

The sun was setting in its wonted west,
When HONGREE, Sub-Lieutenant of Chassoors,
Met MAHRY DAUBIGNY, the Village Rose,
Under the Wizard's Oak - old trysting-place
Of those who loved in rosy Aquitaine.

They thought themselves unwatched, but they were not;
For HONGREE, Sub-Lieutenant of Chassoors,
Found in LIEUTENANT-COLONEL JOOLES DUBOSC
A rival, envious and unscrupulous,
Who thought it not foul scorn to dodge his steps,
And listen, unperceived, to all that passed
Between the simple little Village Rose
And HONGREE, Sub-Lieutenant of Chassoors.

A clumsy barrack-bully was DUBOSC,
Quite unfamiliar with the well-bred tact
That animates a proper gentleman
In dealing with a girl of humble rank.
You'll understand his coarseness when I say
He would have married MAHRY DAUBIGNY,
And dragged the unsophisticated girl
Into the whirl of fashionable life,
For which her singularly rustic ways,
Her breeding (moral, but extremely rude),
Her language (chaste, but ungrammatical),
Would absolutely have unfitted her.
How different to this unreflecting boor
Was HONGREE, Sub-Lieutenant of Chassoors.

Contemporary with the incident
Related in our opening paragraph,
Was that sad war 'twixt Gallia and ourselves
That followed on the treaty signed at Troyes;
And so LIEUTENANT-COLONEL JOOLES DUBOSC
(Brave soldier, he, with all his faults of style)
And HONGREE, Sub-Lieutenant of Chassoors,
Were sent by CHARLES of France against the lines
Of our Sixth HENRY (Fourteen twenty-nine),

To drive his legions out of Aquitaine.

When HONGREE, Sub-Lieutenant of Chassoors,
Returned, suspecting nothing, to his camp,
After his meeting with the Village Rose,
He found inside his barrack letter-box
A note from the commanding officer,
Requiring his attendance at head-quarters.
He went, and found LIEUTENANT-COLONEL JOOLES.

"Young HONGREE, Sub-Lieutenant of Chassoors,
This night we shall attack the English camp:
Be the 'forlorn hope' yours - you'll lead it, sir,
And lead it too with credit, I've no doubt.
As every man must certainly be killed
(For you are twenty 'gainst two thousand men),
It is not likely that you will return.
But what of that? you'll have the benefit
Of knowing that you die a soldier's death."

Obedience was young HONGREE'S strongest point,
But he imagined that he only owed
Allegiance to his MAHRY and his King.
"If MAHRY bade me lead these fated men,
I'd lead them -but I do not think she would.
If CHARLES, my King, said, 'Go, my son, and die,'
I'd go, of course - my duty would be clear.
But MAHRY is in bed asleep, I hope,
And CHARLES, my King, a hundred leagues from this.
As for LIEUTENANT-COLONEL JOOLES DUBOSC,
How know I that our monarch would approve
The order he has given me to-night?
My King I've sworn in all things to obey -
I'll only take my orders from my King!"
Thus HONGREE, Sub-Lieutenant of Chassoors,
Interpreted the terms of his commission.

And HONGREE, who was wise as he was good,
Disguised himself that night in ample cloak,
Round flapping hat, and vizor mask of black,
And made, unnoticed, for the English camp.
He passed the unsuspecting sentinels

(Who little thought a man in this disguise
Could be a proper object of suspicion),
And ere the curfew bell had boomed "lights out,"
He found in audience Bedford's haughty Duke.

"Your Grace," he said, "start not - be not alarmed,
Although a Frenchman stands before your eyes.
I'm HONGREE, Sub-Lieutenant of Chassoores.
My Colonel will attack your camp to-night,
And orders me to lead the hope forlorn.
Now I am sure our excellent KING CHARLES
Would not approve of this; but he's away
A hundred leagues, and rather more than that.
So, utterly devoted to my King,
Blinded by my attachment to the throne,
And having but its interest at heart,
I feel it is my duty to disclose
All schemes that emanate from COLONEL JOOLES,
If I believe that they are not the kind
Of schemes that our good monarch would approve."

"But how," said Bedford's Duke, "do you propose
That we should overthrow your Colonel's scheme?"
And HONGREE, Sub-Lieutenant of Chassoores,
Replied at once with never-failing tact:
"Oh, sir, I know this cursed country well.
Entrust yourself and all your host to me;
I'll lead you safely by a secret path
Into the heart of COLONEL JOOLES' array,
And you can then attack them unprepared,
And slay my fellow-countrymen unarmed."

The thing was done. The DUKE of BEDFORD gave
The order, and two thousand fighting men
Crept silently into the Gallic camp,
And slew the Frenchmen as they lay asleep;
And Bedford's haughty Duke slew COLONEL JOOLES,
And gave fair MAHRY, pride of Aquitaine,
To HONGREE, Sub-Lieutenant of Chassoores.

William Schwenck Gilbert

How It's Done

Bold-faced ranger
(Perfect stranger)
Meets two well-behaved young ladies
He's attractive,
Young and active -
Each a little bit afraid is.
Youth advances,
At his glances
To their danger they awaken;
They repel him
As they tell him
He is very much mistaken.
Though they speak to him politely,
Please observe they're sneering slightly,
Just to show he's acting vainly.
This is Virtue saying plainly,
"Go away, young bachelor,
We are not what you take us for!"
(When addressed impertinently,
English ladies answer gently,
"Go away, young bachelor,
We are not what you take us for!")

As he gazes,
Hat he raises,
Enters into conversation.
Makes excuses -
This produces
Interesting agitation.
He, with daring,
Undespairing,
Gives his card - his rank discloses -
Little heeding
This proceeding,
They turn up their little noses.
Pray observe this lesson vital -
When a man of rank and title
His position first discloses,
Always cock your little noses.

When at home, let all the class
Try this in the looking-glass.
(English girls of well-bred notions
Shun all unrehearsed emotions,
English girls of highest class
Practise them before the glass.)

His intentions
Then he mentions,
Something definite to go on -
Makes recitals
Of his titles,
Hints at settlements, and so on.
Smiling sweetly,
They, discreetly,
Ask for further evidences:
Thus invited,
He, delighted,
Gives the usual references.
This is business. Each is fluttered
When the offer's fairly uttered.
"Which of them has his affection?"
He declines to make selection.
Do they quarrel for his dross?
Not a bit of it - they toss!
Please observe this cogent moral -
English ladies never quarrel.
When a doubt they come across,
English ladies always toss.

William Schwenck Gilbert

Is Life A Boon

Is life a boon?
If so, it must befall
That Death, whene'er he call,
Must call too soon.
Though fourscore years he give
Yet one would pray to live
Another moon!
What kind of plaint have I,
Who perish in July?
I might have had to die
Perchance in June!

Is life a thorn?
Then count it not a whit!
Man is well done with it;
Soon as he's born
He should all means essay
To put the plague away;
And I, war-worn,
Poor captured fugitive,
My life most gladly give -
I might have had to live
Another morn!

William Schwenck Gilbert

Joe Golightly - Or, The First Lord's Daughter

A tar, but poorly prized,
Long, shambling, and unsightly,
Thrashed, bullied, and despised,
Was wretched JOE GOLIGHTLY.

He bore a workhouse brand;
No Pa or Ma had claimed him,
The Beadle found him, and
The Board of Guardians named him.

P'r'aps some Princess's son -
A beggar p'r'aps his mother.
HE rather thought the one,
I rather think the other.

He liked his ship at sea,
He loved the salt sea-water,
He worshipped junk, and he
Adored the First Lord's daughter.

The First Lord's daughter, proud,
Snubbed Earls and Viscounts nightly;
She sneered at Barts. aloud,
And spurned poor Joe Golightly.

Whene'er he sailed afar
Upon a Channel cruise, he
Unpacked his light guitar
And sang this ballad (Boosey):

Ballad

The moon is on the sea,
Willow!
The wind blows towards the lee,
Willow!
But though I sigh and sob and cry,
No Lady Jane for me,

Willow!

She says, "'Twere folly quite,

Willow!

For me to wed a wight,

Willow!

Whose lot is cast before the mast";

And possibly she's right,

Willow!

His skipper (CAPTAIN JOYCE),

He gave him many a rating,

And almost lost his voice

From thus expostulating:

"Lay aft, you lubber, do!

What's come to that young man, JOE?

Belay! - 'vast heaving! you!

Do kindly stop that banjo!

"I wish, I do - O lor'! -

You'd shipped aboard a trader:

ARE you a sailor or

A negro serenader?"

But still the stricken lad,

Aloft or on his pillow,

Howled forth in accents sad

His aggravating "Willow!"

Stern love of duty bad

Been JOYCE'S chiefest beauty;

Says he, "I love that lad,

But duty, damme! duty!

"Twelve months' black-hole, I say,

Where daylight never flashes;

And always twice a day

A good six dozen lashes!"

But JOSEPH had a mate,

A sailor stout and lusty,
A man of low estate,
But singularly trusty.

Says he, "Cheer hup, young JOE!
I'll tell you what I'm arter -
To that Fust Lord I'll go
And ax him for his darter.

"To that Fust Lord I'll go
And say you love her dearly."
And JOE said (weeping low),
"I wish you would, sincerely!"

That sailor to that Lord
Went, soon as he had landed,
And of his own accord
An interview demanded.

Says he, with seaman's roll,
"My Captain (wot's a Tartar)
Guv JOE twelve months' black-hole,
For loving your darter.

"He loves MISS LADY JANE
(I own she is his betters),
But if you'll jine them twain,
They'll free him from his fetters.

"And if so be as how
You'll let her come aboard ship,
I'll take her with me now."
"Get out!" remarked his Lordship.

That honest tar repaired
To JOE upon the billow,
And told him how he'd fared.
JOE only whispered, "Willow!"

And for that dreadful crime
(Young sailors, learn to shun it)
He's working out his time;

In six months he'll have done it.

William Schwenck Gilbert

John And Freddy

JOHN courted lovely MARY ANN,
So likewise did his brother, FREDDY.
FRED was a very soft young man,
While JOHN, though quick, was most unsteady.

FRED was a graceful kind of youth,
But JOHN was very much the strongest.
"Oh, dance away," said she, "in truth,
I'll marry him who dances longest."

JOHN tries the maiden's taste to strike
With gay, grotesque, outrageous dresses,
And dances comically, like
CLODOCHE AND Co., at the Princess's.

But FREDDY tries another style,
He knows some graceful steps and does 'em -
A breathing Poem - Woman's smile -
A man all poesy and buzzem.

Now FREDDY'S operatic PAS -
Now JOHNNY'S hornpipe seems entrapping:
Now FREDDY'S graceful ENTRECHATS -
Now JOHNNY'S skilful "cellar-flapping."

For many hours - for many days -
For many weeks performed each brother,
For each was active in his ways,
And neither would give in to t'other.

After a month of this, they say
(The maid was getting bored and moody)
A wandering curate passed that way
And talked a lot of goody-goody.

"Oh my," said he, with solemn frown,
"I tremble for each dancing FRATER,
Like unregenerated clown
And harlequin at some the-ayter."

He showed that men, in dancing, do
Both impiously and absurdly,
And proved his proposition true,
With Firstly, Secondly, and Thirdly.

For months both JOHN and FREDDY danced,
The curate's protests little heeding;
For months the curate's words enhanced
The sinfulness of their proceeding.

At length they bowed to Nature's rule -
Their steps grew feeble and unsteady,
Till FREDDY fainted on a stool,
And JOHNNY on the top of FREDDY.

"Decide!" quoth they, "let him be named,
Who henceforth as his wife may rank you."
"I've changed my views," the maiden said,
"I only marry curates, thank you!"

Says FREDDY, "Here is goings on!
To bust myself with rage I'm ready."
"I'll be a curate!" whispers JOHN -
"And I," exclaimed poetic FREDDY.

But while they read for it, these chaps,
The curate booked the maiden bonny -
And when she's buried him, perhaps,
She'll marry FREDERICK or JOHNNY.

William Schwenck Gilbert

King Borria Bungalee Boo

KING BORRIA BUNGALÉE BOO

Was a man-eating African swell;
His sigh was a hullabaloo,
His whisper a horrible yell -
A horrible, horrible yell!

Four subjects, and all of them male,
To BORRIA doubled the knee,
They were once on a far larger scale,
But he'd eaten the balance, you see
(*'Scale'* and *'balance'* is punning, you see).

There was haughty PISH-TUSH-POOH-BAH,
There was lumbering DOODLE-DUM-DEY,
Despairing ALACK-A-DEY-AH,
And good little TOOTLE-TUM-TEH -
Exemplary TOOTLE-TUM-TEH.

One day there was grief in the crew,
For they hadn't a morsel of meat,
And BORRIA BUNGALÉE BOO
Was dying for something to eat -
'Come, provide me with something to eat!

'ALACK-A-DEY, famished I feel;
Oh, good little TOOTLE-TUM-TEH,
Where on earth shall I look for a meal?
For I haven't no dinner to-day! -
Not a morsel of dinner to-day!

'Dear TOOTLE-TUM, what shall we do?
Come, get us a meal, or, in truth,
If you don't, we shall have to eat you,
Oh, adorable friend of our youth!
Thou beloved little friend of our youth!'

And he answered, 'Oh, BUNGALÉE BOO,
For a moment I hope you will wait, -
TIPPY-WIPPITY TOL-THE-ROL-LOO

Is the Queen of a neighbouring state -
A remarkably neighbouring state.

'TIPPY-WIPPITY TOL-THE-ROL-LOO,
She would pickle deliciously cold -
And her four pretty Amazons, too,
Are enticing, and not very old -
Twenty-seven is not very old.

'There is neat little TITTY-FOL-LEH,
There is rollicking TRAL-THE-RAL-LAH,
There is jocular WAGGETY-WEH,
There is musical DOH-REH-MI-FAH -
There's the nightingale DOH-REH-MI-FAH!'

So the forces of BUNGALÉE BOO
Marched forth in a terrible row,
And the ladies who fought for QUEEN LOO
Prepared to encounter the foe -
This dreadful, insatiate foe!

But they sharpened no weapons at all,
And they poisoned no arrows - not they!
They made ready to conquer or fall
In a totally different way -
An entirely different way.

With a crimson and pearly-white dye
They endeavoured to make themselves fair,
With black they encircled each eye,
And with yellow they painted their hair
(It was wool, but they thought it was hair).

And the forces they met in the field:-
And the men of KING BORRIA said,
'Amazonians, immediately yield!'
And their arrows they drew to the head -
Yes, drew them right up to the head.

But jocular WAGGETY-WEH
Ogled DOODLE-DUM-DEY (which was wrong),
And neat little TITTY-FOL-LEH

Said, 'TOOTLE-TUM, you go along!
You naughty old dear, go along!'

And rollicking TRAL-THE-RAL-LAH
Tapped ALACK-A-DEY-AH with her fan;
And musical DOH-REH-MI-FAH
Said, 'PISH, go away, you bad man!
Go away, you delightful young man!'

And the Amazons simpered and sighed,
And they ogled, and giggled, and flushed,
And they opened their pretty eyes wide,
And they chuckled, and flirted, and blushed
(At least, if they could, they'd have blushed).

But haughty PISH-TUSH-POOH-BAH
Said, 'ALACK-A-DEY, what does this mean?'
And despairing ALACK-A-DEY-AH
Said, 'They think us uncommonly green!
Ha! ha! most uncommonly green!'

Even blundering DOODLE-DUM-DEY
Was insensible quite to their leers,
And said good little TOOTLE-TUM-TEH,
'It's your blood we desire, pretty dears -
We have come for our dinners, my dears!'

And the Queen of the Amazons fell
To BORRIA BUNGALEE BOO, -
In a mouthful he gulped, with a yell,
TIPPY-WIPPITY TOL-THE-ROL-LOO -
The pretty QUEEN TOL-THE-ROL-LOO.

And neat little TITTY-FOL-LEH
Was eaten by PISH-POOH-BAH,
And light-hearted WAGGETY-WEH
By dismal ALACK-A-DEY-AH -
Despairing ALACK-A-DEY-AH.

And rollicking TRAL-THE-RAL-LAH
Was eaten by DOODLE-DUM-DEY,
And musical DOH-REH-MI-FAH

By good little TOOTLE-DUM-TEH -
Exemplary TOOTLE-TUM-TEH!

William Schwenck Gilbert

King Goodheart

There lived a King, as I've been told
In the wonder-working days of old,
When hearts were twice as good as gold,
And twenty times as mellow.
Good temper triumphed in his face,
And in his heart he found a place
For all the erring human race
And every wretched fellow.
When he had Rhenish wine to drink
It made him very sad to think
That some, at junket or at jink,
Must be content with toddy:
He wished all men as rich as he
(And he was rich as rich could be),
So to the top of every tree
Promoted everybody.

Ambassadors cropped up like hay,
Prime Ministers and such as they
Grew like asparagus in May,
And Dukes were three a penny:
Lord Chancellors were cheap as sprats,
And Bishops in their shovel hats
Were plentiful as tabby cats -
If possible, too many.
On every side Field-Marshal gleamed,
Small beer were Lords-Lieutenants deemed,
With Admirals the ocean teemed,
All round his wide dominions;
And Party Leaders you might meet
In twos and threes in every street
Maintaining, with no little heat,
Their various opinions.

That King, although no one denies,
His heart was of abnormal size,
Yet he'd have acted otherwise
If he had been acuter.
The end is easily foretold,

When every blessed thing you hold
Is made of silver, or of gold,
You long for simple pewter.
When you have nothing else to wear
But cloth of gold and satins rare,
For cloth of gold you cease to care -
Up goes the price of shoddy:
In short, whoever you may be,
To this conclusion you'll agree,
When every one is somebody,
Then no one's anybody!

William Schwenck Gilbert

Lieutenant-Colonel Flare

The earth has armies plenty,
And semi-warlike bands,
I dare say there are twenty
In European lands;
But, oh! in no direction
You'd find one to compare
In brotherly affection
With that of COLONEL FLARE.

His soldiers might be rated
As military Pearls.
As unsophisticated
As pretty little girls!
They never smoked or ratted,
Or talked of Sues or Polls;
The Sergeant-Major tatted,
The others nursed their dolls.

He spent his days in teaching
These truly solemn facts;
There's little use in preaching,
Or circulating tracts.
(The vainest plan invented
For stifling other creeds,
Unless it's supplemented
With charitable DEEDS.)

He taught his soldiers kindly
To give at Hunger's call:
"Oh, better far give blindly,
Than never give at all!
Though sympathy be kindled
By Imposition's game,
Oh, better far be swindled
Than smother up its flame!"

His means were far from ample
For pleasure or for dress,
Yet note this bright example

Of single-heartedness:
Though ranking as a Colonel,
His pay was but a groat,
While their reward diurnal
Was - each a five-pound note.

Moreover, - this evinces
His kindness, you'll allow, -
He fed them all like princes,
And lived himself on cow.
He set them all regaling
On curious wines, and dear,
While he would sit pale-ale-ing,
Or quaffing ginger-beer.

Then at his instigation
(A pretty fancy this)
Their daily pay and ration
He'd take in change for his;
They brought it to him weekly,
And he without a groan,
Would take it from them meekly
And give them all his own!

Though not exactly knighted
As knights, of course, should be,
Yet no one so delighted
In harmless chivalry.
If peasant girl or ladye
Beneath misfortunes sank,
Whate'er distinctions made he,
They were not those of rank.

No maiden young and comely
Who wanted good advice
(However poor or homely)
Need ask him for it twice.
He'd wipe away the blindness
That comes of teary dew;
His sympathetic kindness
No sort of limit knew.

He always hated dealing
With men who schemed or planned;
A person harsh - unfeeling -
The Colonel could not stand.
He hated cold, suspecting,
Official men in blue,
Who pass their lives detecting
The crimes that others do.

For men who'd shoot a sparrow,
Or immolate a worm
Beneath a farmer's harrow,
He could not find a term.
Humanely, ay, and knightly
He dealt with such an one;
He took and tied him tightly,
And blew him from a gun.

The earth has armies plenty,
And semi-warlike bands,
I'm certain there are twenty
In European lands;
But, oh! in no direction
You'd find one to compare
In brotherly affection
With that of COLONEL FLARE.

William Schwenck Gilbert

Life

First you're born - and I'll be bound you
Find a dozen strangers round you.
"Hallo," cries the new-born baby,
"Where's my parents? which may they be?"
Awkward silence - no reply -
Puzzled baby wonders why!
Father rises, bows politely -
Mother smiles (but not too brightly) -
Doctor mumbles like a dumb thing -
Nurse is busy mixing something. -
Every symptom tends to show
You're decidedly DE TROP -
Ho! ho! ho! ho! ho! he! ho! ho!
Time's teetotum,
If you spin it,
Give its quotum
Once a minute:
I'll go bail
You hit the nail,
And if you fail
The deuce is in it!

You grow up, and you discover
What it is to be a lover.
Some young lady is selected -
Poor, perhaps, but well-connected,
Whom you hail (for Love is blind
As the Queen of Fairy-kind.
Though she's plain - perhaps unsightly,
Makes her face up - laces tightly,
In her form your fancy traces
All the gifts of all the graces.
Rivals none the maiden woo,
So you take her and she takes you!
Ho! ho! ho! ho! ho! ho! ho! ho!
Joke beginning,
Never ceases,
Till your inning
Time releases;

On your way
You blindly stray,
And day by day
The joke increases!

Ten years later - Time progresses -
Sours your temper - thins your tresses;
Fancy, then, her chain relaxes;
Rates are facts and so are taxes.
Fairy Queen's no longer young -
Fairy Queen has such a tongue!
Twins have probably intruded -
Quite unbidden - just as you did;
They're a source of care and trouble -
Just as you were - only double.
Comes at last the final stroke -
Time has had his little joke!
Ho! ho! ho! ho! ho! ho! ho! ho!
Daily driven
(Wife as drover)
Ill you've thriven -
Ne'er in clover:
Lastly, when
Threescore and ten
(And not till then),
The joke is over!
Ho! ho! ho! ho! ho! ho! ho! ho!
Then - and then
The joke is over!

William Schwenck Gilbert

Life Is Lovely All The Year

When the buds are blossoming,
Smiling welcome to the spring,
Lovers choose a wedding day -
Life is love in merry May!

Spring is green - Fal la! la!
Summer's rose - Fal la! la!
It is sad when Summer goes,
Fal la!
Autumn's gold - Fal la! la!
Winter's grey - Fal la! la!
Winter still is far away -
Fal la!
Leaves in Autumn fade and fall;
Winter is the end of all.
Spring and summer teem with glee:
Spring and summer, then, for me!
Fal la!

In the Spring-time seed is sown:
In the Summer grass is mown:
In the Autumn you may reap:
Winter is the time for sleep.

Spring is hope - Fal la! la!
Summer's joy - Fal la! la!
Spring and Summer never cloy,
Fal la!
Autumn, toil - Fal la! la!
Winter, rest - Fal la! la!
Winter, after all, is best -
Fal la!
Spring and summer pleasure you,
Autumn, ay, and winter, too -
Every season has its cheer;
Life is lovely all the year!
Fal la!

Limited Liability

Some seven men form an Association
(If possible, all Peers and Baronets),
They start off with a public declaration
To what extent they mean to pay their debts.
That's called their Capital: if they are wary
They will not quote it at a sum immense.
The figure's immaterial - it may vary
From eighteen million down to eighteenpence.
I should put it rather low;
The good sense of doing so
Will be evident at once to any debtor.
When it's left to you to say
What amount you mean to pay,
Why, the lower you can put it at, the better.

They then proceed to trade with all who'll trust 'em,
Quite irrespective of their capital
(It's shady, but it's sanctified by custom);
Bank, Railway, Loan, or Panama Canal.
You can't embark on trading too tremendous -
It's strictly fair, and based on common sense -
If you succeed, your profits are stupendous -
And if you fail, pop goes your eighteenpence.
Make the money-spinner spin!
For you only stand to win,
And you'll never with dishonesty be twitted.
For nobody can know,
To a million or so,
To what extent your capital's committed!

If you come to grief, and creditors are craving
(For nothing that is planned by mortal head
Is certain in this Vale of Sorrow - saving
That one's Liability is Limited), -
Do you suppose that signifies perdition?
If so you're but a monetary dunce -
You merely file a Winding-Up Petition,
And start another Company at once!
Though a Rothschild you may be

In your own capacity,
As a Company you've come to utter sorrow -
But the Liquidators say,
"Never mind - you needn't pay,"
So you start another Company to-morrow!

William Schwenck Gilbert

Little Oliver

EARL JOYCE he was a kind old party
Whom nothing ever could put out,
Though eighty-two, he still was hearty,
Excepting as regarded gout.

He had one unexampled daughter,
The LADY MINNIE-HAHA JOYCE,
Fair MINNIE-HAHA, "Laughing Water,"
So called from her melodious voice.

By Nature planned for lover-capture,
Her beauty every heart assailed;
The good old nobleman with rapture
Observed how widely she prevailed

Aloof from all the lordly flockings
Of titled swells who worshipped her,
There stood, in pumps and cotton stockings,
One humble lover - OLIVER.

He was no peer by Fortune petted,
His name recalled no bygone age;
He was no lordling coronetted -
Alas! he was a simple page!

With vain appeals he never bored her,
But stood in silent sorrow by -
He knew how fondly he adored her,
And knew, alas! how hopelessly!

Well grounded by a village tutor
In languages alive and past,
He'd say unto himself, "Knee-suitor,
Oh, do not go beyond your last!"

But though his name could boast no handle,
He could not every hope resign;
As moths will hover round a candle,
So hovered he about her shrine.

The brilliant candle dazed the moth well:
One day she sang to her Papa
The air that MARIE sings with BOTHWELL
In NEIDERMEYER'S opera.

(Therein a stable boy, it's stated,
Devoutly loved a noble dame,
Who ardently reciprocated
His rather injudicious flame.)

And then, before the piano closing
(He listened coyly at the door),
She sang a song of her composing -
I give one verse from half a score:

BALLAD

Why, pretty page, art ever sighing?
Is sorrow in thy heartlet lying?
Come, set a-ringing
Thy laugh entrancing,
And ever singing
And ever dancing.
Ever singing, Tra! la! la!
Ever dancing, Tra! la! la!
Ever singing, ever dancing,
Ever singing, Tra! la! la!

He skipped for joy like little muttons,
He danced like Esmeralda's kid.
(She did not mean a boy in buttons,
Although he fancied that she did.)

Poor lad! convinced he thus would win her,
He wore out many pairs of soles;
He danced when taking down the dinner -
He danced when bringing up the coals.

He danced and sang (however laden)
With his incessant "Tra! la! la!"

Which much surprised the noble maiden,
And puzzled even her Papa.

He nourished now his flame and fanned it,
He even danced at work below.
The upper servants wouldn't stand it,
And BOWLES the butler told him so.

At length on impulse acting blindly,
His love he laid completely bare;
The gentle Earl received him kindly
And told the lad to take a chair.

"Oh, sir," the suitor uttered sadly,
"Don't give your indignation vent;
I fear you think I'm acting madly,
Perhaps you think me insolent?"

The kindly Earl repelled the notion;
His noble bosom heaved a sigh,
His fingers trembled with emotion,
A tear stood in his mild blue eye:

For, oh! the scene recalled too plainly
The half-forgotten time when he,
A boy of nine, had worshipped vainly
A governess of forty-three!

"My boy," he said, in tone consoling,
"Give up this idle fancy - do -
The song you heard my daughter trolling
Did not, indeed, refer to you.

"I feel for you, poor boy, acutely;
I would not wish to give you pain;
Your pangs I estimate minutely, -
I, too, have loved, and loved in vain.

"But still your humble rank and station
For MINNIE surely are not meet" -
He said much more in conversation
Which it were needless to repeat.

Now I'm prepared to bet a guinea,
Were this a mere dramatic case,
The page would have eloped with MINNIE,
But, no - he only left his place.

The simple Truth is my detective,
With me Sensation can't abide;
The Likely beats the mere Effective,
And Nature is my only guide.

William Schwenck Gilbert

Lorenzo De Lardy

DALILAH DE DARDY adored
The very correctest of cards,
LORENZO DE LARDY, a lord -
He was one of Her Majesty's Guards.

DALILAH DE DARDY was fat,
DALILAH DE DARDY was old -
(No doubt in the world about that)
But DALILAH DE DARDY had gold.

LORENZO DE LARDY was tall,
The flower of maidenly pets,
Young ladies would love at his call,
But LORENZO DE LARDY had debts.

His money-position was queer,
And one of his favourite freaks
Was to hide himself three times a year,
In Paris, for several weeks.

Many days didn't pass him before
He fanned himself into a flame,
For a beautiful "DAM DU COMPTWORE,"
And this was her singular name:

ALICE EULALIE CORALINE
EUPHROSINE COLOMBINA THERESE
JULIETTE STEPHANIE CELESTINE
CHARLOTTE RUSSE DE LA SAUCE MAYONNAISE.

She booked all the orders and tin,
Accoutred in showy fal-lal,
At a two-fifty Restaurant, in
The glittering Palais Royal.

He'd gaze in her orbit of blue,
Her hand he would tenderly squeeze,
But the words of her tongue that he knew
Were limited strictly to these:

"CORALINE CELESTINE EULALIE,
Houp le! Je vous aime, oui, mossoo,
Combien donnez moi aujourd'hui
Bonjour, Mademoiselle, parlez voo."

MADemoiselle DE LA SAUCE MAYONNAISE

Was a witty and beautiful miss,
Extremely correct in her ways,
But her English consisted of this:

"Oh my! pretty man, if you please,
Blom boodin, biftek, currie lamb,
Bouldogue, two franc half, quite ze cheese,
Rosbif, me spik Angleesh, godam."

A waiter, for seasons before,
Had basked in her beautiful gaze,
And burnt to dismember MILOR,
HE LOVED DE LA SAUCE MAYONNAISE.

He said to her, "Mechante THERESE,
Avec desespoir tu m'accables.
Penses-tu, DE LA SAUCE MAYONNAISE,
Ses intentions sont honorables?"

"Flirtez toujours, ma belle, si tu oses -
Je me vengerai ainsi, ma chere,
JE LUI DIRAI DE QUOI L'ON COMPOSE
VOL AU VENT E LA FINANCIERE!"

LORD LARDY knew nothing of this -
The waiter's devotion ignored,
But he gazed on the beautiful miss,
And never seemed weary or bored.

The waiter would screw up his nerve,
His fingers he'd snap and he'd dance -
And LORD LARDY would smile and observe,
"How strange are the customs of France!"

Well, after delaying a space,

His tradesmen no longer would wait:
Returning to England apace,
He yielded himself to his fate.

LORD LARDY espoused, with a groan,
MISS DARDY'S developing charms,
And agreed to tag on to his own,
Her name and her newly-found arms.

The waiter he knelt at the toes
Of an ugly and thin coryphee,
Who danced in the hindermost rows
At the Theatre des Varietes.

MADemoiselle de la Sauce Mayonnaise
Didn't yield to a gnawing despair
But married a soldier, and plays
As a pretty and pert Vivandiere.

William Schwenck Gilbert

Lost Mr. Blake

Mr. Blake was a regular out-and-out hardened sinner,
Who was quite out of the pale of Christianity, so to speak,
He was in the habit of smoking a long pipe and drinking a glass of
grog on a Sunday after dinner,
And seldom thought of going to church more than twice or - if Good
Friday or Christmas Day happened to come in it - three times a
week.

He was quite indifferent as to the particular kinds of dresses
That the clergyman wore at church where he used to go to pray,
And whatever he did in the way of relieving a chap's distresses,
He always did in a nasty, sneaking, underhanded, hole-and-corner
sort of way.

I have known him indulge in profane, ungentlemanly emphatics,
When the Protestant Church has been divided on the subject of the
proper width of a chasuble's hem;
I have even known him to sneer at albs - and as for dalmatics,
Words can't convey an idea of the contempt he expressed for THEM.

He didn't believe in persons who, not being well off themselves,
are obliged to confine their charitable exertions to collecting
money from wealthier people,
And looked upon individuals of the former class as ecclesiastical
hawks;
He used to say that he would no more think of interfering with his
priest's robes than with his church or his steeple,
And that he did not consider his soul imperilled because somebody
over whom he had no influence whatever, chose to dress himself up
like an exaggerated GUY FAWKES.

This shocking old vagabond was so unutterably shameless
That he actually went a-courting a very respectable and pious
middle-aged sister, by the name of BIGGS.
She was a rather attractive widow, whose life as such had always
been particularly blameless;
Her first husband had left her a secure but moderate competence,
owing to some fortunate speculations in the matter of figs.

She was an excellent person in every way - and won the respect even of MRS. GRUNDY,
She was a good housewife, too, and wouldn't have wasted a penny if she had owned the Koh-i-noor.
She was just as strict as he was lax in her observance of Sunday,
And being a good economist, and charitable besides, she took all the bones and cold potatoes and broken pie-crusts and candle-ends (when she had quite done with them), and made them into an excellent soup for the deserving poor.

I am sorry to say that she rather took to BLAKE - that outcast of society,
And when respectable brothers who were fond of her began to look dubious and to cough,
She would say, "Oh, my friends, it's because I hope to bring this poor benighted soul back to virtue and propriety,
And besides, the poor benighted soul, with all his faults, was uncommonly well off.

And when MR. BLAKE'S dissipated friends called his attention to the frown or the pout of her,
Whenever he did anything which appeared to her to savour of an unmentionable place,
He would say that "she would be a very decent old girl when all that nonsense was knocked out of her,"
And his method of knocking it out of her is one that covered him with disgrace.

She was fond of going to church services four times every Sunday, and, four or five times in the week, and never seemed to pall of them,
So he hunted out all the churches within a convenient distance that had services at different hours, so to speak;
And when he had married her he positively insisted upon their going to all of them,
So they contrived to do about twelve churches every Sunday, and, if they had luck, from twenty-two to twenty-three in the course of the week.

She was fond of dropping his sovereigns ostentatiously into the plate, and she liked to see them stand out rather conspicuously against the commonplace half-crowns and shillings,

So he took her to all the charity sermons, and if by any
extraordinary chance there wasn't a charity sermon anywhere, he
would drop a couple of sovereigns (one for him and one for her)
into the poor-box at the door;
And as he always deducted the sums thus given in charity from the
housekeeping money, and the money he allowed her for her bonnets
and frillings,
She soon began to find that even charity, if you allow it to
interfere with your personal luxuries, becomes an intolerable bore.

On Sundays she was always melancholy and anything but good society,
For that day in her household was a day of sighings and sobbings
and wringing of hands and shaking of heads:

She wouldn't hear of a button being sewn on a glove, because it was
a work neither of necessity nor of piety,
And strictly prohibited her servants from amusing themselves, or
indeed doing anything at all except dusting the drawing-rooms,
cleaning the boots and shoes, cooking the parlour dinner, waiting
generally on the family, and making the beds.

But BLAKE even went further than that, and said that people should
do their own works of necessity, and not delegate them to persons
in a menial situation,

So he wouldn't allow his servants to do so much as even answer a
bell.

Here he is making his wife carry up the water for her bath to the
second floor, much against her inclination, -

And why in the world the gentleman who illustrates these ballads
has put him in a cocked hat is more than I can tell.

After about three months of this sort of thing, taking the smooth
with the rough of it,

(Blacking her own boots and peeling her own potatoes was not her
notion of connubial bliss),

MRS. BLAKE began to find that she had pretty nearly had enough of
it,

And came, in course of time, to think that BLAKE'S own original
line of conduct wasn't so much amiss.

And now that wicked person - that detestable sinner ("BELIAL BLAKE"
his friends and well-wishers call him for his atrocities),

And his poor deluded victim, whom all her Christian brothers
dislike and pity so,

Go to the parish church only on Sunday morning and afternoon and
occasionally on a week-day, and spend their evenings in connubial
fondlings and affectionate reciprocities,
And I should like to know where in the world (or rather, out of it)
they expect to go!

William Schwenck Gilbert

Mister William

OH, listen to the tale of MISTER WILLIAM, if you please,
Whom naughty, naughty judges sent away beyond the seas.
He forged a party's will, which caused anxiety and strife,
Resulting in his getting penal servitude for life.

He was a kindly goodly man, and naturally prone,
Instead of taking others' gold, to give away his own.
But he had heard of Vice, and longed for only once to strike -
To plan ONE little wickedness - to see what it was like.

He argued with himself, and said, "A spotless man am I;
I can't be more respectable, however hard I try!
For six and thirty years I've always been as good as gold,
And now for half an hour I'll plan infamy untold!

"A baby who is wicked at the early age of one,
And then reforms - and dies at thirty-six a spotless son,
Is never, never saddled with his babyhood's defect,
But earns from worthy men consideration and respect.

"So one who never revelled in discreditable tricks
Until he reached the comfortable age of thirty-six,
May then for half an hour perpetrate a deed of shame,
Without incurring permanent disgrace, or even blame.

"That babies don't commit such crimes as forgery is true,
But little sins develop, if you leave 'em to accrue;
And he who shuns all vices as successive seasons roll,
Should reap at length the benefit of so much self-control.

"The common sin of babyhood - objecting to be drest -
If you leave it to accumulate at compound interest,
For anything you know, may represent, if you're alive,
A burglary or murder at the age of thirty-five.

"Still, I wouldn't take advantage of this fact, but be content
With some pardonable folly - it's a mere experiment.
The greater the temptation to go wrong, the less the sin;
So with something that's particularly tempting I'll begin.

"I would not steal a penny, for my income's very fair -
I do not want a penny - I have pennies and to spare -
And if I stole a penny from a money-bag or till,
The sin would be enormous - the temptation being NIL.

"But if I broke asunder all such pettifogging bounds,
And forged a party's Will for (say) Five Hundred Thousand Pounds,
With such an irresistible temptation to a haul,
Of course the sin must be infinitesimally small.

"There's WILSON who is dying - he has wealth from Stock and rent -
If I divert his riches from their natural descent,
I'm placed in a position to indulge each little whim."
So he diverted them - and they, in turn, diverted him.

Unfortunately, though, by some unpardonable flaw,
Temptation isn't recognized by Britain's Common Law;
Men found him out by some peculiarity of touch,
And WILLIAM got a "lifer," which annoyed him very much.

For, ah! he never reconciled himself to life in gaol,
He fretted and he pined, and grew dispirited and pale;
He was numbered like a cabman, too, which told upon him so
That his spirits, once so buoyant, grew uncomfortably low.

And sympathetic gaolers would remark, "It's very true,
He ain't been brought up common, like the likes of me and you."
So they took him into hospital, and gave him mutton chops,
And chocolate, and arrowroot, and buns, and malt and hops.

Kind Clergymen, besides, grew interested in his fate,
Affected by the details of his pitiable state.
They waited on the Secretary, somewhere in Whitehall,
Who said he would receive them any day they liked to call.

"Consider, sir, the hardship of this interesting case:
A prison life brings with it something very like disgrace;
It's telling on young WILLIAM, who's reduced to skin and bone -
Remember he's a gentleman, with money of his own.

"He had an ample income, and of course he stands in need

Of sherry with his dinner, and his customary weed;
No delicacies now can pass his gentlemanly lips -
He misses his sea-bathing and his continental trips.

"He says the other prisoners are commonplace and rude;
He says he cannot relish uncongenial prison food.
When quite a boy they taught him to distinguish Good from Bad,
And other educational advantages he's had.

"A burglar or garotter, or, indeed, a common thief
Is very glad to batten on potatoes and on beef,
Or anything, in short, that prison kitchens can afford, -
A cut above the diet in a common workhouse ward.

"But beef and mutton-broth don't seem to suit our WILLIAM'S whim,
A boon to other prisoners - a punishment to him.
It never was intended that the discipline of gaol
Should dash a convict's spirits, sir, or make him thin or pale."

"Good Gracious Me!" that sympathetic Secretary cried,
"Suppose in prison fetters MISTER WILLIAM should have died!
Dear me, of course! Imprisonment for LIFE his sentence saith:
I'm very glad you mentioned it - it might have been For Death!

"Release him with a ticket - he'll be better then, no doubt,
And tell him I apologize." So MISTER WILLIAM'S out.
I hope he will be careful in his manuscripts, I'm sure,
And not begin experimentalizing any more.

William Schwenck Gilbert

My Lady

Bedecked in fashion trim,
With every curl a-quiver;
Or leaping, light of limb,
O'er rivulet and river;
Or skipping o'er the lea
On daffodil and daisy;
Or stretched beneath a tree,
All languishing and lazy;
Whatever be her mood -
Be she demurely prude
Or languishingly lazy -
My lady drives me crazy!
In vain her heart is wooed,
Whatever be her mood!

What profit should I gain
Suppose she loved me dearly?
Her coldness turns my brain
To VERGE of madness merely.
Her kiss - though, Heaven knows,
To dream of it were treason -
Would tend, as I suppose,
To utter loss of reason!
My state is not amiss;
I would not have a kiss
Which, in or out of season,
Might tend to loss of reason:
What profit in such bliss?
A fig for such a kiss!

William Schwenck Gilbert

Old Paul And Old Tim

When rival adorers come courting a maid,
There's something or other may often be said,
Why HE should be pitched upon rather than HIM.
This wasn't the case with Old PAUL and Old TIM.

No soul could discover a reason at all
For marrying TIMOTHY rather than PAUL;
Though all could have offered good reasons, on oath,
Against marrying either - or marrying both.

They were equally wealthy and equally old,
They were equally timid and equally bold;
They were equally tall as they stood in their shoes -
Between them, in fact, there was nothing to choose.

Had I been young EMILY, I should have said,
"You're both much too old for a pretty young maid,
Threescore at the least you are verging upon";
But I wasn't young EMILY. Let us get on.

No coward's blood ran in young EMILY'S veins,
Her martial old father loved bloody campaigns;
At the rumours of battles all over the globe
He pricked up his ears like the war-horse in "Job."

He chuckled to hear of a sudden surprise -
Of soldiers, compelled, through an enemy's spies,
Without any knapsacks or shakos to flee -
For an eminent army-contractor was he.

So when her two lovers, whose patience was tried,
Implored her between them at once to decide,
She told them she'd marry whichever might bring
Good proofs of his doing the pluckiest thing.

They both went away with a qualified joy:
That coward, Old PAUL, chose a very small boy,
And when no one was looking, in spite of his fears,
He set to work boxing that little boy's ears.

The little boy struggled and tugged at his hair,
But the lion was roused, and Old PAUL didn't care;
He smacked him, and whacked him, and boxed him, and kicked
Till the poor little beggar was royally licked.

Old TIM knew a trick worth a dozen of that,
So he called for his stick and he called for his hat.
"I'll cover myself with cheap glory - I'll go
And wallop the Frenchmen who live in Soho!

"The German invader is ravaging France
With infantry rifle and cavalry lance,
And beautiful Paris is fighting her best
To shake herself free from her terrible guest.

"The Frenchmen in London, in craven alarms,
Have all run away from the summons to arms;
They haven't the pluck of a pigeon - I'll go
And wallop the Frenchmen who skulk in Soho!"

Old TIMOTHY tried it and found it succeed:
That day he caused many French noses to bleed;
Through foggy Soho he spread fear and dismay,
And Frenchmen all round him in agony lay.

He took care to abstain from employing his fist
On the old and the crippled, for they might resist;
A crippled old man may have pluck in his breast,
But the young and the strong ones are cowards confest.

Old TIM and Old PAUL, with the list of their foes,
Prostrated themselves at their EMILY'S toes:
"Oh, which of us two is the pluckier blade?"
And EMILY answered and EMILY said:

"Old TIM has thrashed runaway Frenchmen in scores,
Who ought to be guarding their cities and shores;
Old PAUL has made little chaps' noses to bleed -
Old PAUL has accomplished the pluckier deed!"

One Against The World

It's my opinion - though I own
In thinking so I'm quite alone -
In some respects I'm but a fright.
YOU like my features, I suppose?
I'M disappointed with my nose:
Some rave about it - perhaps they're right.
My figure just sets off a fit;
But when they say it's exquisite
(And they DO say so), that's too strong.
I hope I'm not what people call
Opinionated! After all,
I'm but a goose, and may be wrong!

When charms enthrall
There's some excuse
For measures strong;
And after all
I'm but a goose,
And may be wrong!

My teeth are very neat, no doubt;
But after all they MAY fall out:
I think they will - some think they won't.
My hands are small, as you may see,
But not as small as they might be,
At least, I think so - others don't.
But there, a girl may preach and prate
From morning six to evening eight,
And never stop to dine,
When all the world, although misled,
Is quite agreed on any head -
And it is quite agreed on mine!

All said and done,
It's little I
Against a throng.
I'm only one,
And possibly
I may be wrong!

William Schwenck Gilbert

Only A Dancing Girl

Only a dancing girl,
With an unromantic style,
With borrowed colour and curl,
With fixed mechanical smile,
With many a hackneyed wile,
With ungrammatical lips,
And corns that mar her trips.

Hung from the "flies" in air,
She acts a palpable lie,
She's as little a fairy there
As unpoetical I!
I hear you asking, Why -
Why in the world I sing
This tawdry, tinselled thing?

No airy fairy she,
As she hangs in arsenic green
From a highly impossible tree
In a highly impossible scene
(Herself not over-clean).
For fays don't suffer, I'm told,
From bunions, coughs, or cold.

And stately dames that bring
Their daughters there to see,
Pronounce the "dancing thing"
No better than she should be,
With her skirt at her shameful knee,
And her painted, tainted phiz:
Ah, matron, which of us is?

(And, in sooth, it oft occurs
That while these matrons sigh,
Their dresses are lower than hers,
And sometimes half as high;
And their hair is hair they buy,
And they use their glasses, too,
In a way she'd blush to do.)

But change her gold and green
For a coarse merino gown,
And see her upon the scene
Of her home, when coaxing down
Her drunken father's frown,
In his squalid cheerless den:
She's a fairy truly, then!

William Schwenck Gilbert

Only Roses

To a garden full of posies
Cometh one to gather flowers;
And he wanders through its bowers
Toying with the wanton roses,
Who, uprising from their beds,
Hold on high their shameless heads
With their pretty lips a-pouting,
Never doubting - never doubting
That for Cytherean posies
He would gather aught but roses.

In a nest of weeds and nettles,
Lay a violet, half hidden;
Hoping that his glance unbidden
Yet might fall upon her petals.
Though she lived alone, apart,
Hope lay nestling at her heart,
But, alas! the cruel awaking
Set her little heart a-breaking,
For he gathered for his posies
Only roses - only roses!

William Schwenck Gilbert

Out Of Sorts

When you find you're a broken-down critter,
Who is all of a trimmle and twitter,
With your palate unpleasantly bitter,
As if you'd just bitten a pill -
When your legs are as thin as dividers,
And you're plagued with unruly insiders,
And your spine is all creepy with spiders,
And you're highly gamboge in the gill -
When you've got a beehive in your head,
And a sewing machine in each ear,
And you feel that you've eaten your bed,
And you've got a bad headache DOWN HERE -
When such facts are about,
And these symptoms you find
In your body or crown -
Well, it's time to look out,
You may make up your mind
You had better lie down!

When your lips are all smeary - like tallow,
And your tongue is decidedly yallow,
With a pint of warm oil in your swAllow,
And a pound of tin-tacks in your chest -
When you're down in the mouth with the vapours,
And all over your new Morris papers
Black-beetles are cutting their capers,
And crawly things never at rest -
When you doubt if your head is your own,
And you jump when an open door slams -
Then you've got to a state which is known
To the medical world as "jim-jams."
If such symptoms you find
In your body or head,
They're not easy to quell -
You may make up your mind
You are better in bed,
For you're not at all well!

Pasha Bailey Ben

A proud Pasha was BAILEY BEN,
His wives were three, his tails were ten;
His form was dignified, but stout,
Men called him "Little Roundabout."

HIS IMPORTANCE

Pale Pilgrims came from o'er the sea
To wait on PASHA BAILEY B.,
All bearing presents in a crowd,
For B. was poor as well as proud.

HIS PRESENTS

They brought him onions strung on ropes,
And cold boiled beef, and telescopes,
And balls of string, and shrimps, and guns,
And chops, and tacks, and hats, and buns.

MORE OF THEM

They brought him white kid gloves, and pails,
And candlesticks, and potted quails,
And capstan-bars, and scales and weights,
And ornaments for empty grates.

WHY I MENTION THESE

My tale is not of these - oh no!
I only mention them to show
The divers gifts that divers men
Brought o'er the sea to BAILEY BEN.

HIS CONFIDANT

A confidant had BAILEY B.,
A gay Mongolian dog was he;
I am not good at Turkish names,
And so I call him SIMPLE JAMES.

HIS CONFIDANT'S COUNTENANCE

A dreadful legend you might trace
In SIMPLE JAMES'S honest face,
For there you read, in Nature's print,
"A Scoundrel of the Deepest Tint."

HIS CHARACTER

A deed of blood, or fire, or flames,
Was meat and drink to SIMPLE JAMES:
To hide his guilt he did not plan,
But owned himself a bad young man.

THE AUTHOR TO HIS READER

And why on earth good BAILEY BEN
(The wisest, noblest, best of men)
Made SIMPLE JAMES his right-hand man
Is quite beyond my mental span.

THE SAME, CONTINUED

But there - enough of gruesome deeds!
My heart, in thinking of them, bleeds;
And so let SIMPLE JAMES take wing, -
'Tis not of him I'm going to sing.

THE PASHA'S CLERK

Good PASHA BAILEY kept a clerk
(For BAILEY only made his mark),
His name was MATTHEW WYCOMBE COO,
A man of nearly forty-two.

HIS ACCOMPLISHMENTS

No person that I ever knew
Could "yodel" half as well as COO,
And Highlanders exclaimed, "Eh, weel!"
When COO began to dance a reel.

HIS KINDNESS TO THE PASHA'S WIVES

He used to dance and sing and play
In such an unaffected way,
He cheered the unexciting lives
Of PASHA BAILEY'S lovely wives.

THE AUTHOR TO HIS READER

But why should I encumber you
With histories of MATTHEW COO?
Let MATTHEW COO at once take wing, -
'Tis not of COO I'm going to sing.

THE AUTHOR'S MUSE

Let me recall my wandering Muse;
She SHALL be steady if I choose -
She roves, instead of helping me
To tell the deeds of BAILEY B.

THE PASHA'S VISITOR

One morning knocked, at half-past eight,
A tall Red Indian at his gate.
In Turkey, as you're p'raps aware,
Red Indians are extremely rare.

THE VISITOR'S OUTFIT

Mocassins decked his graceful legs,
His eyes were black, and round as eggs,
And on his neck, instead of beads,
Hung several Catawampous seeds.

WHAT THE VISITOR SAID

"Ho, ho!" he said, "thou pale-faced one,
Poor offspring of an Eastern sun,
You've NEVER seen the Red Man skip
Upon the banks of Mississip!"

THE AUTHOR'S MODERATION

To say that BAILEY oped his eyes
Would feebly paint his great surprise -
To say it almost made him die
Would be to paint it much too high.

THE AUTHOR TO HIS READER

But why should I ransack my head
To tell you all that Indian said;
We'll let the Indian man take wing, -
'Tis not of him I'm going to sing.

THE READER TO THE AUTHOR

Come, come, I say, that's quite enough
Of this absurd disjointed stuff;
Now let's get on to that affair
About LIEUTENANT-COLONEL FLARE.

William Schwenck Gilbert

Peter The Wag

POLICEMAN PETER FORTH I drag
From his obscure retreat:
He was a merry genial wag,
Who loved a mad conceit.
If he were asked the time of day,
By country bumpkins green,
He not unfrequently would say,
"A quarter past thirteen."

If ever you by word of mouth
Inquired of MISTER FORTH
The way to somewhere in the South,
He always sent you North.
With little boys his beat along
He loved to stop and play;
He loved to send old ladies wrong,
And teach their feet to stray.

He would in frolic moments, when
Such mischief bent upon,
Take Bishops up as betting men -
Bid Ministers move on.
Then all the worthy boys he knew
He regularly licked,
And always collared people who
Had had their pockets picked.

He was not naturally bad,
Or viciously inclined,
But from his early youth he had
A waggish turn of mind.
The Men of London grimly scowled
With indignation wild;
The Men of London gruffly growled,
But PETER calmly smiled.

Against this minion of the Crown
The swelling murmurs grew -
From Camberwell to Kentish Town -

From Rotherhithe to Kew.
Still humoured he his wagsome turn,
And fed in various ways
The coward rage that dared to burn,
But did not dare to blaze.

Still, Retribution has her day,
Although her flight is slow:
ONE DAY THAT CRUSHER LOST HIS WAY
NEAR POLAND STREET, SOHO.
The haughty boy, too proud to ask,
To find his way resolved,
And in the tangle of his task
Got more and more involved.

The Men of London, overjoyed,
Came there to jeer their foe,
And flocking crowds completely cloyed
The mazes of Soho.
The news on telegraphic wires
Sped swiftly o'er the lea,
Excursion trains from distant shires
Brought myriads to see.

For weeks he trod his self-made beats
Through Newport- Gerrard- Bear-
Greek- Rupert- Frith- Dean- Poland- Streets,
And into Golden Square.
But all, alas! in vain, for when
He tried to learn the way
Of little boys or grown-up men,
They none of them would say.

Their eyes would flash - their teeth would grind -
Their lips would tightly curl -
They'd say, "Thy way thyself must find,
Thou misdirecting churl!"
And, similarly, also, when
He tried a foreign friend;
Italians answered, "IL BALEN" -
The French, "No comprehend."

The Russ would say with gleaming eye
" Sevastopol!" and groan.
The Greek said, [GREEK TEXT WHICH CANNOT
BE REPRODUCED]."
To wander thus for many a year
That Crusher never ceased -
The Men of London dropped a tear,
Their anger was appeased.

At length exploring gangs were sent
To find poor FORTH'S remains -
A handsome grant by Parliament
Was voted for their pains.
To seek the poor policeman out
Bold spirits volunteered,
And when they swore they'd solve the doubt,
The Men of London cheered.

And in a yard, dark, dank, and drear,
They found him, on the floor -
It leads from Richmond Buildings - near
The Royalty stage-door.
With brandy cold and brandy hot
They plied him, starved and wet,
And made him sergeant on the spot -
The Men of London's pet!

William Schwenck Gilbert

Phrenology

"COME, collar this bad man -
Around the throat he knotted me
Till I to choke began -
In point of fact, garotted me!"

So spake SIR HERBERT WRITE
To JAMES, Policeman Thirty-two -
All ruffled with his fight
SIR HERBERT was, and dirty too.

Policeman nothing said
(Though he had much to say on it),
But from the bad man's head
He took the cap that lay on it.

"No, great SIR HERBERT WHITE -
Impossible to take him up.
This man is honest quite -
Wherever did you rake him up?"

"For Burglars, Thieves, and Co.,
Indeed, I'm no apologist,
But I, some years ago,
Assisted a Phrenologist.

"Observe his various bumps,
His head as I uncover it:
His morals lie in lumps
All round about and over it."

"Now take him," said SIR WHITE,
"Or you will soon be rueing it;
Bless me! I must be right, -
I caught the fellow doing it!"

Policeman calmly smiled,
"Indeed you are mistaken, sir,
You're agitated - riled -
And very badly shaken, sir.

"Sit down, and I'll explain
My system of Phrenology,
A second, please, remain" -
(A second is horology).

Policeman left his beat -
(The Bart., no longer furious,
Sat down upon a seat,
Observing, "This is curious!")

"Oh, surely, here are signs
Should soften your rigidity:
This gentleman combines
Politeness with timidity.

"Of Shyness here's a lump -
A hole for Animosity -
And like my fist his bump
Of Impecuniosity.

"Just here the bump appears
Of Innocent Hilarity,
And just behind his ears
Are Faith, and Hope, and Charity.

He of true Christian ways
As bright example sent us is -
This maxim he obeys,
'SORTE TUA CONTENTUS SIS.'

"There, let him go his ways,
He needs no stern admonishing."
The Bart., in blank amaze,
Exclaimed, "This is astonishing!

"I MUST have made a mull,
This matter I've been blind in it:
Examine, please, MY skull,
And tell me what you find in it."

That Crusher looked, and said,

With unimpaired urbanity,
"SIR HERBERT, you've a head
That teems with inhumanity.

"Here's Murder, Envy, Strife
(Propensity to kill any),
And Lies as large as life,
And heaps of Social Villany.

"Here's Love of Brand-New Clothes,
Embezzling - Arson - Deism -
A taste for Slang and Oaths,
And Fraudulent Trusteeism.

"Here's Love of Groundless Charge -
Here's Malice, too, and Trickery,
Unusually large
Your bump of Pocket-Pickery - "

"Stop!" said the Bart., "my cup
Is full - I'm worse than him in all;
Policeman, take me up -
No doubt I am some criminal!"

That Pleeceman's scorn grew large
(Phrenology had nettled it),
He took that Bart. in charge -
I don't know how they settled it.

William Schwenck Gilbert

Poetry Everywhere

What time the poet hath hymned
The writhing maid, lithe-limbed,
Quivering on amaranthine asphodel,
How can he paint her woes,
Knowing, as well he knows,
That all can be set right with calomel?

When from the poet's plinth
The amorous colocynth
Yearns for the aloe, faint with rapturous thrills,
How can he hymn their throes
Knowing, as well he knows,
That they are only un-compounded pills?

Is it, and can it be,
Nature hath this decree,
Nothing poetic in the world shall dwell?
Or that in all her works
Something poetic lurks,
Even in colocynth and calomel?

William Schwenck Gilbert

Proper Bride

The Sun, whose rays
Are all ablaze
With ever-living glory,
Will not deny
His majesty -
He scorns to tell a story:
He won't exclaim,
"I blush for shame,
So kindly be indulgent,"
But, fierce and bold,
In fiery gold,
He glories all effulgent!

I mean to rule the earth,
As he the sky -
We really know our worth,
The Sun and I!

Observe his flame,
That placid dame,
The Moon's Celestial Highness;
There's not a trace
Upon her face
Of diffidence or shyness:
She borrows light
That, through the night,
Mankind may all acclaim her!
And, truth to tell,
She lights up well,
So I, for one, don't blame her!

Ah, pray make no mistake,
We are not shy;
We're very wide awake,
The Moon and I!

William Schwenck Gilbert

Put A Penny In The Slot

If my action's stiff and crude,
Do not laugh, because it's rude.
If my gestures promise larks,
Do not make unkind remarks.
Clockwork figures may be found
Everywhere and all around.
Ten to one, if I but knew,
You are clockwork figures too.
And the motto of the lot,
"Put a penny in the slot!"

Usurer, for money lent,
Making out his cent per cent -
Widow plump or maiden rare,
Deaf and dumb to suitor's prayer -
Tax collectors, whom in vain
You implore to "call again" -
Cautious voter, whom you find
Slow in making up his mind -
If you'd move them on the spot,
Put a penny in the slot!

Bland reporters in the courts,
Who suppress police reports -
Sheriff's yeoman, pen in fist,
Making out a jury list -
Stern policemen, tall and spare,
Acting all "upon the square" -
(Which in words that plainer fall,
Means that you can square them all) -
If you want to move the lot,
Put a penny in the slot!

William Schwenck Gilbert

Said I To Myself, Said I

When I went to the Bar as a very young man
(Said I to myself - said I),
I'll work on a new and original plan
(Said I to myself - said I),
I'll never assume that a rogue or a thief
Is a gentleman worthy implicit belief,
Because his attorney, has sent me a brief
(Said I to myself - said I!)

I'll never throw dust in a juryman's eyes
(Said I to myself - said I),
Or hoodwink a judge who is not over-wise
(Said I to myself - said I),
Or assume that the witnesses summoned in force
In Exchequer, Queen's Bench, Common Pleas, or Divorce,
Have perjured themselves as a matter of course
(Said I to myself - said I!)

Ere I go into court I will read my brief through
(Said I to myself - said I),
And I'll never take work I'm unable to do
(Said I to myself - said I).
My learned profession I'll never disgrace
By taking a fee with a grin on my face,
When I haven't been there to attend to the case
(Said I to myself - said I!)

In other professions in which men engage
(Said I to myself - said I),
The Army, the Navy, the Church, and the Stage,
(Said I to myself - said I),
Professional licence, if carried too far,
Your chance of promotion will certainly mar -
And I fancy the rule might apply to the Bar
(Said I to myself - said I!)

William Schwenck Gilbert

Sans Souci

I cannot tell what this love may be
That cometh to all but not to me.
It cannot be kind as they'd imply,
Or why do these gentle ladies sigh?
It cannot be joy and rapture deep,
Or why do these gentle ladies weep?
It cannot be blissful, as 'tis said,
Or why are their eyes so wondrous red?

If love is a thorn, they show no wit
Who foolishly hug and foster it.
If love is a weed, how simple they
Who gather and gather it, day by day!
If love is a nettle that makes you smart,
Why do you wear it next your heart?
And if it be neither of these, say I,
Why do you sit and sob and sigh?

William Schwenck Gilbert

Sir Barnaby Bampton Boo

This is SIR BARNABY BAMPTON BOO,
Last of a noble race,
BARNABY BAMPTON, coming to woo,
All at a deuce of a pace.
BARNABY BAMPTON BOO,
Here is a health to you:
Here is wishing you luck, you elderly buck -
BARNABY BAMPTON BOO!

The excellent women of Tuptonvee
Knew SIR BARNABY BOO;
One of them surely his bride would be,
But dickens a soul knew who.
Women of Tuptonvee,
Here is a health to ye
For a Baronet, dears, you would cut off your ears,
Women of Tuptonvee!

Here are old MR. and MRS. DE PLOW
(PETER his Christian name),
They kept seven oxen, a pig, and a cow -
Farming it was their game.
Worthy old PETER DE PLOW,
Here is a health to thou:
Your race isn't run, though you're seventy-one,
Worthy old PETER DE PLOW!

To excellent MR. and MRS. DE PLOW
Came SIR BARNABY BOO,
He asked for their daughter, and told 'em as how
He was as rich as a Jew.
BARNABY BAMPTON'S wealth,
Here is your jolly good health:
I'd never repine if you came to be mine,
BARNABY BAMPTON'S wealth!

"O great SIR BARNABY BAMPTON BOO"
(Said PLOW to that titled swell),
"My missus has given me daughters two -

AMELIA and VOLATILE NELL!"
AMELIA and VOLATILE NELL,
I hope you're uncommonly well:
You two pretty pearls - you extremely nice girls -
AMELIA and VOLATILE NELL!

"AMELIA is passable only, in face,
But, oh! she's a worthy girl;
Superior morals like hers would grace
The home of a belted Earl."
Morality, heavenly link!
To you I'll eternally drink:
I'm awfully fond of that heavenly bond,
Morality, heavenly link!

"Now NELLY'S the prettier, p'raps, of my gals,
But, oh! she's a wayward chit;
She dresses herself in her showy fal-lals,
And doesn't read TUPPER a bit!"
O TUPPER, philosopher true,
How do you happen to do?
A publisher looks with respect on your books,
For they DO sell, philosopher true!

The Bart. (I'll be hanged if I drink him again,
Or care if he's ill or well),
He sneered at the goodness of MILLY THE PLAIN,
And cottoned to VOLATILE NELL!
O VOLATILE NELLY DE P.!
Be hanged if I'll empty to thee:
I like worthy maids, not mere frivolous jades,
VOLATILE NELLY DE P.!

They bolted, the Bart. and his frivolous dear,
And MILLY was left to pout;
For years they've got on very well, as I hear,
But soon he will rue it, no doubt.
O excellent MILLY DE PLOW,
I really can't drink to you now;
My head isn't strong, and the song has been long,
Excellent MILLY DE PLOW!

Sir Guy The Crusader

Sir GUY was a doughty crusader,
A muscular knight,
Ever ready to fight,
A very determined invader,
And DICKY DE LION'S delight.

LENORE was a Saracen maiden,
Brunette, statuesque,
The reverse of grotesque,
Her pa was a bagman from Aden,
Her mother she played in burlesque.

A CORYPHEE, pretty and loyal,
In amber and red
The ballet she led;
Her mother performed at the Royal,
LENORE at the Saracen's Head.

Of face and of figure majestic,
She dazzled the cits -
Ecstaticised pits; -
Her troubles were only domestic,
But drove her half out of her wits.

Her father incessantly lashed her,
On water and bread
She was grudgingly fed;
Whenever her father he thrashed her
Her mother sat down on her head.

GUY saw her, and loved her, with reason,
For beauty so bright
Sent him mad with delight;
He purchased a stall for the season,
And sat in it every night.

His views were exceedingly proper,
He wanted to wed,
So he called at her shed

And saw her progenitor whop her -
Her mother sit down on her head.

"So pretty," said he, "and so trusting!
You brute of a dad,
You unprincipled cad,
Your conduct is really disgusting,
Come, come, now admit it's too bad!

"You're a turbaned old Turk, and malignant -
Your daughter LENORE
I intensely adore,
And I cannot help feeling indignant,
A fact that I hinted before;

"To see a fond father employing
A deuce of a knout
For to bang her about,
To a sensitive lover's annoying."
Said the bagman, "Crusader, get out."

Says GUY, "Shall a warrior laden
With a big spiky knob,
Sit in peace on his cob
While a beautiful Saracen maiden
Is whipped by a Saracen snob?

"To London I'll go from my charmer."
Which he did, with his loot
(Seven hats and a flute),
And was nabbed for his Sydenham armour
At MR. BEN-SAMUEL'S suit.

SIR GUY he was lodged in the Compter,
Her pa, in a rage,
Died (don't know his age),
His daughter, she married the prompter,
Grew bulky and quitted the stage.

William Schwenck Gilbert

Sir Macklin

Of all the youths I ever saw
None were so wicked, vain, or silly,
So lost to shame and Sabbath law,
As worldly TOM, and BOB, and BILLY.

For every Sabbath day they walked
(Such was their gay and thoughtless nature)
In parks or gardens, where they talked
From three to six, or even later.

SIR MACKLIN was a priest severe
In conduct and in conversation,
It did a sinner good to hear
Him deal in ratiocination.

He could in every action show
Some sin, and nobody could doubt him.
He argued high, he argued low,
He also argued round about him.

He wept to think each thoughtless youth
Contained of wickedness a skinful,
And burnt to teach the awful truth,
That walking out on Sunday's sinful.

"Oh, youths," said he, "I grieve to find
The course of life you've been and hit on -
Sit down," said he, "and never mind
The pennies for the chairs you sit on.

"My opening head is 'Kensington,'
How walking there the sinner hardens,
Which when I have enlarged upon,
I go to 'Secondly' - its 'Gardens.'

"My 'Thirdly' comprehendeth 'Hyde,'
Of Secresy the guilts and shameses;
My 'Fourthly' - 'Park' - its verdure wide -
My 'Fifthly' comprehends 'St. James's.'

"That matter settled, I shall reach
The 'Sixthly' in my solemn tether,
And show that what is true of each,
Is also true of all, together.

"Then I shall demonstrate to you,
According to the rules of WHATELY,
That what is true of all, is true
Of each, considered separately."

In lavish stream his accents flow,
TOM, BOB, and BILLY dare not flout him;
He argued high, he argued low,
He also argued round about him.

"Ha, ha!" he said, "you loathe your ways,
You writhe at these my words of warning,
In agony your hands you raise."
(And so they did, for they were yawning.)

To "Twenty-firstly" on they go,
The lads do not attempt to scout him;
He argued high, he argued low,
He also argued round about him.

"Ho, ho!" he cries, "you bow your crests -
My eloquence has set you weeping;
In shame you bend upon your breasts!"
(And so they did, for they were sleeping.)

He proved them this - he proved them that -
This good but wearisome ascetic;
He jumped and thumped upon his hat,
He was so very energetic.

His Bishop at this moment chanced
To pass, and found the road encumbered;
He noticed how the Churchman danced,
And how his congregation slumbered.

The hundred and eleventh head

The priest completed of his stricture;
"Oh, bosh!" the worthy Bishop said,
And walked him off as in the picture.

William Schwenck Gilbert

Sleep On!

Fear no unlicensed entry,
Heed no bombastic talk,
While guards the British Sentry
Pall Mall and Birdcage Walk.
Let European thunders
Occasion no alarms,
Though diplomatic blunders
May cause a cry "To arms!"
Sleep on, ye pale civilians;
All thunder-clouds defy:
On Europe's countless millions
The Sentry keeps his eye!

Should foreign-born rascalions
In London dare to show
Their overgrown battalions,
Be sure I'll let you know.
Should Russians or Norwegians
Pollute our favoured clime
With rough barbaric legions,
I'll mention it in time.
So sleep in peace, civilians,
The Continent defy;
While on its countless millions
The Sentry keeps his eye!

William Schwenck Gilbert

Solatium

Comes the broken flower -
Comes the cheated maid -
Though the tempest lower,
Rain and cloud will fade!
Take, O maid, these posies:
Though thy beauty rare
Shame the blushing roses,
They are passing fair!
Wear the flowers till they fade;
Happy be thy life, O maid!

O'er the season vernal,
Time may cast a shade;
Sunshine, if eternal,
Makes the roses fade:
Time may do his duty;
Let the thief alone -
Winter hath a beauty
That is all his own.
Fairest days are sun and shade:
Happy be thy life, O maid!

William Schwenck Gilbert

Speculation

Comes a train of little ladies
From scholastic trammels free,
Each a little bit afraid is,
Wondering what the world can be!

Is it but a world of trouble -
Sadness set to song?
Is its beauty but a bubble
Bound to break ere long?

Are its palaces and pleasures
Fantasies that fade?
And the glory of its treasures
Shadow of a shade?

Schoolgirls we, eighteen and under,
From scholastic trammels free,
And we wonder - how we wonder! -
What on earth the world can be!

William Schwenck Gilbert

Tempora Mutantur

Letters, letters, letters, letters!
Some that please and some that bore,
Some that threaten prison fetters
(Metaphorically, fetters
Such as bind insolvent debtors) -
Invitations by the score.

One from COGSON, WILES, and RAILER,
My attorneys, off the Strand;
One from COPPERBLOCK, my tailor -
My unreasonable tailor -
One in FLAGG'S disgusting hand.

One from EPHRAIM and MOSES,
Wanting coin without a doubt,
I should like to pull their noses -
Their uncompromising noses;
One from ALICE with the roses -
Ah, I know what that's about!

Time was when I waited, waited
For the missives that she wrote,
Humble postmen execrated -
Loudly, deeply execrated -
When I heard I wasn't fated
To be gladdened with a note!

Time was when I'd not have bartered
Of her little pen a dip
For a peerage duly gartered -
For a peerage starred and gartered -
With a palace-office chartered,
Or a Secretaryship.

But the time for that is over,
And I wish we'd never met.
I'm afraid I've proved a rover -
I'm afraid a heartless rover -
Quarters in a place like Dover

Tend to make a man forget.

Bills for carriages and horses,
Bills for wine and light cigar,
Matters that concern the Forces -
News that may affect the Forces -
News affecting my resources,
Much more interesting are!

And the tiny little paper,
With the words that seem to run
From her little fingers taper
(They are very small and taper),
By the tailor and the draper
Are in interest outdone.

And unopened it's remaining!
I can read her gentle hope -
Her entreaties, uncomplaining
(She was always uncomplaining),
Her devotion never waning -
Through the little envelope!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Aesthete

If you're anxious for to shine in the high aesthetic line, as a man
of culture rare,
You must get up all the germs of the transcendental terms, and
plant them everywhere.
You must lie upon the daisies and discourse in novel phrases of
your complicated state of mind
(The meaning doesn't matter if it's only idle chatter of a
transcendental kind).
And every one will say,
As you walk your mystic way,
"If this young man expresses himself in terms too deep for ME,
Why, what a very singularly deep young man this deep young man must
be!"

Be eloquent in praise of the very dull old days which have long
since passed away,
And convince 'em, if you can, that the reign of good QUEEN ANNE was
Culture's palmiest day.
Of course you will pooh-pooh whatever's fresh and new, and declare
it's crude and mean,
And that Art stopped short in the cultivated court of the EMPRESS
JOSEPHINE.
And every one will say,
As you walk your mystic way,
"If that's not good enough for him which is good enough for ME,
Why, what a very cultivated kind of youth this kind of youth must
be!"

Then a sentimental passion of a vegetable fashion must excite your
languid spleen,
An attachment E LA Plato for a bashful young potato, or a not-too-
French French bean.
Though the Philistines may jostle, you will rank as an apostle in
the high aesthetic band,
If you walk down Piccadilly with a poppy or a lily in your
mediaeval hand.
And every one will say,
As you walk your flowery way,
"If he's content with a vegetable love which would certainly not

suit ME,

Why, what a most particularly pure young man this pure young man
must be!"

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Ape And The Lady

A LADY fair, of lineage high,
Was loved by an Ape, in the days gone by -
The Maid was radiant as the sun,
The Ape was a most unsightly one -
So it would not do -
His scheme fell through;
For the Maid, when his love took formal shape,
Expressed such terror
At his monstrous error,
That he stammered an apology and made his 'scape,
The picture of a disconcerted Ape.

With a view to rise in the social scale,
He shaved his bristles, and he docked his tail,
He grew moustachios, and he took his tub,
And he paid a guinea to a toilet club.
But it would not do,
The scheme fell through -
For the Maid was Beauty's fairest Queen,
With golden tresses,
Like a real princess's,
While the Ape, despite his razor keen,
Was the apiest Ape that ever was seen!

He bought white ties, and he bought dress suits,
He crammed his feet into bright tight boots,
And to start his life on a brand-new plan,
He christened himself Darwinian Man!
But it would not do,
The scheme fell through -
For the Maiden fair, whom the monkey craved,
Was a radiant Being,
With a brain far-seeing -
While a Man, however well-behaved,
At best is only a monkey shaved!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Baby's Vengeance

Weary at heart and extremely ill
Was PALEY VOLLAIRE of Bromptonville,
In a dirty lodging, with fever down,
Close to the Polygon, Somers Town.

PALEY VOLLAIRE was an only son
(For why? His mother had had but one),
And PALEY inherited gold and grounds
Worth several hundred thousand pounds.

But he, like many a rich young man,
Through this magnificent fortune ran,
And nothing was left for his daily needs
But duplicate copies of mortgage-deeds.

Shabby and sorry and sorely sick,
He slept, and dreamt that the clock's "tick, tick,"
Was one of the Fates, with a long sharp knife,
Snicking off bits of his shortened life.

He woke and counted the pips on the walls,
The outdoor passengers' loud footfalls,
And reckoned all over, and reckoned again,
The little white tufts on his counterpane.

A medical man to his bedside came.
(I can't remember that doctor's name),
And said, "You'll die in a very short while
If you don't set sail for Madeira's isle."

"Go to Madeira? goodness me!
I haven't the money to pay your fee!"
"Then, PALEY VOLLAIRE," said the leech, "good bye;
I'll come no more, for your're sure to die."

He sighed and he groaned and smote his breast;
"Oh, send," said he, "for FREDERICK WEST,
Ere senses fade or my eyes grow dim:
I've a terrible tale to whisper him!"

Poor was FREDERICK'S lot in life, -
A dustman he with a fair young wife,
A worthy man with a hard-earned store,
A hundred and seventy pounds - or more.

FREDERICK came, and he said, "Maybe
You'll say what you happened to want with me?"
"Wronged boy," said PALEY VOLLAIRE, "I will,
But don't you fidget yourself - sit still."

THE TERRIBLE TALE.

"'Tis now some thirty-seven years ago
Since first began the plot that I'm revealing,
A fine young woman, whom you ought to know,
Lived with her husband down in Drum Lane, Ealing.
Herself by means of mangling reimbursing,
And now and then (at intervals) wet-nursing.

"Two little babes dwelt in their humble cot:
One was her own - the other only lent to her:
HER OWN SHE SLIGHTED. Tempted by a lot
Of gold and silver regularly sent to her,
She ministered unto the little other
In the capacity of foster-mother.

"I WAS HER OWN. Oh! how I lay and sobbed
In my poor cradle - deeply, deeply cursing
The rich man's pampered bantling, who had robbed
My only birthright - an attentive nursing!
Sometimes in hatred of my foster-brother,
I gnashed my gums - which terrified my mother.

"One day - it was quite early in the week -
I IN MY CRADLE HAVING PLACED THE BANTLING -
Crept into his! He had not learnt to speak,
But I could see his face with anger mantling.
It was imprudent - well, disgraceful maybe,
For, oh! I was a bad, blackhearted baby!

"So great a luxury was food, I think
No wickedness but I was game to try for it.
NOW if I wanted anything to drink
At any time, I only had to cry for it!
ONCE, if I dared to weep, the bottle lacking,
My blubbering involved a serious smacking!

"We grew up in the usual way - my friend,
My foster-brother, daily growing thinner,
While gradually I began to mend,
And thrived amazingly on double dinner.
And every one, besides my foster-mother,
Believed that either of us was the other.

"I came into HIS wealth - I bore HIS name,
I bear it still - HIS property I squandered -
I mortgaged everything - and now (oh, shame!)
Into a Somers Town shake-down I've wandered!
I am no PALEY - no, VOLLAIRE - it's true, my boy!
The only rightful PALEY V. is YOU, my boy!

"And all I have is yours - and yours is mine.
I still may place you in your true position:
Give me the pounds you've saved, and I'll resign
My noble name, my rank, and my condition.
So far my wickedness in falsely owning
Your vasty wealth, I am at last atoning!"

*

FREDERICK he was a simple soul,
He pulled from his pocket a bulky roll,
And gave to PALEY his hard-earned store,
A hundred and seventy pounds or more.

PALEY VOLLAIRE, with many a groan,
Gave FREDERICK all that he called his own, -
Two shirts and a sock, and a vest of jean,
A Wellington boot and a bamboo cane.

And FRED (entitled to all things there)
He took the fever from MR. VOLLAIRE,

Which killed poor FREDERICK WEST. Meanwhile
VOLLAIRE sailed off to Madeira's isle.

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Baffled Grumbler

Whene'er I poke
Sarcastic joke
Replete with malice spiteful,
The people vile
Politely smile
And vote me quite delightful!
Now, when a wight
Sits up all night
Ill-natured jokes devising,
And all his wiles
Are met with smiles,
It's hard, there's no disguising!
Oh, don't the days seem lank and long
When all goes right and nothing goes wrong,
And isn't your life extremely flat
With nothing whatever to grumble at!

When German bands,
From music stands
Play Wagner imperFECTly -
I bid them go -
They don't say no,
But off they trot directly!
The organ boys
They stop their noise
With readiness surprising,
And grinning herds
Of hurdy-gurds
Retire apologising!
Oh, don't the days seem lank and long
When all goes right and nothing goes wrong,
And isn't your life extremely flat
With nothing whatever to grumble at!

I've offered gold,
In sums untold,
To all who'd contradict me -
I've said I'd pay
A pound a day

To any one who kicked me -
I've bribed with toys
Great vulgar boys
To utter something spiteful,
But, bless you, no!
They WILL be so
Confoundedly politeful!
In short, these aggravating lads,
They tickle my tastes, they feed my fads,
They give me this and they give me that,
And I've nothing whatever to grumble at!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Bishop And The Busman

It was a Bishop bold,
And London was his see,
He was short and stout and round about
And zealous as could be.

It also was a Jew,
Who drove a Putney 'bus -
For flesh of swine however fine
He did not care a cuss.

His name was HASH BAZ BEN,
And JEDEDIAH too,
And SOLOMON and ZABULON -
This 'bus-directing Jew.

The Bishop said, said he,
"I'll see what I can do
To Christianise and make you wise,
You poor benighted Jew."

So every blessed day
That 'bus he rode outside,
From Fulham town, both up and down,
And loudly thus he cried:

"His name is HASH BAZ BEN,
And JEDEDIAH too,
And SOLOMON and ZABULON -
This 'bus-directing Jew."

At first the 'busman smiled,
And rather liked the fun -
He merely smiled, that Hebrew child,
And said, "Eccentric one!"

And gay young dogs would wait
To see the 'bus go by
(These gay young dogs, in striking togs),
To hear the Bishop cry:

"Observe his grisly beard,
His race it clearly shows,
He sticks no fork in ham or pork -
Observe, my friends, his nose.

"His name is HASH BAZ BEN,
And JEDEDIAH too,
And SOLOMON and ZABULON -
This 'bus-directing Jew."

But though at first amused,
Yet after seven years,
This Hebrew child got rather riled,
And melted into tears.

He really almost feared
To leave his poor abode,
His nose, and name, and beard became
A byword on that road.

At length he swore an oath,
The reason he would know -
"I'll call and see why ever he
Does persecute me so!"

The good old Bishop sat
On his ancestral chair,
The 'busman came, sent up his name,
And laid his grievance bare.

"Benighted Jew," he said
(The good old Bishop did),
"Be Christian, you, instead of Jew -
Become a Christian kid!

"I'll ne'er annoy you more."
"Indeed?" replied the Jew;
"Shall I be freed?" "You will, indeed!"
Then "Done!" said he, "with you!"

The organ which, in man,

Between the eyebrows grows,
Fell from his face, and in its place
He found a Christian nose.

His tangled Hebrew beard,
Which to his waist came down,
Was now a pair of whiskers fair -
His name ADOLPHUS BROWN!

He wedded in a year
That prelate's daughter JANE,
He's grown quite fair - has auburn hair -
His wife is far from plain.

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Bishop Of Rum-Ti-Foo

From east and south the holy clan
Of Bishops gathered to a man;
To Synod, called Pan-Anglican,
In flocking crowds they came.
Among them was a Bishop, who
Had lately been appointed to
The balmy isle of Rum-ti-Foo,
And PETER was his name.

His people - twenty-three in sum -
They played the eloquent tum-tum,
And lived on scalps served up, in rum -
The only sauce they knew.
When first good BISHOP PETER came
(For PETER was that Bishop's name),
To humour them, he did the same
As they of Rum-ti-Foo.

His flock, I've often heard him tell,
(His name was PETER) loved him well,
And, summoned by the sound of bell,
In crowds together came.
"Oh, massa, why you go away?
Oh, MASSA PETER, please to stay."
(They called him PETER, people say,
Because it was his name.)

He told them all good boys to be,
And sailed away across the sea,
At London Bridge that Bishop he
Arrived one Tuesday night;
And as that night he homeward strode
To his Pan-Anglican abode,
He passed along the Borough Road,
And saw a gruesome sight.

He saw a crowd assembled round
A person dancing on the ground,
Who straight began to leap and bound

With all his might and main.
To see that dancing man he stopped,
Who twirled and wriggled, skipped and hopped,
Then down incontinently dropped,
And then sprang up again.

The Bishop chuckled at the sight.
"This style of dancing would delight
A simple Rum-ti-Foozleite.
I'll learn it if I can,
To please the tribe when I get back."
He begged the man to teach his knack.
"Right Reverend Sir, in half a crack!
Replied that dancing man.

The dancing man he worked away,
And taught the Bishop every day -
The dancer skipped like any fay -
Good PETER did the same.
The Bishop buckled to his task,
With BATTEMENTS, and PAS DE BASQUE.
(I'll tell you, if you care to ask,
That PETER was his name.)

"Come, walk like this," the dancer said,
"Stick out your toes - stick in your head,
Stalk on with quick, galvanic tread -
Your fingers thus extend;
The attitude's considered quaint."
The weary Bishop, feeling faint,
Replied, "I do not say it ain't,
But 'Time!' my Christian friend!"

"We now proceed to something new -
Dance as the PAYNES and LAURIS do,
Like this - one, two - one, two - one, two."
The Bishop, never proud,
But in an overwhelming heat
(His name was PETER, I repeat)
Performed the PAYNE and LAURI feat,
And puffed his thanks aloud.

Another game the dancer planned -
"Just take your ankle in your hand,
And try, my lord, if you can stand -
Your body stiff and stark.
If, when revisiting your see,
You learnt to hop on shore - like me -
The novelty would striking be,
And must attract remark."

"No," said the worthy Bishop, "no;
That is a length to which, I trow,
Colonial Bishops cannot go.
You may express surprise
At finding Bishops deal in pride -
But if that trick I ever tried,
I should appear undignified
In Rum-ti-Foozle's eyes.

"The islanders of Rum-ti-Foo
Are well-conducted persons, who
Approve a joke as much as you,
And laugh at it as such;
But if they saw their Bishop land,
His leg supported in his hand,
The joke they wouldn't understand -
'T would pain them very much!"

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Bishop Of Rum-Ti-Foo Again

I often wonder whether you
Think sometimes of that Bishop, who
From black but balmy Rum-ti-Foo
Last summer twelvemonth came.
Unto your mind I p'r'aps may bring
Remembrance of the man I sing
To-day, by simply mentioning
That PETER was his name.

Remember how that holy man
Came with the great Colonial clan
To Synod, called Pan-Anglican;
And kindly recollect
How, having crossed the ocean wide,
To please his flock all means he tried
Consistent with a proper pride
And manly self-respect.

He only, of the reverend pack
Who minister to Christians black,
Brought any useful knowledge back
To his Colonial fold.
In consequence a place I claim
For "PETER" on the scroll of Fame
(For PETER was that Bishop's name,
As I've already told).

He carried Art, he often said,
To places where that timid maid
(Save by Colonial Bishops' aid)
Could never hope to roam.
The Payne-cum-Lauri feat he taught
As he had learnt it; for he thought
The choicest fruits of Progress ought
To bless the Negro's home.

And he had other work to do,
For, while he tossed upon the Blue,
The islanders of Rum-ti-Foo

Forgot their kindly friend.
Their decent clothes they learnt to tear -
They learnt to say, "I do not care,"
Though they, of course, were well aware
How folks, who say so, end.

Some sailors, whom he did not know,
Had landed there not long ago,
And taught them "Bother!" also, "Blow!"
(Of wickedness the germs).
No need to use a casuist's pen
To prove that they were merchantmen;
No sailor of the Royal N.
Would use such awful terms.

And so, when BISHOP PETER came
(That was the kindly Bishop's name),
He heard these dreadful oaths with shame,
And chid their want of dress.
(Except a shell - a bangle rare -
A feather here - a feather there
The South Pacific Negroes wear
Their native nothingness.)

He taught them that a Bishop loathes
To listen to disgraceful oaths,
He gave them all his left-off clothes -
They bent them to his will.
The Bishop's gift spreads quickly round;
In PETER'S left-off clothes they bound
(His three-and-twenty suits they found
In fair condition still).

The Bishop's eyes with water fill,
Quite overjoyed to find them still
Obedient to his sovereign will,
And said, "Good Rum-ti-Foo!
Half-way I'll meet you, I declare:
I'll dress myself in cowries rare,
And fasten feathers in my hair,
And dance the 'Cutch-chi-boo!'" (13)

And to conciliate his See
He married PICCADILLILLEE,
The youngest of his twenty-three,
Tall - neither fat nor thin.
(And though the dress he made her don
Looks awkwardly a girl upon,
It was a great improvement on
The one he found her in.)

The Bishop in his gay canoe
(His wife, of course, went with him too)
To some adjacent island flew,
To spend his honeymoon.
Some day in sunny Rum-ti-Foo
A little PETER'll be on view;
And that (if people tell me true)
Is like to happen soon.

William Schwenck Gilbert

The British Tar

A British tar is a soaring soul,
As free as a mountain bird,
His energetic fist should be ready to resist
A dictatorial word.
His nose should pant and his lip should curl,
His cheeks should flame and his brow should furl,
His bosom should heave and his heart should glow,
And his fist be ever ready for a knock-down blow.

His eyes should flash with an inborn fire,
His brow with scorn be rung;
He never should bow down to a domineering frown,
Or the tang of a tyrant tongue.
His foot should stamp and his throat should growl,
His hair should twirl and his face should scowl;
His eyes should flash and his breast protrude,
And this should be his customary attitude!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Bumboat Woman's Story

I'm old, my dears, and shrivelled with age, and work, and grief,
My eyes are gone, and my teeth have been drawn by Time, the Thief!
For terrible sights I've seen, and dangers great I've run -
I'm nearly seventy now, and my work is almost done!

Ah! I've been young in my time, and I've played the deuce with men!
I'm speaking of ten years past - I was barely sixty then:
My cheeks were mellow and soft, and my eyes were large and sweet,
POLL PINEAPPLE'S eyes were the standing toast of the Royal Fleet!

A bumboat woman was I, and I faithfully served the ships
With apples and cakes, and fowls, and beer, and halfpenny dips,
And beef for the generous mess, where the officers dine at nights,
And fine fresh peppermint drops for the rollicking midshipmites.

Of all the kind commanders who anchored in Portsmouth Bay,
By far the sweetest of all was kind LIEUTENANT BELAYE.'
LIEUTENANT BELAYE commanded the gunboat HOT CROSS BUN,
She was seven and thirty feet in length, and she carried a gun.

With a laudable view of enhancing his country's naval pride,
When people inquired her size, LIEUTENANT BELAYE replied,
"Oh, my ship, my ship is the first of the Hundred and Seventy-ones!"
Which meant her tonnage, but people imagined it meant her guns.

Whenever I went on board he would beckon me down below,
"Come down, Little Buttercup, come" (for he loved to call me so),
And he'd tell of the fights at sea in which he'd taken a part,
And so LIEUTENANT BELAYE won poor POLL PINEAPPLE'S heart!

But at length his orders came, and he said one day, said he,
"I'm ordered to sail with the HOT CROSS BUN to the German Sea."
And the Portsmouth maidens wept when they learnt the evil day,
For every Portsmouth maid loved good LIEUTENANT BELAYE.

And I went to a back back street, with plenty of cheap cheap shops,
And I bought an oilskin hat and a second-hand suit of slops,
And I went to LIEUTENANT BELAYE (and he never suspected ME!)
And I entered myself as a chap as wanted to go to sea.

We sailed that afternoon at the mystic hour of one, -
Remarkably nice young men were the crew of the HOT CROSS BUN,
I'm sorry to say that I've heard that sailors sometimes swear,
But I never yet heard a BUN say anything wrong, I declare.

When Jack Tars meet, they meet with a "Messmate, ho! What cheer?"
But here, on the HOT CROSS BUN, it was "How do you do, my dear?"
When Jack Tars growl, I believe they growl with a big big D-
But the strongest oath of the HOT CROSS BUNS was a mild "Dear me!"

Yet, though they were all well-bred, you could scarcely call them slick:
Whenever a sea was on, they were all extremely sick;
And whenever the weather was calm, and the wind was light and fair,
They spent more time than a sailor should on his back back hair.

They certainly shivered and shook when ordered aloft to run,
And they screamed when LIEUTENANT BELAYE discharged his only gun.
And as he was proud of his gun - such pride is hardly wrong -
The Lieutenant was blazing away at intervals all day long.

They all agreed very well, though at times you heard it said
That BILL had a way of his own of making his lips look red -
That JOE looked quite his age - or somebody might declare
That BARNACLE'S long pig-tail was never his own own hair.

BELAYE would admit that his men were of no great use to him,
"But, then," he would say, "there is little to do on a gunboat trim
I can hand, and reef, and steer, and fire my big gun too -
And it IS such a treat to sail with a gentle well-bred crew."

I saw him every day. How the happy moments sped!
Reef topsails! Make all taut! There's dirty weather ahead!
(I do not mean that tempests threatened the HOT CROSS BUN:
In THAT case, I don't know whatever we SHOULD have done!)

After a fortnight's cruise, we put into port one day,
And off on leave for a week went kind LIEUTENANT BELAYE,
And after a long long week had passed (and it seemed like a life),
LIEUTENANT BELAYE returned to his ship with a fair young wife!

He up, and he says, says he, "O crew of the HOT CROSS BUN,

Here is the wife of my heart, for the Church has made us one!"
And as he uttered the word, the crew went out of their wits,
And all fell down in so many separate fainting-fits.

And then their hair came down, or off, as the case might be,
And lo! the rest of the crew were simple girls, like me,
Who all had fled from their homes in a sailor's blue array,
To follow the shifting fate of kind LIEUTENANT BELAYE.

It's strange to think that I should ever have loved young men,
But I'm speaking of ten years past - I was barely sixty then,
And now my cheeks are furrowed with grief and age, I trow!
And poor POLL PINEAPPLE'S eyes have lost their lustre now!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Captain And The Mermaids

I SING a legend of the sea,
So hard-a-port upon your lee!
A ship on starboard tack!
She's bound upon a private cruise -
(This is the kind of spice I use
To give a salt-sea smack).

Behold, on every afternoon
(Save in a gale or strong Monsoon)
Great CAPTAIN CAPEL CLEGG
(Great morally, though rather short)
Sat at an open weather-port
And aired his shapely legs.

And Mermaids hung around in flocks,
On cable chains and distant rocks,
To gaze upon those limbs;
For legs like those, of flesh and bone,
Are things "not generally known"
To any Merman TIMBS.

But Mermen didn't seem to care
Much time (as far as I'm aware)
With CLEGG'S legs to spend;
Though Mermaids swam around all day
And gazed, exclaiming, "THAT'S the way
A gentleman should end!

"A pair of legs with well-cut knees,
And calves and ankles such as these
Which we in rapture hail,
Are far more eloquent, it's clear
(When clothed in silk and kerseymere),
Than any nasty tail."

And CLEGG - a worthy kind old boy -
Rejoiced to add to others' joy,
And, when the day was dry,
Because it pleased the lookers-on,

He sat from morn till night - though con-
stitutionally shy.

At first the Mermen laughed, "Pooh! pooh!"
But finally they jealous grew,
And sounded loud recalls;
But vainly. So these fishy males
Declared they too would clothe their tails
In silken hose and smalls.

They set to work, these water-men,
And made their nether robes - but when
They drew with dainty touch
The kerseymere upon their tails,
They found it scraped against their scales,
And hurt them very much.

The silk, besides, with which they chose
To deck their tails by way of hose
(They never thought of shoon),
For such a use was much too thin, -
It tore against the caudal fin,
And "went in ladders" soon.

So they designed another plan:
They sent their most seductive man
This note to him to show -
"Our Monarch sends to CAPTAIN CLEGG
His humble compliments, and begs
He'll join him down below;

"We've pleasant homes below the sea -
Besides, if CAPTAIN CLEGG should be
(As our advices say)
A judge of Mermaids, he will find
Our lady-fish of every kind
Inspection will repay."

Good CAPEL sent a kind reply,
For CAPEL thought he could descry
An admirable plan
To study all their ways and laws -

(But not their lady-fish, because
He was a married man).

The Merman sank - the Captain too
Jumped overboard, and dropped from view
Like stone from catapult;
And when he reached the Merman's lair,
He certainly was welcomed there,
But, ah! with what result?

They didn't let him learn their law,
Or make a note of what he saw,
Or interesting mem.:
The lady-fish he couldn't find,
But that, of course, he didn't mind -
He didn't come for them.

For though, when CAPTAIN CAPEL sank,
The Mermen drawn in double rank
Gave him a hearty hail,
Yet when secure of CAPTAIN CLEGGs,
They cut off both his lovely legs,
And gave him SUCH a tail!

When CAPTAIN CLEGGs returned aboard,
His blithesome crew convulsive roar'd,
To see him altered so.
The Admiralty did insist
That he upon the Half-pay List
Immediately should go.

In vain declared the poor old salt,
"It's my misfortune - not my fault,"
With tear and trembling lip -
In vain poor CAPEL begged and begged.
"A man must be completely legged
Who rules a British ship."

So spake the stern First Lord aloud -
He was a wag, though very proud,
And much rejoiced to say,
"You're only half a captain now -

And so, my worthy friend, I vow
You'll only get half-pay!"

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Coming By-And-By

Sad is that woman's lot who, year by year,
Sees, one by one, her beauties disappear;
As Time, grown weary of her heart-drawn sighs,
Impatiently begins to "dim her eyes"! -
Herself compelled, in life's uncertain gloamings,
To wreath her wrinkled brow with well-saved "combings" -
Reduced, with rouge, lipsalve, and pearly grey,
To "make up" for lost time, as best she may!

Silvered is the raven hair,
Spreading is the parting straight,
Mottled the complexion fair,
Halting is the youthful gait,

Hollow is the laughter free,
Spectacled the limpid eye,
Little will be left of me,
In the coming by-and-by!
Fading is the taper waist -
Shapeless grows the shapely limb,
And although securely laced,
Spreading is the figure trim!
Stouter than I used to be,
Still more corpulent grow I -
There will be too much of me
In the coming by-and-by!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Contemplative Sentry

When all night long a chap remains
On sentry-go, to chase monotony
He exercises of his brains,
That is, assuming that he's got any.
Though never nurtured in the lap
Of luxury, yet I admonish you,
I am an intellectual chap,
And think of things that would astonish you.
I often think it's comical
How Nature always does contrive
That every boy and every gal,
That's born into the world alive,
Is either a little Liberal,
Or else a little Conservative!
Fal lal la!

When in that house M.P.'s divide,
If they've a brain and cerebellum, too,
They've got to leave that brain outside,
And vote just as their leaders tell 'em to.
But then the prospect of a lot
Of statesmen, all in close proximity,
A-thinking for themselves, is what
No man can face with equanimity.
Then let's rejoice with loud Fal lal
That Nature wisely does contrive
That every boy and every gal,
That's born into the world alive,
Is either a little Liberal,
Or else a little Conservative!
Fal lal la!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Cunning Woman

On all Arcadia's sunny plain,
On all Arcadia's hill,
None were so blithe as BILL and JANE,
So blithe as JANE and BILL.

No social earthquake e'er occurred
To rack their common mind:
To them a Panic was a word -
A Crisis, empty wind.

No Stock Exchange disturbed the lad
With overwhelming shocks -
BILL ploughed with all the shares he had,
JANE planted all her stocks.

And learn in what a simple way
Their pleasures they enhanced -
JANE danced like any lamb all day,
BILL piped as well as danced.

Surrounded by a twittling crew,
Of linnet, lark, and thrush,
BILL treated his young lady to
This sentimental gush:

"Oh, JANE, how true I am to you!
How true you are to me!
And how we woo, and how we coo!
So fond a pair are we!

"To think, dear JANE, that anyways.
Your chiefest end and aim
Is, one of these fine summer days,
To bear my humble name!"

Quoth JANE, "Well, as you put the case,
I'm true enough, no doubt,
But then, you see, in this here place
There's none to cut you out.

"But, oh! if anybody came -
A Lord or any such -
I do not think your humble name
Would fascinate me much.

"For though your mates, you often boast.
You distance out-and-out;
Still, in the abstract, you're a most
Uncompromising lout!"

Poor BILL, he gave a heavy sigh,
He tried in vain to speak -
A fat tear started to each eye
And coursed adown each cheek.

For, oh! right well in truth he knew
That very self-same day,
The LORD DE JACOB PILLALOO
Was coming there to stay!

The LORD DE JACOB PILLALOO
All proper maidens shun -
He loves all women, it is true,
But never marries one.

Now JANE, with all her mad self-will,
Was no coquette - oh no!
She really loved her faithful BILL,
And thus she tuned her woe:

"Oh, willow, willow, o'er the lea!
And willow once again!
The Peer will fall in love with me!
Why wasn't I made plain?"

*

A cunning woman lived hard by,
A sorceressing dame,
MACCATACOMB DE SALMON-EYE
Was her uncommon name.

To her good JANE, with kindly yearn
For BILL'S increasing pain,
Repaired in secrecy to learn
How best to make her plain.

"Oh, JANE," the worthy woman said,
"This mystic phial keep,
And rub its liquor in your head
Before you go to sleep.

"When you awake next day, I trow,
You'll look in form and hue
To others just as you do now -
But not to PILLALOO!

"When you approach him, you will find
He'll think you coarse - unkempt -
And rudely bid you get behind,
With undisguised contempt."

The LORD DE PILLALOO arrived
With his expensive train,
And when in state serenely hived,
He sent for BILL and JANE.

"Oh, spare her, LORD OF PILLALOO!
(Said BILL) if wed you be,
There's anything I'D rather do
Than flirt with LADY P."

The Lord he gazed in Jenny's eyes,
He looked her through and through:
The cunning woman's prophecies
Were clearly coming true.

LORD PILLALOO, the Rustic's Bane
(Bad person he, and proud),
HE LAUGHED HA! HA! AT PRETTY JANE,
AND SNEERED AT HER ALOUD!

He bade her get behind him then,

And seek her mother's sty -
Yet to her native countrymen
She was as fair as aye!

MACCATACOMB, continue green!
Grow, SALMON-EYE, in might,
Except for you, there might have been
The deuce's own delight.

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Darned Mounseer

I shipped, d'ye see, in a Revenue sloop,
And, off Cape Finisteere,
A merchantman we see,
A Frenchman, going free,
So we made for the bold Mounseer,
D'ye see?
We made for the bold Mounseer!
But she proved to be a Frigate - and she up with her ports,
And fires with a thirty-two!
It come uncommon near,
But we answered with a cheer,
Which paralysed the Parley-voo,
D'ye see?
Which paralysed the Parley-voo!

Then our Captain he up and he says, says he,
"That chap we need not fear, -
We can take her, if we like,
She is sartin for to strike,
For she's only a darned Mounseer,
D'ye see?
She's only a darned Mounseer!
But to fight a French fal-lal - it's like hittin' of a gal -
It's a lubberly thing for to do;
For we, with all our faults,
Why, we're sturdy British salts,
While she's but a Parley-voo,
D'ye see?
A miserable Parley-voo!"

So we up with our helm, and we scuds before the breeze,
As we gives a compassionating cheer;
Froggee answers with a shout
As he sees us go about,
Which was grateful of the poor Mounseer,
D'ye see?
Which was grateful of the poor Mounseer!
And I'll wager in their joy they kissed each other's cheek
(Which is what them furriners do),

And they blessed their lucky stars
We were hardy British tars
Who had pity on a poor Parley-voo,
D'ye see?
Who had pity on a poor Parley-voo!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Disagreeable Man

If you give me your attention, I will tell you what I am:
I'm a genuine philanthropist - all other kinds are sham.
Each little fault of temper and each social defect
In my erring fellow-creatures, I endeavour to correct.
To all their little weaknesses I open people's eyes,
And little plans to snub the self-sufficient I devise;
I love my fellow-creatures - I do all the good I can -
Yet everybody says I'm such a disagreeable man!
And I can't think why!

To compliments inflated I've a withering reply,
And vanity I always do my best to mortify;
A charitable action I can skilfully dissect;
And interested motives I'm delighted to detect.
I know everybody's income and what everybody earns,
And I carefully compare it with the income-tax returns;
But to benefit humanity, however much I plan,
Yet everybody says I'm such a disagreeable man!
And I can't think why!

I'm sure I'm no ascetic; I'm as pleasant as can be;
You'll always find me ready with a crushing repartee;
I've an irritating chuckle, I've a celebrated sneer,
I've an entertaining snigger, I've a fascinating leer;
To everybody's prejudice I know a thing or two;
I can tell a woman's age in half a minute - and I do -
But although I try to make myself as pleasant as I can,
Yet everybody says I'm such a disagreeable man!
And I can't think why!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Disconcerted Tenor

A tenor, all singers above
(This doesn't admit of a question),
Should keep himself quiet,
Attend to his diet,
And carefully nurse his digestion.
But when he is madly in love,
It's certain to tell on his singing -
You can't do chromatics
With proper emphatics
When anguish your bosom is wringing!
When distracted with worries in plenty,
And his pulse is a hundred and twenty,
And his fluttering bosom the slave of mistrust is,
A tenor can't do himself justice.
Now observe - (SINGS A HIGH NOTE) -
You see, I can't do myself justice!

I could sing, if my fervour were mock,
It's easy enough if you're acting,
But when one's emotion
Is born of devotion,
You mustn't be over-exacting.
One ought to be firm as a rock
To venture a shake in VIBRATO;
When fervour's expected,
Keep cool and collected,
Or never attempt AGITATO.
But, of course, when his tongue is of leather,
And his lips appear pasted together,
And his sensitive palate as dry as a crust is,
A tenor can't do himself justice.
Now observe - (SINGS A CADENCE) -
It's no use - I can't do myself justice!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Duke And The Duchess

[THE DUKE.]

Small titles and orders
For Mayors and Recorders
I get - and they're highly delighted.
M.P.s baroneted,
Sham Colonels gazetted,
And second-rate Aldermen knighted.
Foundation-stone laying
I find very paying,
It adds a large sum to my makings.
At charity dinners
The best of speech-spinners,
I get ten per cent on the takings!

[THE DUCHESS.]

I present any lady
Whose conduct is shady
Or smacking of doubtful propriety;
When Virtue would quash her
I take and whitewash her
And launch her in first-rate society.
I recommend acres
Of clumsy dressmakers -
Their fit and their finishing touches;
A sum in addition
They pay for permission
To say that they make for the Duchess!

[THE DUKE.]

Those pressing prevailers,
The ready-made tailors,
Quote me as their great double-barrel;
I allow them to do so,
Though ROBINSON CRUSOE
Would jib at their wearing apparel!
I sit, by selection,

Upon the direction
Of several Companies bubble;
As soon as they're floated
I'm freely bank-noted -
I'm pretty well paid for my trouble!

[THE DUCHESS.]

At middle-class party
I play at ECARTE -
And I'm by no means a beginner;
To one of my station
The remuneration -
Five guineas a night and my dinner.
I write letters blatant
On medicines patent -
And use any other you mustn't;
And vow my complexion
Derives its perfection
From somebody's soap - which it doesn't.

[THE DUKE.]

We're ready as witness
To any one's fitness
To fill any place or preferment;
We're often in waiting
At junket FETING,
And sometimes attend an interment.
In short, if you'd kindle
The spark of a swindle,
Lure simpletons into your clutches,
Or hoodwink a debtor,
You cannot do better
Than trot out a Duke or a Duchess!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Duke Of Plaza-Toro

In enterprise of martial kind,
When there was any fighting,
He led his regiment from behind
(He found it less exciting).
But when away his regiment ran,
His place was at the fore, O-
That celebrated,
Cultivated,
Underrated
Nobleman,
The Duke of Plaza-Toro!
In the first and foremost flight, ha, ha!
You always found that knight, ha, ha!
That celebrated,
Cultivated,
Underrated
Nobleman,
The Duke of Plaza-Toro!

When, to evade Destruction's hand,
To hide they all proceeded,
No soldier in that gallant band
Hid half as well as he did.
He lay concealed throughout the war,
And so preserved his gore, O!
That unaffected,
Undetected,
Well connected
Warrior,
The Duke of Plaza-Toro!
In every doughty deed, ha, ha!
He always took the lead, ha, ha!
That unaffected,
Undetected,
Well connected
Warrior,
The Duke of Plaza-Toro!

When told that they would all be shot

Unless they left the service,
That hero hesitated not,
So marvellous his nerve is.
He sent his resignation in,
The first of all his corps, O!
That very knowing,
Overflowing,
Easy-going
Paladin,
The Duke of Plaza-Toro!
To men of grosser clay, ha, ha!
He always showed the way, ha, ha!
That very knowing,
Overflowing,
Easy-going
Paladin,
The Duke of Plaza-Toro!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Englishman

He is an Englishman!
For he himself has said it,
And it's greatly to his credit,
That he is an Englishman!
For he might have been a Roosian,
A French, or Turk, or Proosian,
Or perhaps Itali-an!
But in spite of all temptations,
To belong to other nations,
He remains an Englishman!
Hurrah!
For the true-born Englishman!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Fairy Curate

Once a fairy
Light and airy
Married with a mortal;
Men, however,
Never, never
Pass the fairy portal.
Slyly stealing,
She to Ealing
Made a daily journey;
There she found him,
Clients round him
(He was an attorney).

Long they tarried,
Then they married.
When the ceremony
Once was ended,
Off they wended
On their moon of honey.
Twelvemonth, maybe,
Saw a baby
(Friends performed an orgie).
Much they prized him,
And baptized him
By the name of GEORGIE,

GEORGIE grew up;
Then he flew up
To his fairy mother.
Happy meeting -
Pleasant greeting -
Kissing one another.
"Choose a calling
Most enthralling,
I sincerely urge ye."
"Mother," said he
(Rev'rence made he),
"I would join the clergy.

"Give permission
In addition -
Pa will let me do it:
There's a living
In his giving -
He'll appoint me to it.
Dreams of coff'ring,
Easter off'ring,
Tithe and rent and pew-rate,
So inflame me
(Do not blame me),
That I'll be a curate."

She, with pleasure,
Said, "My treasure,
'T is my wish precisely.
Do your duty,
There's a beauty;
You have chosen wisely.
Tell your father
I would rather
As a churchman rank you.
You, in clover,
I'll watch over."
GEORGIE said, "Oh, thank you!"

GEORGIE scudded,
Went and studied,
Made all preparations,
And with credit
(Though he said it)
Passed examinations.
(Do not quarrel
With him, moral,
Scrupulous digestions -
'Twas his mother,
And no other,
Answered all the questions.)

Time proceeded;
Little needed
GEORGIE admonition:

He, elated,
Vindicated
Clergyman's position.
People round him
Always found him
Plain and unpretending;
Kindly teaching,
Plainly preaching,
All his money lending.

So the fairy,
Wise and wary,
Felt no sorrow rising -
No occasion
For persuasion,
Warning, or advising.
He, resuming
Fairy pluming
(That's not English, is it?)
Oft would fly up,
To the sky up,
Pay mamma a visit.

Time progressing,
GEORGIE'S blessing
Grew more Ritualistic -
Popish scandals,
Tonsures - sandals -
Genuflections mystic;
Gushing meetings -
Bosom-beatings -
Heavenly ecstasies -
Broidered spencers -
Copes and censers -
Rochets and dalmatics.

This quandary
Vexed the fairy -
Flew she down to Ealing.
"GEORGIE, stop it!

Pray you, drop it;
Hark to my appealing:
To this foolish
Papal rule-ish
Twaddle put an ending;
This a swerve is
From our Service
Plain and unpretending."

He, replying,
Answered, sighing,
Hawing, hemming, humming,
"It's a pity -
They're so pritty;
Yet in mode becoming,
Mother tender,
I'll surrender -
I'll be unaffected - "
But his Bishop
Into HIS shop
Entered unexpected!

"Who is this, sir, -
Ballet miss, sir?"
Said the Bishop coldly.
"T is my mother,
And no other,"
GEORGIE answered boldly.
"Go along, sir!
You are wrong, sir;
You have years in plenty,
While this hussy
(Gracious mussy!)
Isn't two and twenty!"

(Fairies clever
Never, never
Grow in visage older;
And the fairy,
All unwary,
Leant upon his shoulder!)
Bishop grieved him,

Disbelieved him;
GEORGE the point grew warm on;
Changed religion,
Like a pigeon,
And became a Mormon!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Fairy Queen's Song

Oh, foolish fay,
Think you because
Man's brave array
My bosom thaws
I'd disobey
Our fairy laws?
Because I fly
In realms above,
In tendency
To fall in love
Resemble I
The amorous dove?

Oh, amorous dove!
Type of Ovidius Naso!
This heart of mine
Is soft as thine,
Although I dare not say so!

On fire that glows
With heat intense
I turn the hose
Of Common Sense,
And out it goes
At small expense!
We must maintain
Our fairy law;
That is the main
On which to draw -
In that we gain
A Captain Shaw.

Oh, Captain Shaw!
Type of true love kept under!
Could thy Brigade
With cold cascade
Quench my great love, I wonder!

The Family Fool

Oh! a private buffoon is a light-hearted loon,
If you listen to popular rumour;
From morning to night he's so joyous and bright,
And he bubbles with wit and good humour!
He's so quaint and so terse, both in prose and in verse;
Yet though people forgive his transgression,
There are one or two rules that all Family Fools
Must observe, if they love their profession.
There are one or two rules,
Half-a-dozen, maybe,
That all family fools,
Of whatever degree,
Must observe if they love their profession.

If you wish to succeed as a jester, you'll need
To consider each person's auricular:
What is all right for B would quite scandalise C
(For C is so very particular);
And D may be dull, and E's very thick skull
Is as empty of brains as a ladle;
While F is F sharp, and will cry with a carp,
That he's known your best joke from his cradle!
When your humour they flout,
You can't let yourself go;
And it DOES put you out
When a person says, "Oh!
I have known that old joke from my cradle!"

If your master is surly, from getting up early
(And tempers are short in the morning),
An inopportune joke is enough to provoke
Him to give you, at once, a month's warning.
Then if you refrain, he is at you again,
For he likes to get value for money:
He'll ask then and there, with an insolent stare,
"If you know that you're paid to be funny?"
It adds to the tasks
Of a merryman's place,
When your principal asks,

With a scowl on his face,
If you know that you're paid to be funny?

Comes a Bishop, maybe, or a solemn D.D. -
Oh, beware of his anger provoking!
Better not pull his hair - don't stick pins in his chair;
He won't understand practical joking.
If the jests that you crack have an orthodox smack,
You may get a bland smile from these sages;
But should it, by chance, be imported from France,
Half-a-crown is stopped out of your wages!
It's a general rule,
Though your zeal it may quench,
If the Family Fool
Makes a joke that's TOO French,
Half-a-crown is stopped out of his wages!

Though your head it may rack with a bilious attack,
And your senses with toothache you're losing,
And you're mopy and flat - they don't fine you for that
If you're properly quaint and amusing!
Though your wife ran away with a soldier that day,
And took with her your trifle of money;
Bless your heart, they don't mind - they're exceedingly kind -
They don't blame you - as long as you're funny!
It's a comfort to feel
If your partner should flit,
Though YOU suffer a deal,
THEY don't mind it a bit -
They don't blame you - so long as you're funny!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Fickle Breeze

Sighing softly to the river
Comes the loving breeze,
Setting nature all a-quiver,
Rustling through the trees!
And the brook in rippling measure
Laughs for very love,
While the poplars, in their pleasure,
Wave their arms above!
River, river, little river,
May thy loving prosper ever.
Heaven speed thee, poplar tree,
May thy wooing happy be!

Yet, the breeze is but a rover,
When he wings away,
Brook and poplar mourn a lover!
Sighing well-a-day!
Ah, the doing and undoing
That the rogue could tell!
When the breeze is out a-wooing,
Who can woo so well?
Pretty brook, thy dream is over,
For thy love is but a rover!
Sad the lot of poplar trees,
Courtied by the fickle breeze!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The First Lord's Song

When I was a lad I served a term
As office boy to an Attorney's firm;
I cleaned the windows and I swept the floor,
And I polished up the handle of the big front door.
I polished up that handle so successfuller,
That now I am the Ruler of the Queen's Navee!

As office boy I made such a mark
That they gave me the post of a junior clerk;
I served the writs with a smile so bland,
And I copied all the letters in a big round hand.
I copied all the letters in a hand so free,
That now I am the Ruler of the Queen's Navee!

In serving writs I made such a name
That an articled clerk I soon became;
I wore clean collars and a brand-new suit
For the Pass Examination at the Institute:
And that Pass Examination did so well for me,
That now I am the Ruler of the Queen's Navee!

Of legal knowledge I acquired such a grip
That they took me into the partnership,
And that junior partnership I ween,
Was the only ship that I ever had seen:
But that kind of ship so suited me,
That now I am the Ruler of the Queen's Navee!

I grew so rich that I was sent
By a pocket borough into Parliament;
I always voted at my Party's call,
And I never thought of thinking for myself at all.
I thought so little, they rewarded me,
By making me the Ruler of the Queen's Navee!

Now, landsmen all, whoever you may be,
If you want to rise to the top of the tree -
If your soul isn't fettered to an office stool,
Be careful to be guided by this golden rule -

Stick close to your desks and NEVER GO TO SEA,
And you all may be Rulers of the Queen's Navee!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Folly Of Brown - By A General Agent

I knew a boor - a clownish card
(His only friends were pigs and cows and
The poultry of a small farmyard),
Who came into two hundred thousand.

Good fortune worked no change in BROWN,
Though she's a mighty social chymist;
He was a clown - and by a clown
I do not mean a pantomimist.

It left him quiet, calm, and cool,
Though hardly knowing what a crown was -
You can't imagine what a fool
Poor rich uneducated BROWN was!

He scouted all who wished to come
And give him monetary schooling;
And I propose to give you some
Idea of his insensate fooling.

I formed a company or two -
(Of course I don't know what the rest meant,
I formed them solely with a view
To help him to a sound investment).

Their objects were - their only cares -
To justify their Boards in showing
A handsome dividend on shares
And keep their good promoter going.

But no - the lout sticks to his brass,
Though shares at par I freely proffer:
Yet - will it be believed? - the ass
Declines, with thanks, my well-meant offer!

He adds, with bumpkin's stolid grin
(A weakly intellect denoting),
He'd rather not invest it in
A company of my promoting!

"You have two hundred 'thou' or more,"
Said I. "You'll waste it, lose it, lend it;
Come, take my furnished second floor,
I'll gladly show you how to spend it."

But will it be believed that he,
With grin upon his face of poppy,
Declined my aid, while thanking me
For what he called my "philanthropy"?

Some blind, suspicious fools rejoice
In doubting friends who wouldn't harm them;
They will not hear the charmer's voice,
However wisely he may charm them!

I showed him that his coat, all dust,
Top boots and cords provoked compassion,
And proved that men of station must
Conform to the decrees of fashion.

I showed him where to buy his hat
To coat him, trouser him, and boot him;
But no - he wouldn't hear of that -
"He didn't think the style would suit him!"

I offered him a county seat,
And made no end of an oration;
I made it certainty complete,
And introduced the deputation.

But no - the clown my prospect blights -
(The worth of birth it surely teaches!)
"Why should I want to spend my nights
In Parliament, a-making speeches?"

"I haven't never been to school -
I ain't had not no eddication -
And I should surely be a fool
To publish that to all the nation!"

I offered him a trotting horse -

No hack had ever trotted faster -
I also offered him, of course,
A rare and curious "old master."

I offered to procure him weeds -
Wines fit for one in his position -
But, though an ass in all his deeds,
He'd learnt the meaning of "commission."

He called me "thief" the other day,
And daily from his door he thrusts me;
Much more of this, and soon I may
Begin to think that BROWN mistrusts me.

So deaf to all sound Reason's rule
This poor uneducated clown is,
You canNOT fancy what a fool
Poor rich uneducated BROWN is.

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Force Of Argument

Lord B. was a nobleman bold
Who came of illustrious stocks,
He was thirty or forty years old,
And several feet in his socks.

To Turniptopville-by-the-Sea
This elegant nobleman went,
For that was a borough that he
Was anxious to rep-per-re-sent.

At local assemblies he danced
Until he felt thoroughly ill;
He waltzed, and he galoped, and lanced,
And threaded the mazy quadrille.

The maidens of Turniptopville
Were simple - ingenuous - pure -
And they all worked away with a will
The nobleman's heart to secure.

Two maidens all others beyond
Endeavoured his cares to dispel -
The one was the lively ANN POND,
The other sad MARY MORELL.

ANN POND had determined to try
And carry the Earl with a rush;
Her principal feature was eye,
Her greatest accomplishment - gush.

And MARY chose this for her play:
Whenever he looked in her eye
She'd blush and turn quickly away,
And flitter, and flutter, and sigh.

It was noticed he constantly sighed
As she worked out the scheme she had planned,
A fact he endeavoured to hide
With his aristocratical hand.

Old POND was a farmer, they say,
And so was old TOMMY MORELL.
In a humble and pottering way
They were doing exceedingly well.

They both of them carried by vote
The Earl was a dangerous man;
So nervously clearing his throat,
One morning old TOMMY began:

"My darter's no pratty young doll -
I'm a plain-spoken Zommerzet man -
Now what do 'ee mean by my POLL,
And what do 'ee mean by his ANN?

Said B., "I will give you my bond
I mean them uncommonly well,
Believe me, my excellent POND,
And credit me, worthy MORELL.

"It's quite indisputable, for
I'll prove it with singular ease, -
You shall have it in 'Barbara' or
'Celarent' - whichever you please.

'You see, when an anchorite bows
To the yoke of intentional sin,
If the state of the country allows,
Homogeny always steps in -

"It's a highly aesthetical bond,
As any mere ploughboy can tell - "
"Of course," replied puzzled old POND.
"I see," said old TOMMY MORELL.

"Very good, then," continued the lord;
"When it's fooled to the top of its bent,
With a sweep of a Damocles sword
The web of intention is rent.

"That's patent to all of us here,

As any mere schoolboy can tell."
POND answered, "Of course it's quite clear";
And so did that humbug MORELL.

"Its tone's esoteric in force -
I trust that I make myself clear?"
MORELL only answered, "Of course,"
While POND slowly muttered, "Hear, hear."

"Volition - celestial prize,
Pellucid as porphyry cell -
Is based on a principle wise."
"Quite so," exclaimed POND and MORELL.

"From what I have said you will see
That I couldn't wed either - in fine,
By Nature's unchanging decree
YOUR daughters could never be MINE.

"Go home to your pigs and your ricks,
My hands of the matter I've rinsed."
So they take up their hats and their sticks, .
And EXEUNT AMBO, convinced.

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Ghost, The Gallant, The Gael, And The Goblin

O'er unreclaimed suburban clays
Some years ago were hobblin'
An elderly ghost of easy ways,
And an influential goblin.
The ghost was a sombre spectral shape,
A fine old five-act foggy,
The goblin imp, a lithe young ape,
A fine low-comedy boggy.

And as they exercised their joints,
Promoting quick digestion,
They talked on several curious points,
And raised this delicate question:
"Which of us two is Number One -
The ghostie, or the goblin?"
And o'er the point they raised in fun
They fairly fell a-squabblin'.

They'd barely speak, and each, in fine,
Grew more and more reflective:
Each thought his own particular line
By chalks the more effective.
At length they settled some one should
By each of them be haunted,
And so arrange that either could
Exert his prowess vaunted.

"The Quaint against the Statuesque" -
By competition lawful -
The goblin backed the Quaint Grotesque,
The ghost the Grandly Awful.
"Now," said the goblin, "here's my plan -
In attitude commanding,
I see a stalwart Englishman
By yonder tailor's standing.

"The very fittest man on earth
My influence to try on -
Of gentle, p'raps of noble birth,

And dauntless as a lion!
Now wrap yourself within your shroud -
Remain in easy hearing -
Observe - you'll hear him scream aloud
When I begin appearing!

The imp with yell unearthly - wild -
Threw off his dark enclosure:
His dauntless victim looked and smiled
With singular composure.
For hours he tried to daunt the youth,
For days, indeed, but vainly -
The stripling smiled! - to tell the truth,
The stripling smiled inanely.

For weeks the goblin weird and wild,
That noble stripling haunted;
For weeks the stripling stood and smiled,
Unmoved and all undaunted.
The sombre ghost exclaimed, "Your plan
Has failed you, goblin, plainly:
Now watch yon hardy Hieland man,
So stalwart and ungainly.

"These are the men who chase the roe,
Whose footsteps never falter,
Who bring with them, where'er they go,
A smack of old SIR WALTER.
Of such as he, the men sublime
Who lead their troops victorious,
Whose deeds go down to after-time,
Enshrined in annals glorious!

"Of such as he the bard has said
'Hech thrawfu' raltie rorkie!
Wi' thecht ta' croonie clapperhead
And fash' wi' unco pawkie!'
He'll faint away when I appear,
Upon his native heather;
Or p'r'aps he'll only scream with fear,
Or p'r'aps the two together."

The spectre showed himself, alone,
To do his ghostly battling,
With curdling groan and dismal moan,
And lots of chains a-rattling!
But no - the chiel's stout Gaelic stuff
Withstood all ghostly harrying;
His fingers closed upon the snuff
Which upwards he was carrying.

For days that ghost declined to stir,
A foggy shapeless giant -
For weeks that splendid officer
Stared back again defiant.
Just as the Englishman returned
The goblin's vulgar staring,
Just so the Scotchman boldly spurned
The ghost's unmannered scaring.

For several years the ghostly twain
These Britons bold have haunted,
But all their efforts are in vain -
Their victims stand undaunted.
This very day the imp, and ghost,
Whose powers the imp derided,
Stand each at his allotted post -
The bet is undecided.

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Ghosts' High Noon

When the night wind howls in the chimney cowl, and the bat in the
moonlight flies,
And inky clouds, like funeral shrouds, sail over the midnight skies -
When the footpads quail at the night-bird's wail, and black dogs
bay the moon,
Then is the spectres' holiday - then is the ghosts' high noon!

As the sob of the breeze sweeps over the trees, and the mists lie
low on the fen,
From grey tombstones are gathered the bones that once were women
and men,
And away they go, with a mop and a mow, to the revel that ends too
soon,
For cockcrow limits our holiday - the dead of the night's high
noon!

And then each ghost with his ladye-toast to their churchyard beds
take flight,
With a kiss, perhaps, on her lantern chaps, and a grisly grim "good
night";
Till the welcome knell of the midnight bell rings forth its
jolliest tune,
And ushers our next high holiday - the dead of the night's high
noon!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Great Oak Tree

There grew a little flower
'Neath a great oak tree:
When the tempest 'gan to lower
Little heeded she:
No need had she to cower,
For she dreaded not its power -
She was happy in the bower
Of her great oak tree!
Sing hey,
Lackaday!
Let the tears fall free
For the pretty little flower and the great oak tree!

When she found that he was fickle,
Was that great oak tree,
She was in a pretty pickle,
As she well might be -
But his gallantries were mickle,
For Death followed with his sickle,
And her tears began to trickle
For her great oak tree!
Sing hey,
Lackaday!
Let the tears fall free
For the pretty little flower and the great oak tree!

Said she, "He loved me never,
Did that great oak tree,
But I'm neither rich nor clever,
And so why should he?
But though fate our fortunes sever,
To be constant I'll endeavour,
Ay, for ever and for ever,
To my great oak tree!"
Sing hey,
Lackaday!
Let the tears fall free
For the pretty little flower and the great oak tree!

The Haughty Actor

AN actor - GIBBS, of Drury Lane -
Of very decent station,
Once happened in a part to gain
Excessive approbation:
It sometimes turns a fellow's brain
And makes him singularly vain
When he believes that he receives
Tremendous approbation.

His great success half drove him mad,
But no one seemed to mind him;
Well, in another piece he had
Another part assigned him.
This part was smaller, by a bit,
Than that in which he made a hit.
So, much ill-used, he straight refused
To play the part assigned him.

THAT NIGHT THAT ACTOR SLEPT, AND I'LL ATTEMPT
TO TELL YOU OF THE VIVID DREAM HE DREAMT.

THE DREAM.

In fighting with a robber band
(A thing he loved sincerely)
A sword struck GIBBS upon the hand,
And wounded it severely.
At first he didn't heed it much,
He thought it was a simple touch,
But soon he found the weapon's bound
Had wounded him severely.

To Surgeon COBB he made a trip,
Who'd just effected feately
An amputation at the hip

Particularly neatly.

A rising man was Surgeon COBB
But this extremely ticklish job
He had achieved (as he believed)
Particularly neatly.

The actor rang the surgeon's bell.
"Observe my wounded finger,
Be good enough to strap it well,
And prithee do not linger.
That I, dear sir, may fill again
The Theatre Royal Drury Lane:
This very night I have to fight -
So prithee do not linger."

"I don't strap fingers up for doles,"
Replied the haughty surgeon;
"To use your cant, I don't play ROLES
Utility that verge on.
First amputation - nothing less -
That is my line of business:
We surgeon nobs despise all jobs
Utility that verge on.

"When in your hip there lurks disease"
(So dreamt this lively dreamer),
"Or devastating CARIES
In HUMERUS or FEMUR,
If you can pay a handsome fee,
Oh, then you may remember me -
With joy elate I'll amputate
Your HUMERUS or FEMUR."

The disconcerted actor ceased
The haughty leech to pester,
But when the wound in size increased,
And then began to fester,
He sought a learned Counsel's lair,
And told that Counsel, then and there,
How COBB'S neglect of his defect
Had made his finger fester.

"Oh, bring my action, if you please,
The case I pray you urge on,
And win me thumping damages
From COBB, that haughty surgeon.
He culpably neglected me
Although I proffered him his fee,
So pray come down, in wig and gown,
On COBB, that haughty surgeon!"

That Counsel learned in the laws,
With passion almost trembled.
He just had gained a mighty cause
Before the Peers assembled!
Said he, "How dare you have the face
To come with Common Jury case
To one who wings rhetoric flings
Before the Peers assembled?"

Dispirited became our friend -
Depressed his moral pecker -
"But stay! a thought! - I'll gain my end,
And save my poor exchequer.
I won't be placed upon the shelf,
I'll take it into Court myself,
And legal lore display before
The Court of the Exchequer."

He found a Baron - one of those
Who with our laws supply us -
In wig and silken gown and hose,
As if at NISI PRIUS.
But he'd just given, off the reel,
A famous judgment on Appeal:
It scarce became his heightened fame
To sit at NISI PRIUS.

Our friend began, with easy wit,
That half concealed his terror:
"Pooh!" said the Judge, "I only sit
In BANCO or in Error.
Can you suppose, my man, that I'd
O'er NISI PRIUS Courts preside,

Or condescend my time to spend
On anything but Error?"

"Too bad," said GIBBS, "my case to shirk!
You must be bad innately,
To save your skill for mighty work
Because it's valued greatly!"
But here he woke, with sudden start.

He wrote to say he'd play the part.
I've but to tell he played it well -
The author's words - his native wit
Combined, achieved a perfect "hit" -
The papers praised him greatly.

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Heavy Dragoon

If you want a receipt for that popular mystery,
Known to the world as a Heavy Dragoon,
Take all the remarkable people in history,
Rattle them off to a popular tune!
The pluck of LORD NELSON on board of the VICTORY -
Genius of BISMARCK devising a plan;
The humour of FIELDING (which sounds contradictory) -
Coolness of PAGET about to trepan -
The grace of MOZART, that unparalleled musico -
Wit of MACAULAY, who wrote of QUEEN ANNE -
The pathos of PADDY, as rendered by BOUCICAULT -
Style of the BISHOP OF SODOR AND MAN -
The dash of a D'ORSAY, divested of quackery -
Narrative powers of DICKENS and THACKERAY -
VICTOR EMMANUEL - peak-haunting PEVERIL -
THOMAS AQUINAS, and DOCTOR SACHEVERELL -
TUPPER and TENNYSON - DANIEL DEFOE -
ANTHONY TROLLOPE and MISTER GUIZOT!
Take of these elements all that is fusible,
Melt 'em all down in a pipkin or crucible,
Set 'em to simmer and take off the scum,
And a Heavy Dragoon is the residuum!

If you want a receipt for this soldierlike paragon,
Get at the wealth of the CZAR (if you can) -
The family pride of a Spaniard from Arragon -
Force of MEPHISTO pronouncing a ban -
A smack of LORD WATERFORD, reckless and rollicky -
Swagger of RODERICK, heading his clan -
The keen penetration of PADDINGTON POLLAKY -
Grace of an Odalisque on a divan -
The genius strategic of CAESAR or HANNIBAL -
Skill of LORD WOLSELEY in thrashing a cannibal -
Flavour of HAMLET - the STRANGER, a touch of him -
Little of MANFRED (but not very much of him) -
Beadle of Burlington - RICHARDSON'S show -
MR. MICAWBER and MADAME TUSSAUD!
Take of these elements all that is fusible -
Melt 'em all down in a pipkin or crucible -

Set 'em to simmer and take off the scum,
And a Heavy Dragoon is the residuum!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Highly Respectable Gondolier

I stole the Prince, and I brought him here,
And left him, gaily prattling
With a highly respectable Gondolier,
Who promised the Royal babe to rear,
And teach him the trade of a timoneer
With his own beloved bratling.

Both of the babes were strong and stout,
And, considering all things, clever.
Of that there is no manner of doubt -
No probable, possible shadow of doubt -
No possible doubt whatever.

Time sped, and when at the end of a year
I sought that infant cherished,
That highly respectable Gondolier
Was lying a corpse on his humble bier -
I dropped a Grand Inquisitor's tear -
That Gondolier had perished!

A taste for drink, combined with gout,
Had doubled him up for ever.
Of THAT there is no manner of doubt -
No probable, possible shadow of doubt -
No possible doubt whatever.

But owing, I'm much disposed to fear,
To his terrible taste for tippling,
That highly respectable Gondolier
Could never declare with a mind sincere
Which of the two was his offspring dear,
And which the Royal stripling!

Which was which he could never make out,
Despite his best endeavour.
Of THAT there is no manner of doubt -
No probable, possible shadow of doubt -
No possible doubt whatever.

The children followed his old career -
(This statement can't be parried)
Of a highly respectable Gondolier:
Well, one of the two (who will soon be here) -
But WHICH of the two is not quite clear -
Is the Royal Prince you married!

Search in and out and round about
And you'll discover never
A tale so free from every doubt -
All probable, possible shadow of doubt -
All possible doubt whatever!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The House Of Peers

When Britain really ruled the waves -
(In good Queen Bess's time)
The House of Peers made no pretence
To intellectual eminence,
Or scholarship sublime;
Yet Britain won her proudest bays
In good Queen Bess's glorious days!

When Wellington thrashed Bonaparte,
As every child can tell,
The House of Peers, throughout the war,
Did nothing in particular,
And did it very well;
Yet Britain set the world ablaze
In good King George's glorious days!

And while the House of Peers withholds
Its legislative hand,
And noble statesmen do not itch
To interfere with matters which
They do not understand,
As bright will shine Great Britain's rays,
As in King George's glorious days!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Humane Mikado

A more humane Mikado never
Did in Japan exist;
To nobody second,
I'm certainly reckoned
A true philanthropist.
It is my very humane endeavour
To make, to some extent,
Each evil liver
A running river
Of harmless merriment.

My object all sublime
I shall achieve in time -
To let the punishment fit the crime -
The punishment fit the crime;
And make each prisoner pent
Unwillingly represent
A source of innocent merriment -
Of innocent merriment!

All prosy dull society sinners,
Who chatter and bleat and bore,
Are sent to hear sermons
From mystical Germans
Who preach from ten to four:
The amateur tenor, whose vocal villainies
All desire to shirk,
Shall, during off-hours,
Exhibit his powers
To Madame Tussaud's waxwork:
The lady who dyes a chemical yellow,
Or stains her grey hair puce,
Or pinches her figger,
Is blacked like a nigger
With permanent walnut juice:
The idiot who, in railway carriages,
Scribbles on window panes,
We only suffer
To ride on a buffer

In Parliamentary trains.

My object all sublime
I shall achieve in time -
To let the punishment fit the crime -
The punishment fit the crime;
And make each prisoner pent
Unwillingly represent
A source of innocent merriment -
Of innocent merriment!

The advertising quack who wearies
With tales of countless cures,
His teeth, I've enacted,
Shall all be extracted
By terrified amateurs:
The music-hall singer attends a series
Of masses and fugues and "ops"
By Bach, interwoven
With Spohr and Beethoven,
At classical Monday Pops:
The billiard sharp whom any one catches
His doom's extremely hard -
He's made to dwell
In a dungeon cell
On a spot that's always barred;
And there he plays extravagant matches
In fitless finger-stalls,
On a cloth untrue
With a twisted cue,
And elliptical billiard balls!

My object all sublime
I shall achieve in time -
To let the punishment fit the crime -
The punishment fit the crime;
And make each prisoner pent
Unwillingly represent
A source of innocent merriment,
Of innocent merriment!

The Independent Bee

A hive of bees, as I've heard say,
Said to their Queen one sultry day,
"Please your Majesty's high position,
The hive is full and the weather is warm,
We rather think, with a due submission,
The time has come when we ought to swarm."
Buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz.

Up spake their Queen and thus spake she -
"This is a matter that rests with me,
Who dares opinions thus to form?
I'LL tell you when it is time to swarm!"
Buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz.

Her Majesty wore an angry frown,
In fact, her Majesty's foot was down -
Her Majesty sulked - declined to sup -
In short, her Majesty's back was up.
Buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz.
Her foot was down and her back was up!

That hive contained one obstinate bee
(His name was Peter), and thus spake he -
"Though every bee has shown white feather,
To bow to tyranny I'm not prone -
Why should a hive swarm all together?
Surely a bee can swarm alone?"
Buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz.

Upside down and inside out,
Backwards, forwards, round about,
Twirling here and twisting there,
Topsy turvily everywhere -
Buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz.
Pitiful sight it was to see
Respectable elderly high-class bee,
Who kicked the beam at sixteen stone,
Trying his best to swarm alone!
Buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz.
Trying his best to swarm alone!

The hive were shocked to see their chum
(A strict teetotaller) teetotum -
The Queen exclaimed, "How terrible, very!
It's perfectly clear to all the throng
Peter's been at the old brown sherry.
Old brown sherry is much too strong -
Buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz.
Of all who thus themselves degrade,
A stern example must be made,
To Coventry go, you tipsy bee!"
So off to Coventry town went he.
Buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz.
There, classed with all who misbehave,
Both plausible rogue and noisome knave,
In dismal dumps he lived to own
The folly of trying to swarm alone!
Buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz.
All came of trying to swarm alone.

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Judge's Song

When I, good friends, was called to the Bar,
I'd an appetite fresh and hearty,
But I was, as many young barristers are,
An impecunious party.

I'd a swallow-tail coat of a beautiful blue -
A brief which was brought by a booby -
A couple of shirts and a collar or two,
And a ring that looked like a ruby!

In Westminster Hall I danced a dance,
Like a semi-despondent fury;
For I thought I should never hit on a chance
Of addressing a British Jury -
But I soon got tired of third-class journeys,
And dinners of bread and water;
So I fell in love with a rich attorney's
Elderly, ugly daughter.

The rich attorney, he wiped his eyes,
And replied to my fond professions:
"You shall reap the reward of your enterprise,
At the Bailey and Middlesex Sessions.
You'll soon get used to her looks," said he,
"And a very nice girl you'll find her -
She may very well pass for forty-three
In the dusk, with a light behind her!"

The rich attorney was as good as his word:
The briefs came trooping gaily,
And every day my voice was heard
At the Sessions or Ancient Bailey.
All thieves who could my fees afford
Relied on my orations,
And many a burglar I've restored
To his friends and his relations.

At length I became as rich as the GURNEYS -
An incubus then I thought her,
So I threw over that rich attorney's

Elderly, ugly daughter.
The rich attorney my character high
Tried vainly to disparage -
And now, if you please, I'm ready to try
This Breach of Promise of Marriage!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Love-Sick Boy

When first my old, old love I knew,
My bosom welled with joy;
My riches at her feet I threw;
I was a love-sick boy!
No terms seemed too extravagant
Upon her to employ -
I used to mope, and sigh, and pant,
Just like a love-sick boy!

But joy incessant palls the sense;
And love unchanged will cloy,
And she became a bore intense
Unto her love-sick boy?
With fitful glimmer burnt my flame,
And I grew cold and coy,
At last, one morning, I became
Another's love-sick boy!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Magnet And The Churn

A MAGNET hung in a hardware shop,
And all around was a loving crop
Of scissors and needles, nails and knives,
Offering love for all their lives;
But for iron the Magnet felt no whim,
Though he charmed iron, it charmed not him,
From needles and nails and knives he'd turn,
For he'd set his love on a Silver Churn!
His most aesthetic,
Very magnetic
Fancy took this turn -
"If I can wheedle
A knife or needle,
Why not a Silver Churn?"

And Iron and Steel expressed surprise,
The needles opened their well-drilled eyes,
The pen-knives felt "shut up," no doubt,
The scissors declared themselves "cut out,"
The kettles they boiled with rage, 'tis said,
While every nail went off its head,
And hither and thither began to roam,
Till a hammer came up - and drove it home,
While this magnetic
Peripatetic
Lover he lived to learn,
By no endeavour,
Can Magnet ever
Attract a Silver Churn!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Martinet

Some time ago, in simple verse
I sang the story true
Of CAPTAIN REECE, the MANTELPIECE,
And all her happy crew.

I showed how any captain may
Attach his men to him,
If he but heeds their smallest needs,
And studies every whim.

Now mark how, by Draconic rule
And HAUTEUR ill-advised,
The noblest crew upon the Blue
May be demoralized.

When his ungrateful country placed
Kind REECE upon half-pay,
Without much claim SIR BERKELY came,
And took command one day.

SIR BERKELY was a martinet -
A stern unyielding soul -
Who ruled his ship by dint of whip
And horrible black-hole.

A sailor who was overcome
From having freely dined,
And chanced to reel when at the wheel,
He instantly confined!

And tars who, when an action raged,
Appeared alarmed or scared,
And those below who wished to go,
He very seldom spared.

E'en he who smote his officer
For punishment was booked,
And mutinies upon the seas
He rarely overlooked.

In short, the happy MANTELPIECE,
Where all had gone so well,
Beneath that fool SIR BERKELY'S rule
Became a floating hell.

When first SIR BERKELY came aboard
He read a speech to all,
And told them how he'd made a vow
To act on duty's call.

Then WILLIAM LEE, he up and said
(The Captain's coxswain he),
"We've heard the speech your honour's made,
And werry pleased we be.

"We won't pretend, my lad, as how
We're glad to lose our REECE;
Urbane, polite, he suited quite
The saucy MANTELPIECE.

"But if your honour gives your mind
To study all our ways,
With dance and song we'll jog along
As in those happy days.

"I like your honour's looks, and feel
You're worthy of your sword.
Your hand, my lad - I'm doosid glad
To welcome you aboard!"

SIR BERKELY looked amazed, as though
He didn't understand.
"Don't shake your head," good WILLIAM said,
"It is an honest hand.

"It's grasped a better hand than yourn -
Come, gov'nor, I insist!"
The Captain stared - the coxswain glared -
The hand became a fist!

"Down, upstart!" said the hardy salt;

But BERKELY dodged his aim,
And made him go in chains below:
The seamen murmured "Shame!"

He stopped all songs at 12 p.m.,
Stopped hornpipes when at sea,
And swore his cot (or bunk) should not
Be used by aught than he.

He never joined their daily mess,
Nor asked them to his own,
But chaffed in gay and social way
The officers alone.

His First Lieutenant, PETER, was
As useless as could be,
A helpless stick, and always sick
When there was any sea.

This First Lieutenant proved to be
His foster-sister MAY,
Who went to sea for love of he
In masculine array.

And when he learnt the curious fact,
Did he emotion show,
Or dry her tears or end her fears
By marrying her? No!

Or did he even try to soothe
This maiden in her teens?
Oh, no! - instead he made her wed
The Sergeant of Marines!

Of course such Spartan discipline
Would make an angel fret;
They drew a lot, and WILLIAM shot
This fearful martinet.

The Admiralty saw how ill
They'd treated CAPTAIN REECE;
He was restored once more aboard

The saucy MANTELPIECE.

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Merryman And His Maid

[HE] I have a song to sing, O!

[SHE] Sing me your song, O!

[HE] It is sung to the moon

By a love-lorn loon,

Who fled from the mocking throng, O!

It's the song of a merryman, moping mum,

Whose soul was sad, whose glance was glum,

Who sipped no sup, and who craved no crumb,

As he sighed for the love of a ladye.

Heighdy! heighdy!

Misery me - lackadaydee!

He sipped no sup, and he craved no crumb,

As he sighed for the love of a ladye!

[SHE] I have a song to sing, O!

[HE] Sing me your song, O!

[SHE] It is sung with the ring

Of the song maids sing

Who love with a love life-long, O!

It's the song of a merrymaid, peerly proud,

Who loved a lord, and who laughed aloud

At the moan of the merryman, moping mum,

Whose soul was sore, whose glance was glum,

Who sipped no sup, and who craved no crumb,

As he sighed for the love of a ladye!

Heighdy! heighdy!

Misery me - lackadaydee!

He sipped no sup, and he craved no crumb,

As he sighed for the love of a ladye!

[HE] I have a song to sing, O!

[SHE] Sing me your song, O!

[HE] It is sung to the knell

Of a churchyard bell,

And a doleful dirge, ding dong, O!

It's a song of a popinjay, bravely born,

Who turned up his noble nose with scorn

At the humble merrymaid, peerly proud,

Who loved that lord, and who laughed aloud

At the moan of the merryman, moping mum,
Whose soul was sad, whose glance was glum,
Who sipped no sup, and who craved no crumb,
As he sighed for the love of a ladye!

Heighdy! heighdy!

Misery me - lackadaydee!

He sipped no sup, and he craved no crumb,
As he sighed for the love of a ladye!

[SHE] I have a song to sing, O!

[HE] Sing me your song, O!

[SHE] It is sung with a sigh

And a tear in the eye,

For it tells of a righted wrong, O!

It's a song of a merrymaid, once so gay,
Who turned on her heel and tripped away
From the peacock popinjay, bravely born,
Who turned up his noble nose with scorn
At the humble heart that he did not prize;
And it tells how she begged, with downcast eyes,
For the love of a merryman, moping mum,
Whose soul was sad, whose glance was glum,
Who sipped no sup, and who craved no crumb,
As he sighed for the love of a ladye!

[BOTH] Heighdy! heighdy!

Misery me - lackadaydee!

His pains were o'er, and he sighed no more.
For he lived in the love of a ladye!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Mighty Must

Come mighty Must!
Inevitable Shall!
In thee I trust.
Time weaves my coronal!
Go mocking Is!
Go disappointing Was!
That I am this
Ye are the cursed cause!
Yet humble Second shall be First,
I ween;
And dead and buried be the curst
Has Been!

Oh weak Might Be!
Oh May, Might, Could, Would, Should!
How powerless ye
For evil or for good!
In every sense
Your moods I cheerless call,
Whate'er your tense
Ye are Imperfect, all!
Ye have deceived the trust I've shown
In ye!
Away! The Mighty Must alone
Shall be!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Modern Major-General

I am the very pattern of a modern Major-General,
I've information vegetable, animal, and mineral;
I know the kings of England, and I quote the fights historical,
From Marathon to Waterloo, in order categorical;
I'm very well acquainted, too, with matters mathematical,
I understand equations, both the simple and quadratical;
About binomial theorem I'm teeming with a lot o' news,
With interesting facts about the square of the hypotenuse,
I'm very good at integral and differential calculus,
I know the scientific names of beings animalculous.
In short, in matters vegetable, animal, and mineral,
I am the very model of a modern Major-General.

I know our mythic history - KING ARTHUR'S and SIR CARADOC'S,
I answer hard acrostics, I've a pretty taste for paradox;
I quote in elegiacs all the crimes of HELIOGABALUS,
In conics I can floor peculiarities parabolous.
I tell undoubted RAPHAELS from GERARD DOWS and ZOFFANIES,
I know the croaking chorus from the "Frogs" of ARISTOPHANES;
Then I can hum a fugue, of which I've heard the music's din afore,
And whistle all the airs from that confounded nonsense "Pinafore."
Then I can write a washing-bill in Babylonian cuneiform,
And tell you every detail of CHARACTERACUS'S uniform.
In short, in matters vegetable, animal, and mineral,
I am the very model of a modern Major-General.

In fact, when I know what is meant by "mamelon" and "ravelin,"
When I can tell at sight a Chassepot rifle from a javelin,
When such affairs as SORTIES and surprises I'm more wary at,
And when I know precisely what is meant by Commissariat,
When I have learnt what progress has been made in modern gunnery,
When I know more of tactics than a novice in a nunnery,
In short, when I've a smattering of elementary strategy,
You'll say a better Major-General has never SAT a gee -
For my military knowledge, though I'm plucky and adventury,
Has only been brought down to the beginning of the century.
But still in learning vegetable, animal, and mineral,
I am the very model of a modern Major-General!

The Modest Couple

When man and maiden meet, I like to see a drooping eye,
I always droop my own - I am the shyest of the shy.
I'm also fond of bashfulness, and sitting down on thorns,
For modesty's a quality that womankind adorns.

Whenever I am introduced to any pretty maid,
My knees they knock together, just as if I were afraid;
I flutter, and I stammer, and I turn a pleasing red,
For to laugh, and flirt, and ogle I consider most ill-bred.

But still in all these matters, as in other things below,
There is a proper medium, as I'm about to show.
I do not recommend a newly-married pair to try
To carry on as PETER carried on with SARAH BLIGH.

Betrothed they were when very young - before they'd learnt to speak
(For SARAH was but six days old, and PETER was a week);
Though little more than babies at those early ages, yet
They bashfully would faint when they occasionally met.

They blushed, and flushed, and fainted, till they reached the
age of nine,
When PETER'S good papa (he was a Baron of the Rhine)
Determined to endeavour some sound argument to find
To bring these shy young people to a proper frame of mind.

He told them that as SARAH was to be his PETER'S bride,
They might at least consent to sit at table side by side;
He begged that they would now and then shake hands, till he
was hoarse,
Which SARAH thought indelicate, and PETER very coarse.

And PETER in a tremble to the blushing maid would say,
"You must excuse papa, MISS BLIGH, - it is his mountain way."
Says SARAH, "His behaviour I'll endeavour to forget,
But your papa's the coarsest person that I ever met.

"He plighted us without our leave, when we were very young,
Before we had begun articulating with the tongue.

His underbred suggestions fill your SARAH with alarm;
Why, gracious me! he'll ask us next to walk out arm-in-arm!"

At length when SARAH reached the legal age of twenty-one,
The Baron he determined to unite her to his son;
And SARAH in a fainting-fit for weeks unconscious lay,
And PETER blushed so hard you might have heard him miles away.

And when the time arrived for taking SARAH to his heart,
They were married in two churches half-a-dozen miles apart
(Intending to escape all public ridicule and chaff),
And the service was conducted by electric telegraph.

And when it was concluded, and the priest had said his say,
Until the time arrived when they were both to drive away,
They never spoke or offered for to fondle or to fawn,
For HE waited in the attic, and SHE waited on the lawn.

At length, when four o'clock arrived, and it was time to go,
The carriage was announced, but decent SARAH answered "No!
Upon my word, I'd rather sleep my everlasting nap,
Than go and ride alone with MR. PETER in a trap."

And PETER'S over-sensitive and highly-polished mind
Wouldn't suffer him to sanction a proceeding of the kind;
And further, he declared he suffered overwhelming shocks
At the bare idea of having any coachman on the box.

So PETER into one turn-out incontinently rushed,
While SARAH in a second trap sat modestly and blushed;
And MR. NEWMAN'S coachman, on authority I've heard,
Drove away in gallant style upon the coach-box of a third.

Now, though this modest couple in the matter of the car
Were very likely carrying a principle too far,
I hold their shy behaviour was more laudable in them
Than that of PETER'S brother with MISS SARAH'S sister EM.

ALPHONSO, who in cool assurance all creation licks,
He up and said to EMMIE (who had impudence for six),
"MISS EMILY, I love you - will you marry? Say the word!"
And EMILY said, "Certainly, ALPHONSO, like a bird!"

I do not recommend a newly-married pair to try
To carry on as PETER carried on with SARAH BLIGH,
But still their shy behaviour was more laudable in them
Than that of PETER'S brother with MISS SARAH'S sister EM.

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Mystic Selvagee

Perhaps already you may know
SIR BLENNERHASSET PORTICO?
A Captain in the Navy, he -
A Baronet and K.C.B.
You do? I thought so!
It was that Captain's favourite whim
(A notion not confined to him)
That RODNEY was the greatest tar
Who ever wielded capstan-bar.
He had been taught so.

"BENBOW! CORNWALLIS! HOOD! - Belay!
Compared with RODNEY" - he would say -
"No other tar is worth a rap!
The great LORD RODNEY was the chap
The French to polish!
"Though, mind you, I respect LORD HOOD;
CORNWALLIS, too, was rather good;
BENBOW could enemies repel,
LORD NELSON, too, was pretty well -
That is, tol-lol-ish!"

SIR BLENNERHASSET spent his days
In learning RODNEY'S little ways,
And closely imitated, too,
His mode of talking to his crew -
His port and paces.
An ancient tar he tried to catch
Who'd served in RODNEY'S famous batch;
But since his time long years have fled,
And RODNEY'S tars are mostly dead:
EHEU FUGACES!

But after searching near and far,
At last he found an ancient tar
Who served with RODNEY and his crew
Against the French in 'Eighty-two,
(That gained the peerage).
He gave him fifty pounds a year,

His rum, his baccy, and his beer;
And had a comfortable den
Rigged up in what, by merchantmen,
Is called the steerage.

"Now, JASPER" - 't was that sailor's name -
"Don't fear that you'll incur my blame
By saying, when it seems to you,
That there is anything I do
That RODNEY wouldn't."
The ancient sailor turned his quid,
Prepared to do as he was bid:
"Ay, ay, yer honour; to begin,
You've done away with 'swiftin' in' -
Well, sir, you shouldn't!

"Upon your spars I see you've clapped
Peak halliard blocks, all iron-capped.
I would not christen that a crime,
But 'twas not done in RODNEY'S time.
It looks half-witted!
Upon your maintop-stay, I see,
You always clap a selvagee!
Your stays, I see, are equalized -
No vessel, such as RODNEY prized,
Would thus be fitted!

"And RODNEY, honoured sir, would grin
To see you turning deadeyes in,
Not UP, as in the ancient way,
But downwards, like a cutter's stay -
You didn't oughter;
Besides, in seizing shrouds on board,
Breast backstays you have quite ignored;
Great RODNEY kept unto the last
Breast backstays on topgallant mast -
They make it tauter."

SIR BLENNERHASSET "swifted in,"
Turned deadeyes up, and lent a fin
To strip (as told by JASPER KNOX)
The iron capping from his blocks,

Where there was any.
SIR BLENNERHASSET does away,
With selvagees from maintop-stay;
And though it makes his sailors stare,
He rigs breast backstays everywhere -
In fact, too many.

One morning, when the saucy craft
Lay calmed, old JASPER toddled aft.
"My mind misgives me, sir, that we
Were wrong about that selvagee -
I should restore it."
"Good," said the Captain, and that day
Restored it to the maintop-stay.
Well-practised sailors often make
A much more serious mistake,
And then ignore it.

Next day old JASPER came once more:
"I think, sir, I was right before."
Well, up the mast the sailors skipped,
The selvagee was soon unshipped,
And all were merry.
Again a day, and JASPER came:
"I p'r'aps deserve your honour's blame,
I can't make up my mind," said he,
"About that cursed selvagee -
It's foolish - very.

"On Monday night I could have sworn
That maintop-stay it should adorn,
On Tuesday morning I could swear
That selvagee should not be there.
The knot's a rasper!"
"Oh, you be hanged," said CAPTAIN P.,
"Here, go ashore at Caribbee.
Get out - good bye - shove off - all right!"
Old JASPER soon was out of sight -
Farewell, old JASPER!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The National Anthem

A monarch is pestered with cares,
Though, no doubt, he can often trepan them;
But one comes in a shape he can never escape -
The implacable National Anthem!
Though for quiet and rest he may yearn,
It pursues him at every turn -
No chance of forsaking
Its ROCOCO numbers;
They haunt him when waking -
They poison his slumbers -
Like the Banbury Lady, whom every one knows,
He's cursed with its music wherever he goes!
Though its words but imperfectly rhyme,
And the devil himself couldn't scan them;
With composure polite he endures day and night
That illiterate National Anthem!

It serves a good purpose, I own:
Its strains are devout and impressive -
Its heart-stirring notes raise a lump in our throats
As we burn with devotion excessive:
But the King, who's been bored by that song
From his cradle - each day - all day long -
Who's heard it loud-shouted
By throats operatic,
And loyally spouted
By courtiers emphatic -
By soldier - by sailor - by drum and by fife -
Small blame if he thinks it the plague of his life!
While his subjects sing loudly and long,
Their King - who would willingly ban them -
Sits, worry disguising, anathematising
That Bogie, the National Anthem!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Pantomime Super To His Mask

Vast empty shell!
Impertinent, preposterous abortion!
With vacant stare,
And ragged hair,
And every feature out of all proportion!
Embodiment of echoing inanity!
Excellent type of simpering insanity!
Unwieldy, clumsy nightmare of humanity!
I ring thy knell!

To-night thou diest,
Beast that destroy'st my heaven-born identity!
Nine weeks of nights,
Before the lights,
Swamped in thine own preposterous nonentity,
I've been ill-treated, cursed, and thrashed diurnally,
Credited for the smile you wear externally -
I feel disposed to smash thy face, infernally,
As there thou liest!

I've been thy brain:
I'VE been the brain that lit thy dull concavity!
The human race
Invest MY face
With thine expression of unchecked depravity,
Invested with a ghastly reciprocity,
I'VE been responsible for thy monstrosity,
I, for thy wanton, blundering ferocity -
But not again!

'T is time to toll
Thy knell, and that of follies pantomimical:
A nine weeks' run,
And thou hast done
All thou canst do to make thyself inimical.
Adieu, embodiment of all inanity!
Excellent type of simpering insanity!
Unwieldy, clumsy nightmare of humanity!
Freed is thy soul!

(THE MASK RESPONDETH.)

Oh! master mine,
Look thou within thee, ere again ill-using me.
Art thou aware
Of nothing there
Which might abuse thee, as thou art abusing me?
A brain that mourns THINE unredeemed rascality?
A soul that weeps at THY threadbare morality?
Both grieving that THEIR individuality
Is merged in thine?

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Perils Of Invisibility

Old PETER led a wretched life -
Old PETER had a furious wife;
Old PETER too was truly stout,
He measured several yards about.

The little fairy PICKLEKIN
One summer afternoon looked in,
And said, "Old PETER, how de do?
Can I do anything for you?"

"I have three gifts - the first will give
Unbounded riches while you live;
The second health where'er you be;
The third, invisibility."

"O little fairy PICKLEKIN,"
Old PETER answered with a grin,
"To hesitate would be absurd, -
Undoubtedly I choose the third."

"'Tis yours," the fairy said; "be quite
Invisible to mortal sight
Whene'er you please. Remember me
Most kindly, pray, to MRS. P."

Old MRS. PETER overheard
Wee PICKLEKIN'S concluding word,
And, jealous of her girlhood's choice,
Said, "That was some young woman's voice:

Old PETER let her scold and swear -
Old PETER, bless him, didn't care.
"My dear, your rage is wasted quite -
Observe, I disappear from sight!"

A well-bred fairy (so I've heard)
Is always faithful to her word:
Old PETER vanished like a shot,
Put then - HIS SUIT OF CLOTHES DID NOT!

For when conferred the fairy slim
Invisibility on HIM,
She popped away on fairy wings,
Without referring to his "things."

So there remained a coat of blue,
A vest and double eyeglass too,
His tail, his shoes, his socks as well,
His pair of - no, I must not tell.

Old MRS. PETER soon began
To see the failure of his plan,
And then resolved (I quote the Bard)
To "hoist him with his own petard."

Old PETER woke next day and dressed,
Put on his coat, and shoes, and vest,
His shirt and stock; BUT COULD NOT FIND
HIS ONLY PAIR OF - never mind!

Old PETER was a decent man,
And though he twigged his lady's plan,
Yet, hearing her approaching, he
Resumed invisibility.

"Dear MRS. P., my only joy,"
Exclaimed the horrified old boy,
"Now, give them up, I beg of you -
You know what I'm referring to!"

But no; the cross old lady swore
She'd keep his - what I said before -
To make him publicly absurd;
And MRS. PETER kept her word.

The poor old fellow had no rest;
His coat, his stick, his shoes, his vest,
Were all that now met mortal eye -
The rest, invisibility!

"Now, madam, give them up, I beg -

I've had rheumatics in my leg;
Besides, until you do, it's plain
I cannot come to sight again!

"For though some mirth it might afford
To see my clothes without their lord,
Yet there would rise indignant oaths
If he were seen without his clothes!"

But no; resolved to have her quiz,
The lady held her own - and his -
And PETER left his humble cot
To find a pair of - you know what.

But - here's the worst of the affair -
Whene'er he came across a pair
Already placed for him to don,
He was too stout to get them on!

So he resolved at once to train,
And walked and walked with all his main;
For years he paced this mortal earth,
To bring himself to decent girth.

At night, when all around is still,
You'll find him pounding up a hill;
And shrieking peasants whom he meets,
Fall down in terror on the peats!

Old PETER walks through wind and rain,
Resolved to train, and train, and train,
Until he weighs twelve stone' or so -
And when he does, I'll let you know.

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Periwinkle Girl

I've often thought that headstrong youths
Of decent education,
Determine all-important truths,
With strange precipitation.

The ever-ready victims they,
Of logical illusions,
And in a self-assertive way
They jump at strange conclusions.

Now take my case: Ere sorrow could
My ample forehead wrinkle,
I had determined that I should
Not care to be a wrinkle.

"A wrinkle," I would oft advance
With readiness provoking,
"Can seldom flirt, and never dance,
Or soothe his mind by smoking."

In short, I spurned the shelly joy,
And spoke with strange decision -
Men pointed to me as a boy
Who held them in derision.

But I was young - too young, by far -
Or I had been more wary,
I knew not then that wrinkles are
The stock-in-trade of MARY.

I had not watched her sunlight blithe
As o'er their shells it dances -
I've seen those wrinkles almost writhe
Beneath her beaming glances.

Of slighting all the wrinkly brood
I surely had been chary,
If I had known they formed the food
And stock-in-trade of MARY.

Both high and low and great and small
Fell prostrate at her tootsies,
They all were noblemen, and all
Had balances at COUTTS'S.

Dukes with the lovely maiden dealt,
DUKE BAILEY and DUKE HUMPHY,
Who ate her winkles till they felt
Exceedingly uncomfy.

DUKE BAILEY greatest wealth computes,
And sticks, they say, at no-thing,
He wears a pair of golden boots
And silver underclothing.

DUKE HUMPHY, as I understand,
Though mentally acuter,
His boots are only silver, and
His underclothing pewter.

A third adorer had the girl,
A man of lowly station -
A miserable grov'ling Earl
Besought her approbation.

This humble cad she did refuse
With much contempt and loathing,
He wore a pair of leather shoes
And cambric underclothing!

"Ha! ha!" she cried. "Upon my word!
Well, really - come, I never!
Oh, go along, it's too absurd!
My goodness! Did you ever?"

"Two Dukes would Mary make a bride,
And from her foes defend her" -
"Well, not exactly that," they cried,
"We offer guilty splendour.

"We do not offer marriage rite,

So please dismiss the notion!"
"Oh dear," said she, "that alters quite
The state of my emotion."

The Earl he up and says, says he,
"Dismiss them to their orgies,
For I am game to marry thee
Quite reg'lar at St. George's."

(He'd had, it happily befell,
A decent education,
His views would have befitted well
A far superior station.)

His sterling worth had worked a cure,
She never heard him grumble;
She saw his soul was good and pure,
Although his rank was humble.

Her views of earldoms and their lot,
All underwent expansion -
Come, Virtue in an earldom's cot!
Go, Vice in ducal mansion!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Phantom Curate

A bishop once - I will not name him see -
Annoyed his clergy in the mode conventional;
From pulpit shackles never set them free,
And found a sin where sin was unintentional.
All pleasures ended in abuse auricular -
The Bishop was so terribly particular.

Though, on the whole, a wise and upright man,
He sought to make of human pleasures clearances;
And form his priests on that much-lauded plan
Which pays undue attention to appearances.
He couldn't do good deeds without a psalm in 'em,
Although, in truth, he bore away the palm in 'em.

Enraged to find a deacon at a dance,
Or catch a curate at some mild frivolity,
He sought by open censure to enhance
Their dread of joining harmless social jollity.
Yet he enjoyed (a fact of notoriety)
The ordinary pleasures of society.

One evening, sitting at a pantomime
(Forbidden treat to those who stood in fear of him),
Roaring at jokes, SANS metre, sense, or rhyme,
He turned, and saw immediately in rear of him,
His peace of mind upsetting, and annoying it,
A curate, also heartily enjoying it.

Again, 't was Christmas Eve, and to enhance
His children's pleasure in their harmless rollicking,
He, like a good old fellow, stood to dance;
When something checked the current of his frolicking:
That curate, with a maid he treated lover-ly,
Stood up and figured with him in the "Coverley!"

Once, yielding to an universal choice
(The company's demand was an emphatic one,
For the old Bishop had a glorious voice),
In a quartet he joined - an operatic one.

Harmless enough, though ne'er a word of grace in it,
When, lo! that curate came and took the bass in it!

One day, when passing through a quiet street,
He stopped awhile and joined a Punch's gathering;
And chuckled more than solemn folk think meet,
To see that gentleman his Judy lathering;
And heard, as Punch was being treated penally,
That phantom curate laughing all hyaenally.

Now at a picnic, 'mid fair golden curls,
Bright eyes, straw hats, BOTTINES that fit amazingly,
A croquet-bout is planned by all the girls;
And he, consenting, speaks of croquet praisingly;
But suddenly declines to play at all in it -
The curate fiend has come to take a ball in it!

Next, when at quiet sea-side village, freed
From cares episcopal and ties monarchical,
He grows his beard, and smokes his fragrant weed,
In manner anything but hierarchical -
He sees - and fixes an unearthly stare on it -
That curate's face, with half a yard of hair on it!

At length he gave a charge, and spake this word:
"Vicars, your curates to enjoyment urge ye may;
To check their harmless pleasuring's absurd;
What laymen do without reproach, my clergy may."
He spake, and lo! at this concluding word of him,
The curate vanished - no one since has heard of him.

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Philosophic Pill

I've wisdom from the East and from the West,
That's subject to no academic rule;
You may find it in the jeering of a jest,
Or distill it from the folly of a fool.
I can teach you with a quip, if I've a mind;
I can trick you into learning with a laugh;
Oh, winnow all my folly, and you'll find
A grain or two of truth among the chaff!

I can set a braggart quailing with a quip,
The upstart I can wither with a whim;
He may wear a merry laugh upon his lip,
But his laughter has an echo that is grim.
When they've offered to the world in merry guise,
Unpleasant truths are swallowed with a will -
For he who'd make his fellow-creatures wise
Should always gild the philosophic pill!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Played-Out Humorist

Quixotic is his enterprise, and hopeless his adventure is,
Who seeks for jocularities that haven't yet been said.
The world has joked incessantly for over fifty centuries,
And every joke that's possible has long ago been made.
I started as a humorist with lots of mental fizziness,
But humour is a drug which it's the fashion to abuse;
For my stock-in-trade, my fixtures, and the goodwill of the
business
No reasonable offer I am likely to refuse.
And if anybody choose
He may circulate the news
That no reasonable offer I'm likely to refuse.

Oh happy was that humorist - the first that made a pun at all -
Who when a joke occurred to him, however poor and mean,
Was absolutely certain that it never had been done at all -
How popular at dinners must that humorist have been!

Oh the days when some stepfather for the query held a handle out,
The door-mat from the scraper, is it distant very far?
And when no one knew where Moses was when Aaron blew the candle
out,
And no one had discovered that a door could be a-jar!
But your modern hearers are
In their tastes particular,
And they sneer if you inform them that a door can be a-jar!

In search of quip and quiddity, I've sat all day, alone, apart -
And all that I could hit on as a problem was - to find
Analogy between a scrag of mutton and a Bony-part,
Which offers slight employment to the speculative mind:
For you cannot call it very good, however great your charity -
It's not the sort of humour that is greeted with a shout -
And I've come to the conclusion that my mine of jocularity
In present Anno Domini, is worked completely out!
Though the notion you may scout,
I can prove beyond a doubt
That my mine of jocularity is utterly worked out.

The Policeman's Lot

When a felon's not engaged in his employment,
Or maturing his felonious little plans,
His capacity for innocent enjoyment
Is just as great as any honest man's.
Our feelings we with difficulty smother
When constabulary duty's to be done:
Ah, take one consideration with another,
A policeman's lot is not a happy one!

When the enterprising burglar isn't burgling,
When the cut-throat isn't occupied in crime,
He loves to hear the little brook a-gurgling,
And listen to the merry village chime.
When the coster's finished jumping on his mother,
He loves to lie a-basking in the sun:
Ah, take one consideration with another,
The policeman's lot is not a happy one!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Precocious Baby - A Very True Tale

An elderly person - a prophet by trade -
With his quips and tips
On withered old lips,
He married a young and a beautiful maid;
The cunning old blade!
Though rather decayed,
He married a beautiful, beautiful maid.

She was only eighteen, and as fair as could be,
With her tempting smiles
And maidenly wiles,
And he was a trifle past seventy-three:
Now what she could see
Is a puzzle to me,
In a prophet of seventy - seventy-three!

Of all their acquaintances bidden (or bad)
With their loud high jinks
And underbred winks,
None thought they'd a family have - but they had;
A dear little lad
Who drove 'em half mad,
For he turned out a horribly fast little cad.

For when he was born he astonished all by,
With their "Law, dear me!"
"Did ever you see?"
He'd a pipe in his mouth and a glass in his eye,
A hat all awry -
An octagon tie -
And a miniature - miniature glass in his eye.

He grumbled at wearing a frock and a cap,
With his "Oh, dear, oh!"
And his "Hang it! 'oo know!"
And he turned up his nose at his excellent pap -
"My friends, it's a tap
Dat is not worf a rap."
(Now this was remarkably excellent pap.)

He'd chuck his nurse under the chin, and he'd say,
With his "Fal, la!, la!" -
"Oo doosed fine gal!"
This shocking precocity drove 'em away:
"A month from to-day
Is as long as I'll stay -
Then I'd wish, if you please, for to toddle away."

His father, a simple old gentleman, he
With nursery rhyme
And "Once on a time,"
Would tell him the story of "Little Bo-P,"
"So pretty was she,
So pretty and wee,
As pretty, as pretty, as pretty could be."

But the babe, with a dig that would startle an ox,
With his "C'ck! Oh, my! -
Go along wiz 'oo, fie!"
Would exclaim, "I'm afraid 'oo a socking ole fox."
Now a father it shocks,
And it whitens his locks,
When his little babe calls him a shocking old fox.

The name of his father he'd couple and pair
(With his ill-bred laugh,
And insolent chaff)
With those of the nursery heroines rare -
Virginia the Fair,
Or Good Goldenhair,
Till the nuisance was more than a prophet could bear.

"There's Jill and White Cat" (said the bold little brat,
With his loud, "Ha, ha!")
"Oo sly ickle Pa!
Wiz 'oo Beauty, Bo-Peep, and 'oo Mrs. Jack Sprat!
I've noticed 'oo pat
MY pretty White Cat -
I sink dear mamma ought to know about dat!"

He early determined to marry and wive,

For better or worse
With his elderly nurse -
Which the poor little boy didn't live to contrive:
His hearth didn't thrive -
No longer alive,
He died an enfeebled old dotard at five!

MORAL.

Now, elderly men of the bachelor crew,
With wrinkled hose
And spectacled nose,
Don't marry at all - you may take it as true
If ever you do
The step you will rue,
For your babes will be elderly - elderly too.

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Reverend Micah Sowls

The REVEREND MICAH SOWLS,
He shouts and yells and howls,
He screams, he mouths, he bumps,
He foams, he rants, he thumps.

His armour he has buckled on, to wage
The regulation war against the Stage;
And warns his congregation all to shun
"The Presence-Chamber of the Evil One,"

The subject's sad enough
To make him rant and puff,
And fortunately, too,
His Bishop's in a pew.

So REVEREND MICAH claps on extra steam,
His eyes are flashing with superior gleam,
He is as energetic as can be,
For there are fatter livings in that see.

The Bishop, when it's o'er,
Goes through the vestry door,
Where MICAH, very red,
Is mopping of his head.

"Pardon, my Lord, your SOWLS' excessive zeal,
It is a theme on which I strongly feel."
(The sermon somebody had sent him down
From London, at a charge of half-a-crown.)

The Bishop bowed his head,
And, acquiescing, said,
"I've heard your well-meant rage
Against the Modern Stage.

"A modern Theatre, as I heard you say,
Sows seeds of evil broadcast - well it may;
But let me ask you, my respected son,
Pray, have you ever ventured into one?"

"My Lord," said MICAH, "no!
I never, never go!
What! Go and see a play?
My goodness gracious, nay!"

The worthy Bishop said, "My friend, no doubt
The Stage may be the place you make it out;
But if, my REVEREND SOWLS, you never go,
I don't quite understand how you're to know."

"Well, really," MICAH said,
"I've often heard and read,
But never go - do you?"
The Bishop said, "I do."

"That proves me wrong," said MICAH, in a trice:
"I thought it all frivolity and vice."
The Bishop handed him a printed card;
"Go to a theatre where they play our Bard."

The Bishop took his leave,
Rejoicing in his sleeve.
The next ensuing day
SOWLS went and heard a play.

He saw a dreary person on the stage,
Who mouthed and mugged in simulated rage,
Who growled and spluttered in a mode absurd,
And spoke an English SOWLS had never heard.

For "gaunt" was spoken "garnt,"
And "haunt" transformed to "harnt,"
And "wrath " pronounced as "rath,"
And "death" was changed to "dath."

For hours and hours that dismal actor walked,
And talked, and talked, and talked, and talked,
Till lethargy upon the parson crept,
And sleepy MICAH SOWLS serenely slept.

He slept away until

The farce that closed the bill
Had warned him not to stay,
And then he went away.

"I thought MY gait ridiculous," said he -
"MY elocution faulty as could be;
I thought I mumbled on a matchless plan -
I had not seen our great Tragedian!

"Forgive me, if you can,
O great Tragedian!
I own it with a sigh -
You're drearier than I!"

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Reverend Simon Magus

A rich advowson, highly prized,
For private sale was advertised;
And many a parson made a bid;
The REVEREND SIMON MAGUS did.

He sought the agent's: "Agent, I
Have come prepared at once to buy
(If your demand is not too big)
The Cure of Otium-cum-Digge."

"Ah!" said the agent, "THERE'S a berth -
The snuggest vicarage on earth;
No sort of duty (so I hear),
And fifteen hundred pounds a year!

"If on the price we should agree,
The living soon will vacant be;
The good incumbent's ninety five,
And cannot very long survive.

See - here's his photograph - you see,
He's in his dotage." "Ah, dear me!
Poor soul!" said SIMON. "His decease
Would be a merciful release!"

The agent laughed - the agent blinked -
The agent blew his nose and winked -
And poked the parson's ribs in play -
It was that agent's vulgar way.

The REVEREND SIMON frowned: "I grieve
This light demeanour to perceive;
It's scarcely COMME IL FAUT, I think:
Now - pray oblige me - do not wink.

"Don't dig my waistcoat into holes -
Your mission is to sell the souls
Of human sheep and human kids
To that divine who highest bids.

"Do well in this, and on your head
Unnumbered honours will be shed."
The agent said, "Well, truth to tell,
I HAVE been doing very well."

"You should," said SIMON, "at your age;
But now about the parsonage.
How many rooms does it contain?
Show me the photograph again.

"A poor apostle's humble house
Must not be too luxurious;
No stately halls with oaken floor -
It should be decent and no more.

" No billiard-rooms - no stately trees -
No croquet-grounds or pineries."
"Ah!" sighed the agent, "very true:
This property won't do for you."

"All these about the house you'll find." -
"Well," said the parson, "never mind;
I'll manage to submit to these
Luxurious superfluities.

"A clergyman who does not shirk
The various calls of Christian work,
Will have no leisure to employ
These 'common forms' of worldly joy.

"To preach three times on Sabbath days -
To wean the lost from wicked ways -
The sick to soothe - the sane to wed -
The poor to feed with meat and bread;

"These are the various wholesome ways
In which I'll spend my nights and days:
My zeal will have no time to cool
At croquet, archery, or pool."

The agent said, "From what I hear,

This living will not suit, I fear -
There are no poor, no sick at all;
For services there is no call."

The reverend gent looked grave, "Dear me!
Then there is NO 'society'? -
I mean, of course, no sinners there
Whose souls will be my special care?"

The cunning agent shook his head,
"No, none - except" - (the agent said) -
"The DUKE OF A., the EARL OF B.,
The MARQUIS C., and VISCOUNT D.

"But you will not be quite alone,
For though they've chaplains of their own,
Of course this noble well-bred clan
Receive the parish clergyman."

"Oh, silence, sir!" said SIMON M.,
"Dukes - Earls! What should I care for them?
These worldly ranks I scorn and flout!"
"Of course," the agent said, "no doubt!"

"Yet I might show these men of birth
The hollowness of rank on earth."
The agent answered, "Very true -
But I should not, if I were you."

"Who sells this rich advowson, pray?"
The agent winked - it was his way -
"His name is HART; 'twixt me and you,
He is, I'm grieved to say, a Jew!"

"A Jew?" said SIMON, "happy find!
I purchase this advowson, mind.
My life shall be devoted to
Converting that unhappy Jew!"

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Reward Of Merit

DR. BELVILLE was regarded as the CRICHTON of his age:
His tragedies were reckoned much too thoughtful for the stage;
His poems held a noble rank, although it's very true
That, being very proper, they were read by very few.
He was a famous Painter, too, and shone upon the "line,"
And even MR. RUSKIN came and worshipped at his shrine;
But, alas, the school he followed was heroically high -
The kind of Art men rave about, but very seldom buy;
And everybody said
"How can he be repaid -
This very great - this very good - this very gifted man?"
But nobody could hit upon a practicable plan!

He was a great Inventor, and discovered, all alone,
A plan for making everybody's fortune but his own;
For, in business, an Inventor's little better than a fool,
And my highly-gifted friend was no exception to the rule.
His poems - people read them in the Quarterly Reviews -
His pictures - they engraved them in the ILLUSTRATED NEWS -
His inventions - they, perhaps, might have enriched him by degrees,
But all his little income went in Patent Office fees;
And everybody said
"How can he be repaid -
This very great - this very good - this very gifted man?"
But nobody could hit upon a practicable plan!

At last the point was given up in absolute despair,
When a distant cousin died, and he became a millionaire,
With a county seat in Parliament, a moor or two of grouse,
And a taste for making inconvenient speeches in the House!
THEN it flashed upon Britannia that the fittest of rewards
Was, to take him from the Commons and to put him in the Lords!
And who so fit to sit in it, deny it if you can,
As this very great - this very good - this very gifted man?
(Though I'm more than half afraid
That it sometimes may be said
That we never should have revelled in that source of proper pride,
However great his merits - if his cousin hadn't died!)

The Rival Curates

List while the poet trolls
Of MR. CLAYTON HOOPER,
Who had a cure of souls
At Spiffton-extra-Soooper.

He lived on curds and whey,
And daily sang their praises,
And then he'd go and play
With buttercups and daisies.

Wild croquet HOOPER banned,
And all the sports of Mammon,
He warred with cribbage, and
He exorcised backgammon.

His helmet was a glance
That spoke of holy gladness;
A saintly smile his lance;
His shield a tear of sadness.

His Vicar smiled to see
This armour on him buckled:
With pardonable glee
He blessed himself and chuckled.

"In mildness to abound
My curate's sole design is;
In all the country round
There's none so mild as mine is!"

And HOOPER, disinclined
His trumpet to be blowing,
Yet didn't think you'd find
A milder curate going.

A friend arrived one day
At Spiffton-extra-Soooper,
And in this shameful way
He spoke to Mr. HOOPER:

"You think your famous name
For mildness can't be shaken,
That none can blot your fame -
But, HOOPER, you're mistaken!

"Your mind is not as blank
As that of HOPLEY PORTER,
Who holds a curate's rank
At Assesmilk-cum-Worter.

"HE plays the airy flute,
And looks depressed and blighted,
Doves round about him 'toot,'
And lambkins dance delighted.

"HE labours more than you
At worsted work, and frames it;
In old maids' albums, too,
Sticks seaweed - yes, and names it!"

The tempter said his say,
Which pierced him like a needle -
He summoned straight away
His sexton and his beadle.

(These men were men who could
Hold liberal opinions:
On Sundays they were good -
On week-days they were minions.)

"To HOPLEY PORTER go,
Your fare I will afford you -
Deal him a deadly blow,
And blessings shall reward you.

"But stay - I do not like
Undue assassination,
And so before you strike,
Make this communication:

"I'll give him this one chance -

If he'll more gaily bear him,
Play croquet, smoke, and dance,
I willingly will spare him."

They went, those minions true,
To Assesmilk-cum-Worter,
And told their errand to
The REVEREND HOPLEY PORTER.

"What?" said that reverend gent,
"Dance through my hours of leisure?
Smoke? - bathe myself with scent? -
Play croquet? Oh, with pleasure!

"Wear all my hair in curl?
Stand at my door and wink - so -
At every passing girl?
My brothers, I should think so!

"For years I've longed for some
Excuse for this revulsion:
Now that excuse has come -
I do it on compulsion!!!"

He smoked and winked away -
This REVEREND HOPLEY PORTER -
The deuce there was to pay
At Assesmilk-cum-Worter.

And HOOPER holds his ground,
In mildness daily growing -
They think him, all around,
The mildest curate going.

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Rover's Apology

Oh, gentlemen, listen, I pray;
Though I own that my heart has been ranging,
Of nature the laws I obey,
For nature is constantly changing.
The moon in her phases is found,
The time and the wind and the weather,
The months in succession come round,
And you don't find two Mondays together.
Consider the moral, I pray,
Nor bring a young fellow to sorrow,
Who loves this young lady to-day,
And loves that young lady to-morrow!

You cannot eat breakfast all day.
Nor is it the act of a sinner,
When breakfast is taken away,
To turn your attention to dinner;
And it's not in the range of belief
That you could hold him as a glutton,
Who, when he is tired of beef,
Determines to tackle the mutton.
But this I am ready to say,
If it will diminish their sorrow,
I'll marry this lady to-day,
And I'll marry that lady to-morrow!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Sailor Boy To His Lass

I go away this blessed day,
To sail across the sea, MATILDA!
My vessel starts for various parts
At twenty after three, MATILDA.
I hardly know where we may go,
Or if it's near or far, MATILDA,
For CAPTAIN HYDE does not confide
In any 'fore-mast tar, MATILDA!

Beneath my ban that mystic man
Shall suffer, COUTE QUI COUTE, MATILDA!
What right has he to keep from me
The Admiralty route, MATILDA?
Because, forsooth! I am a youth
Of common sailors' lot, MATILDA!
Am I a man on human plan
Designed, or am I not, MATILDA?

But there, my lass, we'll let that pass!
With anxious love I burn, MATILDA.
I want to know if we shall go
To church when I return, MATILDA?
Your eyes are red, you bow your head;
It's pretty clear you thirst, MATILDA,
To name the day - What's that you say?
- "You'll see me further first," MATILDA?

I can't mistake the signs you make,
Although you barely speak, MATILDA;
Though pure and young, you thrust your tongue
Right in your pretty cheek, MATILDA!
My dear, I fear I hear you sneer -
I do - I'm sure I do, MATILDA!
With simple grace you make a face,
Ejaculating, "Ugh!" MATILDA.

Oh, pause to think before you drink
The dregs of Lethe's cup, MATILDA!
Remember, do, what I've gone through,

Before you give me up, MATILDA!
Recall again the mental pain
Of what I've had to do, MATILDA!
And be assured that I've endured
It, all along of you, MATILDA!

Do you forget, my blithesome pet,
How once with jealous rage, MATILDA,
I watched you walk and gaily talk
With some one thrice your age, MATILDA?
You squatted free upon his knee,
A sight that made me sad, MATILDA!
You pinched his cheek with friendly tweak,
Which almost drove me mad, MATILDA!

I knew him not, but hoped to spot
Some man you thought to wed, MATILDA!
I took a gun, my darling one,
And shot him through the head, MATILDA!
I'm made of stuff that's rough and gruff
Enough, I own; but, ah, MATILDA!
It DID annoy your sailor boy
To find it was your pa, MATILDA!

I've passed a life of toil and strife,
And disappointments deep, MATILDA;
I've lain awake with dental ache
Until I fell asleep, MATILDA!
At times again I've missed a train,
Or p'rhaps run short of tin, MATILDA,
And worn a boot on corns that shoot,
Or, shaving, cut my chin, MATILDA.

But, oh! no trains - no dental pains -
Believe me when I say, MATILDA,
No corns that shoot - no pinching boot
Upon a summer day, MATILDA -
It's my belief, could cause such grief
As that I've suffered for, MATILDA,
My having shot in vital spot
Your old progenitor, MATILDA.

Bethink you how I've kept the vow
I made one winter day, MATILDA -
That, come what could, I never would
Remain too long away, MATILDA.
And, oh! the crimes with which, at times,
I've charged my gentle mind, MATILDA,
To keep the vow I made - and now
You treat me so unkind, MATILDA!

For when at sea, off Caribbee,
I felt my passion burn, MATILDA,
By passion egged, I went and begged
The captain to return, MATILDA.
And when, my pet, I couldn't get
That captain to agree, MATILDA,
Right through a sort of open port
I pitched him in the sea, MATILDA!

Remember, too, how all the crew
With indignation blind, MATILDA,
Distinctly swore they ne'er before
Had thought me so unkind, MATILDA.
And how they'd shun me one by one -
An unforgiving group, MATILDA -
I stopped their howls and sulky scowls
By pizenning their soup, MATILDA!

So pause to think, before you drink
The dregs of Lethe's cup, MATILDA;
Remember, do, what I've gone through,
Before you give me up, MATILDA.
Recall again the mental pain
Of what I've had to do, MATILDA,
And be assured that I've endured
It, all along of you, MATILDA!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Sensation Captain

No nobler captain ever trod
Than CAPTAIN PARKLEBURY TODD,
So good - so wise - so brave, he!
But still, as all his friends would own,
He had one folly - one alone -
This Captain in the Navy.

I do not think I ever knew
A man so wholly given to
Creating a sensation,
Or p'raps I should in justice say -
To what in an Adelphi play
Is known as "situation."

He passed his time designing traps
To flurry unsuspecting chaps -
The taste was his innately;
He couldn't walk into a room
Without ejaculating "Boom!"
Which startled ladies greatly.

He'd wear a mask and muffling cloak,
Not, you will understand, in joke,
As some assume disguises;
He did it, actuated by
A simple love of mystery
And fondness for surprises.

I need not say he loved a maid -
His eloquence threw into shade
All others who adored her.
The maid, though pleased at first, I know,
Found, after several years or so,
Her startling lover bored her.

So, when his orders came to sail,
She did not faint or scream or wail,
Or with her tears anoint him:
She shook his hand, and said "Good-bye,"

With laughter dancing in her eye -
Which seemed to disappoint him.

But ere he went aboard his boat,
He placed around her little throat
A ribbon, blue and yellow,
On which he hung a double-tooth -
A simple token this, in sooth -
'Twas all he had, poor fellow!

"I often wonder," he would say,
When very, very far away,
"If ANGELINA wears it?
A plan has entered in my head:
I will pretend that I am dead,
And see how ANGY bears it."

The news he made a messmate tell.
His ANGELINA bore it well,
No sign gave she of crazing;
But, steady as the Inchcape Rock,
His ANGELINA stood the shock
With fortitude amazing.

She said, "Some one I must elect
Poor ANGELINA to protect
From all who wish to harm her.
Since worthy CAPTAIN TODD is dead,
I rather feel inclined to wed
A comfortable farmer."

A comfortable farmer came
(BASSANIO TYLER was his name),
Who had no end of treasure.
He said, "My noble gal, be mine!"
The noble gal did not decline,
But simply said, "With pleasure."

When this was told to CAPTAIN TODD,
At first he thought it rather odd,
And felt some perturbation;
But very long he did not grieve,

He thought he could a way perceive
To SUCH a situation!

"I'll not reveal myself," said he,
"Till they are both in the Ecclesiastical arena;
Then suddenly I will appear,
And paralysing them with fear,
Demand my ANGELINA!"

At length arrived the wedding day;
Accoutred in the usual way
Appeared the bridal body;
The worthy clergyman began,
When in the gallant Captain ran
And cried, "Behold your TODDY!"

The bridegroom, p'raps, was terrified,
And also possibly the bride -
The bridesmaids WERE affrighted;
But ANGELINA, noble soul,
Contrived her feelings to control,
And really seemed delighted.

"My bride!" said gallant CAPTAIN TODD,
"She's mine, uninteresting clod!
My own, my darling charmer!"
"Oh dear," said she, "you're just too late -
I'm married to, I beg to state,
This comfortable farmer!"

"Indeed," the farmer said, "she's mine:
You've been and cut it far too fine!"
"I see," said TODD, "I'm beaten."
And so he went to sea once more,
"Sensation" he for aye forswore,
And married on her native shore
A lady whom he'd met before -
A lovely Otaheitian.

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Sorcerer: Act I

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Sir Marmaduke Pointdextre, an Elderly Baronet

Alexis, of the Grenadier Guards--His Son

Dr. Daly, Vicar of Ploverleigh

John Wellington Wells, of J. W. Wells & Co., Family Sorcerers

Lady Sangazure, a Lady of Ancient Lineage

Aline, Her Daughter--betrothed to Alexis

Mrs. Partlet, a Pew-Opener

Constance, her Daughter

Chorus of Villagers

ACT I -- Grounds of Sir Marmaduke's Mansion, Mid-day

SCENE -- Exterior of Sir Marmaduke's Elizabethan Mansion, mid-day.

CHORUS OF VILLAGERS

Ring forth, ye bells,
 With clarion sound--
Forget your knells,
 For joys abound.
Forget your notes
 Of mournful lay,
And from your throats
 Pour joy to-day.

For to-day young Alexis--young Alexis Pointdextre
 Is betrothed to Aline--to Aline Sangazure,

And that pride of his sex is--of his sex is to be next her
At the feast on the green--on the green, oh, be sure!

Ring forth, ye bells etc.

(Exeunt the men into house.)

(Enter Mrs. Partlet with Constance, her daughter)

RECITATIVE

MRS. P. Constance, my daughter, why this strange depression?
The village rings with seasonable joy,
Because the young and amiable Alexis,
Heir to the great Sir Marmaduke Pointdextre,
Is plighted to Aline, the only daughter
Of Annabella, Lady Sangazure.
You, you alone are sad and out of spirits;
What is the reason? Speak, my daughter, speak!

CONST. Oh, mother, do not ask! If my complexion
From red to white should change in quick succession,
And then from white to red, oh, take no notice!
If my poor limbs should tremble with emotion,
Pay no attention, mother--it is nothing!
If long and deep-drawn sighs I chance to utter,
Oh, heed them not, their cause must ne'er be known!

Mrs. Partlet motions to Chorus to leave her with Constance. Exeunt
ladies of Chorus.

ARIA--CONSTANCE

When he is here,
I sigh with pleasure--
When he is gone,
I sigh with grief.
My hopeless fear
No soul can measure--
His love alone
Can give my aching heart relief!

When he is cold,

I weep for sorrow--
When he is kind,
I weep for joy.
My grief untold
Knows no to-morrow--
My woe can find
No hope, no solace, no alloy!

MRS. P. Come, tell me all about it! Do not fear--
I, too, have loved; but that was long ago!
Who is the object of your young affections?

CONST. Hush, mother! He is here! (Looking off)

Enter Dr. Daly. He is pensive and does not see them

MRS. P. (amazed) Our reverend vicar!

CONST. Oh, pity me, my heart is almost broken!

MRS. P. My child, be comforted. To such an union
I shall not offer any opposition.

Take him--he's yours! May you and he be happy!

CONST. But, mother dear, he is not yours to give!

MRS. P. That's true, indeed!

CONST. He might object!

MRS. P. He might.

But come--take heart--I'll probe him on the subject.
Be comforted--leave this affair to me.

(They withdraw.)

RECITATIVE--DR. DALY

The air is charged with amatory numbers--
Soft madrigals, and dreamy lovers' lays.
Peace, peace, old heart! Why waken from its slumbers
The aching memory of the old, old days?

BALLAD

Time was when Love and I were well acquainted.
Time was when we walked ever hand in hand.
A saintly youth, with worldly thought untainted,
None better-loved than I in all the land!
Time was, when maidens of the noblest station,

Forsaking even military men,
Would gaze upon me, rapt in adoration--
Ah me, I was a fair young curate then!

Had I a headache? sighed the maids assembled;
Had I a cold? welled forth the silent tear;
Did I look pale? then half a parish trembled;
And when I coughed all thought the end was near!
I had no care--no jealous doubts hung o'er me--
For I was loved beyond all other men.
Fled gilded dukes and belted earls before me--
Ah me, I was a pale young curate them!

(At the conclusion of the ballad, Mrs. Partlet comes forward with Constance.)

MRS. P. Good day, reverend sir.

DR. D. Ah, good Mrs. Partlet, I am glad to see you. And your little daughter, Constance! Why, she is quite a little woman, I declare!

CONST. (aside) Oh, mother, I cannot speak to him!

MRS. P. Yes, reverend sir, she is nearly eighteen, and as good a girl as ever stepped. (Aside to Dr. Daly) Ah, sir, I'm afraid I shall soon lose her!

DR. D. (aside to Mrs. Partlet) Dear me, you pain me very much. Is she delicate?

MRS. P. Oh no, sir--I don't mean that--but young girls look to get married.

DR. D. Oh, I take you. To be sure. But there's plenty of time for that. Four or five years hence, Mrs. Partlet, four or five years hence. But when the time does come, I shall have much pleasure in marrying her myself--

CONST. (aside) Oh, mother!

DR. D. To some strapping young fellow in her own rank of life.

CONST. (in tears) He does not love me!

MRS. P. I have often wondered, reverend sir (if you'll excuse the liberty), that you have never married.

DR. D. (aside) Be still, my fluttering heart!

MRS. P. A clergyman's wife does so much good in a village. Besides that, you are not as young as you were, and before very long you will want somebody to nurse you, and look after your

little comforts.

DR. D. Mrs. Partlet, there is much truth in what you say. I am indeed getting on in years, and a helpmate would cheer my declining days. Time was when it might have been; but I have left it too long--I am an old foggy, now, am I not, my dear? (to Constance)--a very old foggy, indeed. Ha! ha! No, Mrs. Partlet, my mind is quite made up. I shall live and die a solitary old bachelor.

CONST. Oh, mother, mother! (Sobs on Mrs. Partlet's bosom)

MRS. P. Come, come, dear one, don't fret. At a more fitting time we will try again--we will try again.

(Exeunt Mrs. Partlet and Constance.)

DR. D. (looking after them) Poor little girl! I'm afraid she has something on her mind. She is rather comely. Time was when this old heart would have throbbled in double-time at the sight of such a fairy form! But tush! I am puling! Here comes the young Alexis with his proud and happy father. Let me dry this tell-tale tear!

Enter Sir Marmaduke and Alexis

RECITATIVE

DR. D. Sir Marmaduke--my dear young friend, Alexis--
On this most happy, most auspicious plighting--
Permit me as a true old friend to tender
My best, my very best congratulations!

SIR M. Sir, you are most obleeging!

ALEXIS. Dr. Daly
My dear old tutor, and my valued pastor,
I thank you from the bottom of my heart!

(Spoken through music)

DR. D. May fortune bless you! may the middle distance
Of your young life be pleasant as the foreground--
The joyous foreground! and, when you have reached it,
May that which now is the far-off horizon
(But which will then become the middle distance),
In fruitful promise be exceeded only
By that which will have opened, in the meantime,
Into a new and glorious horizon!

SIR M. Dear Sir, that is an excellent example

Of an old school of stately compliment
To which I have, through life, been much addicted.
Will you oblige me with a copy of it,
In clerical manuscript, that I myself
May use it on appropriate occasions?

DR. D. Sir, you shall have a fairly-written copy
Ere Sol has sunk into his western slumbers!

(Exit Dr. Daly)

SIR M. (to Alexis, who is in a reverie) Come, come, my
son--your fiancée will be here in five minutes. Rouse yourself
to receive her.

ALEXIS. Oh rapture!

SIR M. Yes, you are a fortunate young fellow, and I will
not disguise from you that this union with the House of Sangazure
realizes my fondest wishes. Aline is rich, and she comes of a
sufficiently old family, for she is the seven thousand and
thirty-seventh in direct descent from Helen of Troy. True, there
was a blot on the escutcheon of that lady--that affair with
Paris--but where is the family, other than my own, in which there
is no flaw? You are a lucky fellow, sir--a very lucky fellow!

ALEXIS. Father, I am welling over with limpid joy! No
sickly taint of sorrow overlies the lucid lake of liquid love,
upon which, hand in hand, Aline and I are to float into eternity!

SIR M. Alexis, I desire that of your love for this young
lady you do not speak so openly. You are always singing ballads
in praise of her beauty, and you expect the very menials who wait
behind your chair to chorus your ecstasies. It is not delicate.

ALEXIS. Father, a man who loves as I love--

SIR M. Pooh pooh, sir! fifty years ago I madly loved your
future mother-in-law, the Lady Sangazure, and I have reason to
believe that she returned my love. But were we guilty of the
indelicate of publicly rushing into each other's arms,
exclaiming--

"Oh, my adored one!" "Beloved boy!"

"Ecstatic rapture!" "Unmingled joy!"

which seems to be the modern fashion of love-making? No! it was
"Madam, I trust you are in the enjoyment of good health"--"Sir,
you are vastly polite, I protest I am mighty well"--and so forth.
Much more delicate--much more respectful. But see--Aline

approaches--let us retire, that she may compose herself for the interesting ceremony in which she is to play so important a part.

(Exeunt Sir Marmaduke and Alexis.)

(Enter Aline on terrace, preceded by Chorus of Girls.)

CHORUS OF GIRLS

With heart and with voice
Let us welcome this mating:
To the youth of her choice,
With a heart palpitating,
Comes the lovely Aline!

May their love never cloy!
May their bliss be unbounded!
With a halo of joy
May their lives be surrounded!
Heaven bless our Aline!

RECITATIVE--ALINE.

My kindly friends, I thank you for this greeting
And as you wish me every earthly joy,
I trust your wishes may have quick fulfillment!

ARIA--ALINE.

Oh, happy young heart!
Comes thy young lord a-wooing
With joy in his eyes,
And pride in his breast--
Make much of thy prize,
For he is the best
That ever came a-suing.
Yet--yet we must part,
Young heart!
Yet--yet we must part!

Oh, merry young heart,
Bright are the days of thy wooing!
But happier far

The days untried--
No sorrow can mar,
When love has tied
The knot there's no undoing.
Then, never to part,
Young heart!
Then, never to part!

Enter Lady Sangazure

RECITATIVE--LADY S.

My child, I join in these congratulations:
Heed not the tear that dims this aged eye!
Old memories crowd upon me. Though I sorrow,
'Tis for myself, Aline, and not for thee!

Enter Alexis, preceded by Chorus of Men

CHORUS OF MEN AND WOMEN

With heart and with voice
Let us welcome this mating;
To the maid of his choice,
With a heart palpitating,
Comes Alexis, the brave!.

(Sir Marmaduke enters. Lady Sangazure and he exhibit signs of strong emotion at the sight of each other which they endeavor to repress. Alexis and Aline rush into each other's arms.)

RECITATIVE

ALEXIS. Oh, my adored one!

ALINE. Beloved boy!

ALEXIS. Ecstatic rapture!

ALINE. Unmingled joy!

(They retire up.)

DUET--SIR MARMADUKE and LADY SANGAZURE

SIR M. (with stately courtesy)

Welcome joy, adieu to sadness!
As Aurora gilds the day,
So those eyes, twin orbs of gladness,
Chase the clouds of care away.
Irresistible incentive
Bids me humbly kiss your hand;
I'm your servant most attentive--
Most attentive to command!

(Aside with frantic vehemence)

Wild with adoration!
Mad with fascination!
To indulge my lamentation
No occasion do I miss!
Goaded to distraction
By maddening inaction,
I find some satisfaction
In apostrophe like this:
"Sangazure immortal,
"Sangazure divine,
"Welcome to my portal,
"Angel, oh be mine!"

(Aloud with much ceremony)

Irresistible incentive
Bids me humbly kiss your hand;
I'm your servant most attentive--
Most attentive to command!

LADY S. Sir, I thank you most politely
For your grateful courtesee;
Compliment more true and knightly
Never yet was paid to me!
Chivalry is an ingredient
Sadly lacking in our land--
Sir, I am your most obedient,
Most obedient to command!

(Aside and with great vehemence)

Wild with adoration!
Mad with fascination!
To indulge my lamentation
 No occasion do I miss!
Goaded to distraction
By maddening inaction,
I find some satisfaction
 In apostrophe like this:
 "Marmaduke immortal,
 "Marmaduke divine,
 "Take me to thy portal,
 "Loved one, oh be mine!"

(Aloud with much ceremony)
Chivalry is an ingredient
 Sadly lacking in our land;
Sir, I am your most obedient,
 Most obedient to command!

(During this the Notary has entered, with marriage contract.)

RECITATIVE--NOTARY

All is prepared for sealing and for signing,
 The contract has been drafted as agreed;
Approach the table, oh, ye lovers pining,
 With hand and seal come execute the deed!

(Alexis and Aline advance and sign, Alexis supported by Sir Marmaduke,
Aline by her Mother.)

CHORUS

See they sign, without a quiver, it--
 Then to seal proceed.
They deliver it--they deliver it
 As their Act and Deed!

ALEXIS. I deliver it--I deliver it
 As my Act and Deed!.

ALINE. I deliver it--I deliver it.
 As my Act and Deed!

alone!

BALLAD--ALEXIS

Love feeds on many kinds of food, I know,
Some love for rank, some for duty:
Some give their hearts away for empty show,
And others for youth and beauty.
To love for money all the world is prone:
Some love themselves, and live all lonely:
Give me the love that loves for love alone--
I love that love--I love it only!

What man for any other joy can thirst,
Whose loving wife adores him duly?
Want, misery, and care may do their worst,
If loving woman loves you truly.
A lover's thoughts are ever with his own--
None truly loved is ever lonely:
Give me the love that loves for love alone--
I love that love--I love it only!

ALINE. Oh, Alexis, those are noble principles!

ALEXIS. Yes, Aline, and I am going to take a desperate step in support of them. Have you ever heard of the firm of J. W. Wells & Co., the old-established Family Sorcerers in St. Mary Axe?

ALINE. I have seen their advertisement.

ALEXIS. They have invented a philtre, which, if report may be believed, is simply infallible. I intend to distribute it through the village, and within half-an-hour of my doing so there will not be an adult in the place who will not have learnt the secret of pure and lasting happiness. What do you say to that?

ALINE. Well, dear, of course a filter is a very useful thing in a house; but still I don't quite see that it is the sort of thing that places its possessor on the very pinnacle of earthly joy.

ALEXIS. Aline, you misunderstand me. I didn't say a filter--I said a philtre.

ALINE (alarmed). You don't mean a love-potion?

ALEXIS. On the contrary--I do mean a love potion.

ALINE. Oh, Alexis! I don't think it would be right. I

don't indeed. And then--a real magician! Oh, it would be downright wicked.

ALEXIS. Aline, is it, or is it not, a laudable object to steep the whole village up to its lips in love, and to couple them in matrimony without distinction of age, rank, or fortune?

ALINE. Unquestionably, but--

ALEXIS. Then unpleasant as it must be to have recourse to supernatural aid, I must nevertheless pocket my aversion, in deference to the great and good end I have in view. (Calling) Hercules.

(Enter a Page from tent)

PAGE. Yes, sir.

ALEXIS. Is Mr. Wells there?

PAGE. He's in the tent, sir--refreshing.

ALEXIS. Ask him to be so good as to step this way.

PAGE. Yes, sir. (Exit Page)

ALINE. Oh, but, Alexis! A real Sorcerer! Oh, I shall be frightened to death!

ALEXIS. I trust my Aline will not yield to fear while the strong right arm of her Alexis is here to protect her.

ALINE. It's nonsense, dear, to talk of your protecting me with your strong right arm, in face of the fact that this Family Sorcerer could change me into a guinea-pig before you could turn round.

ALEXIS. He could change you into a guinea-pig, no doubt, but it is most unlikely that he would take such a liberty. It's a most respectable firm, and I am sure he would never be guilty of so untradesmanlike an act.

(Enter Mr. Wells from tent)

WELLS. Good day, sir. (Aline much terrified.)

ALEXIS. Good day--I believe you are a Sorcerer.

WELLS. Yes, sir, we practice Necromancy in all its branches. We've a choice assortment of wishing-caps, divining-rods, amulets, charms, and counter-charms. We can cast you a nativity at a low figure, and we have a horoscope at three-and-six that we can guarantee. Our Abudah chests, each containing a patent Hag who comes out and prophesies disasters, with spring complete, are strongly recommended. Our Aladdin

lamps are very chaste, and our Prophetic Tablets, foretelling everything--from a change of Ministry down to a rise in Unified--are much enquired for. Our penny Curse--one of the cheapest things in the trade--is considered infallible. We have some very superior Blessings, too, but they're very little asked for. We've only sold one since Christmas--to a gentleman who bought it to send to his mother-in-law--but it turned out that he was afflicted in the head, and it's been returned on our hands. But our sale of penny Curses, especially on Saturday nights, is tremendous. We can't turn 'em out fast enough.

SONG--MR. WELLS

Oh! my name is John Wellington Wells,
I'm a dealer in magic and spells,
 In blessings and curses
 And ever-filled purses,
In prophecies, witches, and knells.
If you want a proud foe to "make tracks"--
If you'd melt a rich uncle in wax--
 You've but to look in
 On the resident Djinn,
Number seventy, Simmery Axe!

We've a first-class assortment of magic;
 And for raising a posthumous shade
With effects that are comic or tragic,
 There's no cheaper house in the trade.
Love-philtre--we've quantities of it;
 And for knowledge if any one burns,
We keep an extremely small prophet, a prophet
 Who brings us unbounded returns:

For he can prophesy
With a wink of his eye,
Peep with security
Into futurity,
Sum up your history,
Clear up a mystery,
Humour proclivity
For a nativity--for a nativity;
With mirrors so magical,

Tetrapods tragical,
Bogies spectacular,
Answers oracular,
Facts astronomical,
Solemn or comical,
And, if you want it, he
Makes a reduction on taking a quantity!
Oh!

If any one anything lacks,
He'll find it all ready in stacks,
If he'll only look in
On the resident Djinn,
Number seventy, Simmery Axe!

He can raise you hosts
Of ghosts,
And that without reflectors;
And creepy things
With wings,
And gaunt and grisly spectres.
He can fill you crowds
Of shrouds,
And horrify you vastly;
He can rack your brains
With chains,
And gibberings grim and ghastly.

And then, if you plan it, he
Changes organity,
With an urbanity,
Full of Satanity,
Vexes humanity
With an inanity
Fatal to vanity--
Driving your foes to the verge of insanity!

Barring tautology,
In demonology,
'Lectro-biology,
Mystic nosology,
Spirit philology,

High-class astrology,
Such is his knowledge, he
Isn't the man to require an apology!

Oh!

My name is John Wellington Wells,
I'm a dealer in magic and spells,
In blessings and curses
And ever-filled purses,
In prophecies, witches, and knells.

If any one anything lacks,
He'll find it all ready in stacks,
If he'll only look in
On the resident Djinn,
Number seventy, Simmery Axe!

ALEXIS. I have sent for you to consult you on a very important matter. I believe you advertise a Patent Oxy-Hydrogen Love-at-first-sight Philtre?

WELLS. Sir, it is our leading article. (Producing a phial.)

ALEXIS. Now I want to know if you can confidently guarantee it as possessing all the qualities you claim for it in your advertisement?

WELLS. Sir, we are not in the habit of puffing our goods. Ours is an old-established house with a large family connection, and every assurance held out in the advertisement is fully realized. (Hurt)

ALINE. (aside) Oh, Alexis, don't offend him! He'll change us into something dreadful--I know he will!

ALEXIS. I am anxious from purely philanthropical motives to distribute this philtre, secretly, among the inhabitants of this village. I shall of course require a quantity. How do you sell it?

WELLS. In buying a quantity, sir, we should strongly advise your taking it in the wood, and drawing it off as you happen to want it. We have it in four-and-a-half and nine gallon casks--also in pipes and hogsheads for laying down, and we deduct 10 per cent from prompt cash.

ALEXIS. I should mention that I am a Member of the Army and Navy Stores.

WELLS. In that case we deduct 25 percent.

ALEXIS. Aline, the villagers will assemble to carouse in a few minutes. Go and fetch the tea-pot.

ALINE. But, Alexis--

ALEXIS. My dear, you must obey me, if you please. Go and fetch the teapot.

ALINE (going). I'm sure Dr. Daly would disapprove of it!

(Exit Aline.)

ALEXIS. And how soon does it take effect?

WELLS. In twelve hours. Whoever drinks of it loses consciousness for that period, and on waking falls in love, as a matter of course, with the first lady he meets who has also tasted it, and his affection is at once returned. One trial will prove the fact.

Enter Aline with large tea-pot

ALEXIS. Good: then, Mr. Wells, I shall feel obliged if you will at once pour as much philtre into this teapot as will suffice to affect the whole village.

ALINE. But bless me, Alexis, many of the villagers are married people!

WELLS. Madam, this philtre is compounded on the strictest principles. On married people it has no effect whatever. But are you quite sure that you have nerve enough to carry you through the fearful ordeal?

ALEXIS. In the good cause I fear nothing.

WELLS. Very good, then, we will proceed at once to the Incantation.

The stage grows dark.

INCANTATION

WELLS. Sprites of earth and air--
 Fiends of flame and fire--
 Demon souls,
 Come here in shoals,
 This dreaded deed inspire!
 Appear, appear, appear.

MALE VOICES. Good master, we are here!

WELLS. Noisome hags of night--
 Imps of deadly shade--
 Pallid ghosts,
 Arise in hosts,
And lend me all your aid.
 Appear, appear, appear!

FEMALE VOICES. Good master, we are here!

ALEXIS (aside). Hark, they assemble,
 These fiends of the night!

ALINE (aside). Oh Alexis, I tremble,
 Seek safety in flight!

ARIA - ALINE

Let us fly to a far-off land,
 Where peace and plenty dwell--
Where the sigh of the silver strand
 Is echoed in every shell
To the joy that land will give,
 On the wings of Love we'll fly;
In innocence, there to live--
 In innocence there to die!

CHORUS OF SPIRITS.

Too late--too late
 It may not be!
That happy fate
 Is not for (me/thee)!

ALEXIS, ALINE, and MR. W.

Too late--too late,
 That may not be!
That happy fate,
 Is not for thee!

MR. WELLS

Now shrivelled hags, with poison bags,
Discharge your loathsome loads!
Spit flame and fire, unholy choir!
Belch forth your venom, toads!
Ye demons fell, with yelp and yell,
Shed curses far afield--
Ye fiends of night, your filthy blight
In noisome plenty yield!

WELLS (pouring phial into tea-pot--flash)

Number One!

CHORUS It is done!

WELLS (same business) Number Two! (flash)

CHORUS One too few!

WELLS Number Three! (flash)

CHORUS Set us free!

Set us free--our work is done

Ha! ha! ha!

Set us free--our course is run!

Ha! ha! ha!

ALINE AND ALEXIS (aside)

Let us fly to a far-off land,
Where peace and plenty dwell--
Where the sigh of the silver strand
Is echoed in every shell.

CHORUS OF FIENDS.

Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!

(Stage grows light. Mr. Wells beckons villagers. Enter villagers
and all the dramatis personae, dancing joyously. Mrs.
Partlet and Mr. Wells then distribute tea-cups.)

CHORUS.

Now to the banquet we press;
Now for the eggs, the ham;
Now for the mustard and cress,

Now for the strawberry jam!

Now for the tea of our host,
Now for the rollicking bun,
Now for the muffin and toast,
Now for the gay Sally Lunn!

WOMEN. The eggs and the ham, and the strawberry jam!

MEN. The rollicking bun, and the gay Sally Lunn!
The rollicking, rollicking bun!

RECITATIVE--SIR MARMADUKE

Be happy all--the feast is spread before ye;
Fear nothing, but enjoy yourselves, I pray!
Eat, aye, and drink--be merry, I implore ye,
For once let thoughtless Folly rule the day.

TEA-CUP BRINDISI

Eat, drink, and be gay,
Banish all worry and sorrow,
Laugh gaily to-day,
Weep, if you're sorry, to-morrow!
Come, pass the cup around--
I will go bail for the liquor;
It's strong, I'll be bound,
For it was brewed by the vicar!

CHORUS.

None so knowing as he
At brewing a jorum of tea,
Ha! ha!
A pretty stiff jorum of tea.

TRIO--WELLS, ALINE, and ALEXIS. (aside)

See--see--they drink--
All thoughts unheeding,
The tea-cups clink,

They are exceeding!
Their hearts will melt
In half-an-hour--
Then will be felt
The potions power!

(During this verse Constance has brought a small tea-pot, kettle, caddy, and cosy to Dr. Daly. He makes tea scientifically.)

BRINDISI, 2nd Verse--DR. DALY (with the tea-pot)

Pain, trouble, and care,
Misery, heart-ache, and worry,
Quick, out of your lair!
Get you gone in a hurry!
Toil, sorrow, and plot,
Fly away quicker and quicker--
Three spoons in the pot--
That is the brew of your vicar!

CHORUS

None so cunning as he
At brewing a jorum of tea,
Ha! ha!
A pretty stiff jorum of tea!

ENSEMBLE--ALEXIS and ALINE (aside)

Oh love, true love--unworldly, abiding!
Source of all pleasure--true fountain of joy,--
Oh love, true love--divinely confiding,
Exquisite treasure that knows no alloy,--
Oh love, true love, rich harvest of gladness,
Peace-bearing tillage--great garner of bliss,--
Oh love, true love, look down on our sadness --
Dwell in this village--oh, hear us in this!

(It becomes evident by the strange conduct of the characters that the charm is working. All rub their eyes, and stagger about the stage as if under the influence of a narcotic.)

TUTTI (aside)

ALEXIS, MR. WELLS and ALINE

Oh, marvellous illusion!

A marvellous illusion!

Oh, terrible surprise!

A terrible surprise

What is this strange confusion

Excites a strange confusion

That veils my aching eyes?

Within their aching eyes--

I must regain my senses,

They must regain their senses,

Restoring Reason's law,

Restoring Reason's law,

Or fearful inferences

Or fearful inferences

Society will draw!

Society will draw!

(Those who have partaken of the philtre struggle in vain against its effects, and, at the end of the chorus, fall insensible on the stage.)

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Sorcerer: Act II

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Sir Marmaduke Pointdextre, an Elderly Baronet

Alexis, of the Grenadier Guards--His Son

Dr. Daly, Vicar of Ploverleigh

John Wellington Wells, of J. W. Wells & Co., Family Sorcerers

Lady Sangazure, a Lady of Ancient Lineage

Aline, Her Daughter--betrothed to Alexis

Mrs. Partlet, a Pew-Opener

Constance, her Daughter

Chorus of Villagers

(Twelve hours are supposed to elapse between Acts I and II)

ACT II-- Grounds of Sir Marmaduke's Mansion, Midnight

Scene--Exterior of Sir Marmaduke's mansion by moonlight. All the peasantry are discovered asleep on the ground, as at the end of Act I.

Enter Mr. Wells, on tiptoe, followed by Alexis and Aline. Mr. Wells carries a dark lantern.

TRIO--ALEXIS, ALINE, and MR. WELLS

'Tis twelve, I think,
And at this mystic hour
The magic drink
Should manifest its power.

Oh, slumbering forms,
How little ye have guessed
That fire that warms
Each apathetic breast!

ALEXIS. But stay, my father is not here!

ALINE. And pray where is my mother dear?

MR. WELLS. I did not think it meet to see
A dame of lengthy pedigree,
A Baronet and K.C.B.
A Doctor of Divinity,
And that respectable Q.C.,
All fast asleep, al-fresco-ly,
And so I had them taken home
And put to bed respectably!
I trust my conduct meets your approbation.

ALEXIS. Sir, you have acted with discrimination,
And shown more delicate appreciation
Than we expect of persons of your station.

MR. WELLS. But stay--they waken one by one --
The spell has worked--the deed is done!
I would suggest that we retire
While Love, the Housemaid, lights her kitchen
fire!

(Exeunt Mr. Wells, Alexis and Aline, on tiptoe, as the villagers stretch their arms, yawn, rub their eyes, and sit up.)

MEN. Why, where be oi, and what be oi a doin',
A sleepin' out, just when the dew's du rise?

GIRLS. Why, that's the very way your health to ruin,
And don't seem quite respectable likewise!

MEN (staring at girls). Eh, that's you!
Only think o' that now!

GIRLS (coyly). What may you be at, now?
Tell me, du!

MEN (admiringly). Eh, what a nose,
And eh, what eyes, miss!

Lips like a rose,
 And cheeks likewise, miss!
 GIRLS (coyly). Oi tell you true,
 Which I've never done, sir,
 Oi loike you
 As I never loiked none, sir!
 ALL. Eh, but oi du loike you!
 MEN. If you'll marry me, I'll dig for you and
 rake for you!
 GIRLS. If you'll marry be, I'll scrub for you
 and bake for you!
 MEN. If you'll marry me, all others I'll
 forsake for you!
 ALL. All this will I du, if you marry
 me!
 GIRLS. If you'll marry me, I'll cook for you
 and brew for you!
 MEN. If you'll marry me, I've guineas not a
 few for you!
 GIRLS. If you'll marry me, I'll take you in and
 du for you!
 ALL. All this will I du, if you'll marry me!
 Eh, but I do loike you!

Country Dance

(At end of dance, enter Constance in tears, leading Notary, who carries an ear-trumpet)

Aria--CONSTANCE

Dear friends, take pity on my lot,
 My cup is not of nectar!
 I long have loved--as who would not?--
 Our kind and reverend rector.
 Long years ago my love began
 So sweetly--yet so sadly--
 But when I saw this plain old man,
 Away my old affection ran--
 I found I loved him madly.
 Oh!

(To Notary) You very, very plain old man,
I love, I love you madly!

CHORUS. You very, very plain old man,
She loves, she loves you madly!

NOTARY. I am a very deaf old man,
And hear you very badly!

CONST. I know not why I love him so;
It is enchantment, surely!
He's dry and snuffy, deaf and slow
Ill-tempered, weak and poorly!
He's ugly, and absurdly dressed,
And sixty-seven nearly,
He's everything that I detest,
But if the truth must be confessed,
I love him very dearly!
Oh!

(To Notary) You're everything that I detest,
But still I love you dearly!

CHORUS. You've everything that girls detest,
But still she loves you dearly!

NOTARY. I caught that line, but for the rest,
I did not hear it clearly!

(During this verse Aline and Alexis have entered at back
unobserved.)

ALINE AND ALEXIS

ALEXIS. Oh joy! oh joy!
The charm works well,
And all are now united.

ALINE. The blind young boy
Obeys the spell,
And troth they all have plighted!

ENSEMBLE

ALEXIS. Then you absolutely refuse?

ALINE. I do. If you cannot trust me, you have no right to love me--no right to be loved by me.

ALEXIS. Enough, Aline, I shall know how to interpret this refusal.

BALLAD--ALEXIS

Thou hast the power thy vaunted love
To sanctify, all doubt above,
 Despite the gathering shade:
To make that love of thine so sure
That, come what may, it must endure
 Till time itself shall fade.

 They love is but a flower
 That fades within the hour!
 If such thy love, oh, shame!
 Call it by other name--
 It is not love!

Thine is the power and thine alone,
To place me on so proud a throne
 That kings might envy me!
A priceless throne of love untold,
More rare than orient pearl and gold.

 But no! Thou wouldst be free!
 Such love is like the ray
 That dies within the day:
 If such thy love, oh, shame!
 Call it by other name--
 It is not love!

Enter Dr. Daly.

DR. D. (musing) It is singular--it is very singular. It has overthrown all my calculations. It is distinctly opposed to the doctrine of averages. I cannot understand it.

ALINE. Dear Dr. Daly, what has puzzled you?

DR. D. My dear, this village has not hitherto been addicted to marrying and giving in marriage. Hitherto the youths of this village have not been enterprising, and the maidens have been distinctly coy. Judge then of my surprise when I tell you that

the whole village came to me in a body just now, and implored me to join them in matrimony with as little delay as possible. Even your excellent father has hinted to me that before very long it is not unlikely that he may also change his condition.

ALINE. Oh, Alexis--do you hear that? Are you not delighted?

ALEXIS. Yes, I confess that a union between your mother and my father would be a happy circumstance indeed. (Crossing to Dr. Daly) My dear sir--the news that you bring us is very gratifying.

DR. D. Yes--still, in my eyes, it has its melancholy side. This universal marrying recalls the happy days--now, alas, gone forever--when I myself might have--but tush! I am puling. I am too old to marry--and yet, within the last half-hour, I have greatly yearned for companionship. I never remarked it before, but the young maidens of this village are very comely. So likewise are the middle-aged. Also the elderly. All are comely--and (with a deep sigh) all are engaged!

ALINE. Here comes your father.

Enter Sir Marmaduke with Mrs. Partlet, arm-in-arm

ALINE and ALEXIS (aside). Mrs. Partlet!

SIR M. Dr. Daly, give me joy. Alexis, my dear boy, you will, I am sure, be pleased to hear that my declining days are not unlikely to be solaced by the companionship of this good, virtuous, and amiable woman.

ALEXIS. (rather taken aback) My dear father, this is not altogether what I expected. I am certainly taken somewhat by surprise. Still it can hardly be necessary to assure you that any wife of yours is a mother of mine. (Aside to Aline.) It is not quite what I could have wished.

MRS. P. (crossing to Alexis) Oh, sir, I entreat your forgiveness. I am aware that socially I am not everything that could be desired, nor am I blessed with an abundance of worldly goods, but I can at least confer on your estimable father the great and priceless dowry of a true, tender, and lovin' 'art!

ALEXIS (coldly). I do not question it. After all, a faithful love is the true source of every earthly joy.

SIR M. I knew that my boy would not blame his poor father for acting on the impulse of a heart that has never yet misled him. Zorah is not perhaps what the world calls beautiful--

DR. D. Still she is comely--distinctly comely. (Sighs)

ALINE. Zorah is very good, and very clean, and honest, and quite, quite sober in her habits: and that is worth far more than beauty, dear Sir Marmaduke.

DR. D. Yes; beauty will fade and perish, but personal cleanliness is practically undying, for it can be renewed whenever it discovers symptoms of decay. My dear Sir Marmaduke, I heartily congratulate you. (Sighs)

QUINETTE

ALEXIS, ALINE, SIR MARMADUKE, ZORAH, and DR. DALY

ALEXIS. I rejoice that it's decided,
Happy now will be his life,
For my father is provided
With a true and tender wife.
She will tend him, nurse him, mend him,
Air his linen, dry his tears;
Bless the thoughtful fate that send him
Such a wife to soothe his years!

ALINE. No young giddy thoughtless maiden,
Full of graces, airs, and jeers--
But a sober widow, laden
With the weight of fifty years!

SIR M. No high-born exacting beauty
Blazing like a jewelled sun--
But a wife who'll do her duty,
As that duty should be done!

MRS. P. I'm no saucy minx and giddy--
Hussies such as them abound--
But a clean and tidy widdy
Well be-known for miles around!

DR.D. All the village now have mated,
All are happy as can be--
I to live alone am fated:
No one's left to marry me!

ENSEMBLE. She will tend him etc.

(Exeunt Sir Marmaduke, Mrs. Partlet, and Aline, with Alexis. Dr. Daly looks after them sentimentally, then exits with a sigh.)

Enter Mr. Wells

RECITATIVE--MR. WELLS

Oh, I have wrought much evil with my spells!
An ill I can't undo!
This is too bad of you, J. W. Wells--
What wrong have they done you?
And see--another love-lorn lady comes--
Alas, poor stricken dame!
A gentle pensiveness her life benumbs--
And mine, alone, the blame!

Lady Sangazure enters. She is very melancholy

LADY S. Alas, ah me! and well-a-day!
I sigh for love, and well I may,
For I am very old and grey.
But stay!

(Sees Mr. Wells, and becomes fascinated by him.)

RECITATIVE

LADY S. What is this fairy form I see before me?
WELLS. Oh horrible!--She's going to adore me!
 This last catastrophe is overpowering!
LADY S. Why do you glare at one with visage lowering?
 For pity's sake recoil not thus from me!
WELLS. My lady leave me--this may never be!

DUET--LADY SANGAZURE and MR. WELLS

WELLS. Hate me! I drop my H's--have through life!
LADY S. Love me! I'll drop them too!
WELLS. Hate me! I always eat peas with a knife!
LADY S. Love me! I'll eat like you!

WELLS. Hate me! I spend the day at Rosherville!
LADY S. Love me! that joy I'll share!
WELLS. Hate me! I often roll down One Tree Hill!
LADY S. Love me! I'll join you there!

LADY S. Love me! My prejudices I will drop!
WELLS. Hate me! that's not enough!
LADY S. Love me! I'll come and help you in the shop!
WELLS. Hate me! the life is rough!
LADY S. Love me! my grammar I will all forswear!
WELLS. Hate me! abjure my lot!
LADY S. Love me! I'll stick sunflowers in my hair!
WELLS. Hate me! they'll suit you not!

RECITATIVE--MR. WELLS

At what I am going to say be not enraged--
I may not love you--for I am engaged!

LADY S. (horrified). Engaged!
WELLS. Engaged!

To a maiden fair,
With bright brown hair,
And a sweet and simple smile,
Who waits for me
By the sounding sea,
On a South Pacific isle.

WELLS (aside). A lie! No maiden waits me there!
LADY S. (mournfully). She has bright brown hair;
WELLS (aside). A lie! No maiden smiles on me!
LADY S. (mournfully). By the sounding sea!

ENSEMBLE

LADY SANGAZURE

WELLS.

Oh agony, rage, despair!
The maiden has bright brown hair,
And mine is as white as snow!
False man, it will be your fault,
If I go to my family vault,
And bury my life-long woe!

Oh, agony, rage, despair!
Oh, where will this end--oh, where?
I should like very much to know!
It will certainly be my fault,
If she goes to her family vault,
To bury her life-long woe!

BOTH. The family vault--the family vault.
It will certainly be (your/my) fault.
If (I go/she goes) to (my/her) family vault,
To bury (my/her) life-long woe!

(Exit Lady Sangazure, in great anguish, accompanied by Mr. Wells.)

Enter Aline, Recitative

Alexis! Doubt me not, my loved one! See,
Thine uttered will is sovereign law to me!
All fear--all thought of ill I cast away!
It is my darling's will, and I obey!
(She drinks the philtre.)

The fearful deed is done,
My love is near!
I go to meet my own
In trembling fear!
If o'er us aught of ill
Should cast a shade,
It was my darling's will,
And I obeyed!

(As Aline is going off, she meets Dr. Daly, entering pensively. He is playing on a flageolet. Under the influence of the spell she at once becomes strangely fascinated by him, and exhibits every symptom of being hopelessly in love with him.)

SONG--DR. DALY

Oh, my voice is sad and low
And with timid step I go--
For with load of love o'er laden
I enquire of every maiden,
"Will you wed me, little lady?
Will you share my cottage shady?"
Little lady answers "No!
Thank you for your kindly proffer--
Good your heart, and full your coffer;
Yet I must decline your offer--"

I'm engaged to So-and-so!"
So-and-so!
So-and-so! (flageolet solo)
She's engaged to So-and-so!
What a rogue young hearts to pillage;
What a worker on Love's tillage!
Every maiden in the village
Is engaged to So-and-so!
So-and-so!
So-and-so! (flageolet solo)
All engaged to So-and-so!

(At the end of the song Dr. Daly sees Aline, and, under the influence of the potion, falls in love with her.)

ENSEMBLE--ALINE and DR. DALY.

Oh, joyous boon! oh, mad delight;
Oh, sun and moon! oh, day and night!
Rejoice, rejoice with me!
Proclaim our joy, ye birds above--
Yet brooklets, murmur forth our love,
In choral ecstasy:

ALINE. Oh, joyous boon!
DR. D. Oh, mad delight!
ALINE. Oh, sun and moon!
DR. D. Oh, day and night!
BOTH. Ye birds, and brooks, and fruitful trees,
With choral joy, delight the breeze--
Rejoice, rejoice with me!

Enter Alexis

ALEXIS (with rapture). Aline my only love, my happiness!
The philtre--you have tasted it?

ALINE (with confusion). Yes! Yes!

ALEXIS. Oh, joy, mine, mine for ever, and for aye!
(Embraces her.)

ALINE. Alexis, don't do that--you must not!

(Dr. Daly interposes between them)

ALEXIS (amazed). Why?

DUET--ALINE and DR. DALY

ALINE. Alas! that lovers thus should meet:
 Oh, pity, pity me!
Oh, charge me not with cold deceit;
 Oh, pity, pity me!
You bade me drink--with trembling awe
I drank, and, by the potion's law,
I loved the very first I saw!
 Oh, pity, pity, me!

DR. D. My dear young friend, consoled be--
 We pity, pity you.
In this I'm not an agent free--
 We pity, pity you.
Some most extraordinary spell
O'er us has cast its magic fell--
The consequence I need not tell.
 We pity, pity you.

ENSEMBLE

Some most extraordinary spell
O'er (us/them) has cast its magic fell--
The consequence (we/they) need not tell.
(We/They) pity, pity (thee!/me).

ALEXIS (furiously). False one, begone--I spurn thee,
 To thy new lover turn thee!
 Thy perfidy all men shall know,

ALINE (wildly). I could not help it!

ALEXIS (calling off). Come one, come all!

DR. D. We could not help it!

ALEXIS (calling off). Obey my call!

ALINE (wildly). I could not help it!

ALEXIS (calling off). Come hither, run!

DR. D. We could not help it!

ALEXIS (calling off). Come, every one!

Enter all the characters except Lady Sangazure and Mr. Wells

CHORUS

Oh, what is the matter, and what is the clatter?
He's glowering at her, and threatens a blow!
Oh, why does he batter the girl he did flatter?
And why does the latter recoil from him so?

RECITATIVE--ALEXIS

Prepare for sad surprises--
My love Aline despises!
No thought of sorrow shames her--
Another lover claims her!
Be his, false girl, for better or for worse--
But, ere you leave me, may a lover's curse--

DR. D. (coming forward). Hold! Be just. This poor child drank the philtre at your instance. She hurried off to meet you--but, most unhappily, she met me instead. As you had administered the potion to both of us, the result was inevitable. But fear nothing from me--I will be no man's rival. I shall quit the country at once--and bury my sorrow in the congenial gloom of a Colonial Bishopric.

ALEXIS. My excellent old friend! (Taking his hand--then turning to Mr. Wells, who has entered with Lady Sangazure.) Oh, Mr. Wells, what, what is to be done?

WELLS. I do not know--and yet--there is one means by which this spell may be removed.

ALEXIS. Name it--oh, name it!

WELLS. Or you or I must yield up his life to Ahrimanes. I would rather it were you. I should have no hesitation in sacrificing my own life to spare yours, but we take stock next week, and it would not be fair on the Co.

ALEXIS. True. Well, I am ready!

ALINE. No, no--Alexis--it must not be! Mr. Wells, if he must die that all may be restored to their old loves, what is to become of me? I should be left out in the cold, with no love to be restored to!

WELLS. True--I did not think of that. (To the others) My friends, I appeal to you, and I will leave the decision in your hands.

FINALE

WELLS. Or I or he
 Must die!
 Which shall it be?
 Reply!

SIR M. Die thou!
 Thou art the cause of all offending!

DR. D. Die thou!
 Yield to this decree unbending!

ALL. Die thou!

WELLS. So be it! I submit! My fate is sealed.
 To public execration thus I yield!

(Falls on trap)

Be happy all--leave me to my despair--
I go--it matters not with whom--or where!

(Gong)

(All quit their present partners, and rejoin their old lovers.
Sir Marmaduke leaves Mrs. Partlet, and goes to Lady Sangazure.
Aline leaves Dr. Daly, and goes to Alexis. Dr. Daly leaves
Aline, and goes to Constance. Notary leaves Constance, and goes
to Mrs. Partlet. All the Chorus makes a corresponding change.)

ALL

GENTLEMEN. Oh, my adored one!
LADIES. Unmingled joy!
GENTLEMEN. Ecstatic rapture!
LADIES. Beloved boy!

(They embrace)

SIR M. Come to my mansion, all of you! At least
 We'll crown our rapture with another feast!

ENSEMBLE

SIR MARMADUKE, LADY SANGAZURE, ALEXIS, and ALINE

Now to the banquet we press--
Now for the eggs and the ham--
Now for the mustard and cress--
Now for the strawberry jam!

CHORUS. Now to the banquet, etc.

DR. DALY, CONSTANCE, NOTARY, and MRS. PARTLET

Now for the tea of our host--
Now for the rollicking bun--
Now for the muffin and toast--
Now for the gay Sally Lunn!

CHORUS. Now for the tea, etc.

(General Dance)

(During the symphony Mr. Wells sinks through the trap, amid red
fire.)

CURTAIN

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Sorcerer's Song

Oh! my name is JOHN WELLINGTON WELLS -
I'm a dealer in magic and spells,
In blessings and curses,
And ever-filled purses,
In prophecies, witches, and knells!
If you want a proud foe to "make tracks" -
If you'd melt a rich uncle in wax -
You've but to look in
On our resident Djinn,
Number seventy, Simmery Axe.

We've a first-class assortment of magic;
And for raising a posthumous shade
With effects that are comic or tragic,
There's no cheaper house in the trade.
Love-philtre - we've quantities of it;
And for knowledge if any one burns,
We keep an extremely small prophet, a prophet
Who brings us unbounded returns:
For he can prophesy
With a wink OF his eye,
Peep with security
Into futurity,
Sum up your history,
Clear up a mystery,
Humour proclivity
For a nativity.
With mirrors so magical,
Tetrapods tragical,
Bogies spectacular,
Answers oracular,
Facts astronomical,
Solemn or comical,
And, if you want it, he
Makes a reduction on taking a quantity!
Oh!
If any one anything lacks,
He'll find it all ready in stacks,
If he'll only look in

On the resident Djinn,
Number seventy, Simmery Axe!

He can raise you hosts,
Of ghosts,
And that without reflectors;
And creepy things
With wings,
And gaunt and grisly spectres!
He can fill you crowds
Of shrouds,
And horrify you vastly;
He can rack your brains
With chains,
And gibberings grim and ghastly.
Then, if you plan it, he
Changes organity
With an urbanity,
Full of Satanity,
Vexes humanity
With an inanity
Fatal to vanity -
Driving your foes to the verge of insanity.
Barring tautology,
In demonology,
'Lectro biology,
Mystic nosology,
Spirit philology,
High class astrology,
Such is his knowledge, he
Isn't the man to require an apology
Oh!
My name is JOHN WELLINGTON WELLS,
I'm a dealer in magic and spells,
In blessings and curses,
And ever-filled purses -
In prophecies, witches, and knells.
If any one anything lacks,
He'll find it all ready in stacks,
If he'll only look in
On the resident Djinn,
Number seventy, Simmery Axe!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Story Of Prince Agib

STRIKE the concertina's melancholy string!
Blow the spirit-stirring harp like anything!
Let the piano's martial blast
Rouse the Echoes of the Past,
For of AGIB, PRINCE OF TARTARY, I sing!

Of AGIB, who, amid Tartaric scenes,
Wrote a lot of ballet music in his teens:
His gentle spirit rolls
In the melody of souls -
Which is pretty, but I don't know what it means.

Of AGIB, who could readily, at sight,
Strum a march upon the loud Theodolite.
He would diligently play
On the Zoetrope all day,
And blow the gay Pantechnicon all night.

One winter - I am shaky in my dates -
Came two starving Tartar minstrels to his gates;
Oh, ALLAH be obeyed,
How infernally they played!
I remember that they called themselves the "Oaits."

Oh! that day of sorrow, misery, and rage,
I shall carry to the Catacombs of Age,
Photographically lined
On the tablet of my mind,
When a yesterday has faded from its page!

Alas! PRINCE AGIB went and asked them in;
Gave them beer, and eggs, and sweets, and scent, and tin.
And when (as snobs would say)
They had "put it all away,"
He requested them to tune up and begin.

Though its icy horror chill you to the core,
I will tell you what I never told before, -
The consequences true

Of that awful interview,
FOR I LISTENED AT THE KEYHOLE IN THE DOOR!

They played him a sonata - let me see!
"MEDULLA OBLONGATA" - key of G.
Then they began to sing
That extremely lovely thing,
SCHERZANDO! MA NON TROPPO, PPP."

He gave them money, more than they could count,
Scent from a most ingenious little fount,
More beer, in little kegs,
Many dozen hard-boiled eggs,
And goodies to a fabulous amount.

Now follows the dim horror of my tale,
And I feel I'm growing gradually pale,
For, even at this day,
Though its sting has passed away,
When I venture to remember it, I quail!

The elder of the brothers gave a squeal,
All-overish it made me for to feel;
"Oh, PRINCE," he says, says he,
"IF A PRINCE INDEED YOU BE,
I've a mystery I'm going to reveal!

"Oh, listen, if you'd shun a horrid death,
To what the gent who's speaking to you saith:
No 'Oaits' in truth are we,
As you fancy that we be,
For (ter-remble!) I am ALECK - this is BETH!"

Said AGIB, "Oh! accursed of your kind,
I have heard that ye are men of evil mind!"
BETH gave a dreadful shriek -
But before he'd time to speak
I was mercilessly collared from behind.

In number ten or twelve, or even more,
They fastened me full length upon the floor.
On my face extended flat,

I was walloped with a cat
For listening at the keyhole of a door.

Oh! the horror of that agonizing thrill!
(I can feel the place in frosty weather still).
For a week from ten to four
I was fastened to the floor,
While a mercenary wopped me with a will

They branded me and broke me on a wheel,
And they left me in an hospital to heal;
And, upon my solemn word,
I have never never heard
What those Tartars had determined to reveal.

But that day of sorrow, misery, and rage,
I shall carry to the Catacombs of Age,
Photographically lined
On the tablet of my mind,
When a yesterday has faded from its page.

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Suicide's Grave

On a tree by a river a little tomtit
Sang "Willow, titwillow, titwillow!"
And I said to him, "Dicky-bird, why do you sit
Singing 'Willow, titwillow, titwillow'?
Is it weakness of intellect, birdie?" I cried,
"Or a rather tough worm in your little inside?"
With a shake of his poor little head he replied,
"Oh, willow, titwillow, titwillow!"

He slapped at his chest, as he sat on that bough,
Singing "Willow, titwillow, titwillow!"
And a cold perspiration bespangled his brow,
Oh, willow, titwillow, titwillow!
He sobbed and he sighed, and a gurgle he gave,
Then he threw himself into the billowy wave,
And an echo arose from the suicide's grave -
"Oh, willow, titwillow, titwillow!"

Now I feel just as sure as I'm sure that my name
Isn't Willow, titwillow, titwillow,
That 'twas blighted affection that made him exclaim,
"Oh, willow, titwillow, titwillow!"
And if you remain callous and obdurate, I
Shall perish as he did, and you will know why,
Though I probably shall not exclaim as I die,
"Oh, willow, titwillow, titwillow!"

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Susceptible Chancellor

The law is the true embodiment
Of everything that's excellent.
It has no kind of fault or flaw,
And I, my lords, embody the Law.
The constitutional guardian I
Of pretty young Wards in Chancery,
All very agreeable girls - and none
Is over the age of twenty-one.
A pleasant occupation for
A rather susceptible Chancellor!

But though the compliment implied
Inflates me with legitimate pride,
It nevertheless can't be denied
That it has its inconvenient side.
For I'm not so old, and not so plain,
And I'm quite prepared to marry again,
But there'd be the deuce to pay in the Lords
If I fell in love with one of my Wards:
Which rather tries my temper, for
I'm SUCH a susceptible Chancellor!

And every one who'd marry a Ward
Must come to me for my accord:
So in my court I sit all day,
Giving agreeable girls away,
With one for him - and one for he -
And one for you - and one for ye -
And one for thou - and one for thee -
But never, oh never a one for me!
Which is exasperating, for
A highly susceptible Chancellor!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Tangled Skein

Try we life-long, we can never
Straighten out life's tangled skein,
Why should we, in vain endeavour,
Guess and guess and guess again?
Life's a pudding full of plums
Care's a canker that benumbs.
Wherefore waste our elocution
On impossible solution?
Life's a pleasant institution,
Let us take it as it comes!

Set aside the dull enigma,
We shall guess it all too soon;
Failure brings no kind of stigma -
Dance we to another tune!
String the lyre and fill the cup,
Lest on sorrow we should sup;
Hop and skip to Fancy's fiddle,
Hands across and down the middle -
Life's perhaps the only riddle
That we shrink from giving up!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Three Kings Of Chickeraboo

There were three niggers of Chickeraboo -
PACIFICO, BANG-BANG, POPCHOP - who
Exclaimed, one terribly sultry day,
"Oh, let's be kings in a humble way."

The first was a highly-accomplished "bones,"
The next elicited banjo tones,
The third was a quiet, retiring chap,
Who danced an excellent break-down "flap."

"We niggers," said they, "have formed a plan
By which, whenever we like, we can
Extemporise kingdoms near the beach,
And then we'll collar a kingdom each.

"Three casks, from somebody else's stores,
Shall represent our island shores,
Their sides the ocean wide shall lave,
Their heads just topping the briny wave.

"Great Britain's navy scours the sea,
And everywhere her ships they be;
She'll recognise our rank, perhaps,
When she discovers we're Royal Chaps.

"If to her skirts you want to cling,
It's quite sufficient that you're a king;
She does not push inquiry far
To learn what sort of king you are."

A ship of several thousand tons,
And mounting seventy-something guns,
Ploughed, every year, the ocean blue,
Discovering kings and countries new.

The brave REAR-ADMIRAL BAILEY PIP,
Commanding that magnificent ship,
Perceived one day, his glasses through,
The kings that came from Chickeraboo.

"Dear eyes!" said ADMIRAL PIP, "I see
Three flourishing islands on our lee.
And, bless me! most remarkable thing!
On every island stands a king!

"Come, lower the Admiral's gig," he cried,
"And over the dancing waves I'll glide;
That low obeisance I may do
To those three kings of Chickeraboo!"

The Admiral pulled to the islands three;
The kings saluted him graciousLEE.
The Admiral, pleased at his welcome warm,
Unrolled a printed Alliance form.

"Your Majesty, sign me this, I pray -
I come in a friendly kind of way -
I come, if you please, with the best intents,
And QUEEN VICTORIA'S compliments."

The kings were pleased as they well could be;
The most retiring of the three,
In a "cellar-flap" to his joy gave vent
With a banjo-bones accompaniment.

The great REAR-ADMIRAL BAILEY PIP
Embarked on board his jolly big ship,
Blue Peter flew from his lofty fore,
And off he sailed to his native shore.

ADMIRAL PIP directly went
To the Lord at the head of the Government,
Who made him, by a stroke of a quill,
BARON DE PIPPE, OF PIPPETONNEVILLE.

The College of Heralds permission yield
That he should quarter upon his shield
Three islands, VERT, on a field of blue,
With the pregnant motto "Chickeraboo."

Ambassadors, yes, and attaches, too,

Are going to sail for Chickeraboo.
And, see, on the good ship's crowded deck,
A bishop, who's going out there on spec.

And let us all hope that blissful things
May come of alliance with darky kings,
And, may we never, whatever we do,
Declare a war with Chickeraboo!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Troubadour

A troubadour he played
Without a castle wall,
Within, a hapless maid
Responded to his call.

"Oh, willow, woe is me!
Alack and well-a-day!
If I were only free
I'd hide me far away!"

Unknown her face and name,
But this he knew right well,
The maiden's wailing came
From out a dungeon cell.

A hapless woman lay
Within that dungeon grim -
That fact, I've heard him say,
Was quite enough for him.

"I will not sit or lie,
Or eat or drink, I vow,
Till thou art free as I,
Or I as pent as thou."

Her tears then ceased to flow,
Her wails no longer rang,
And tuneful in her woe
The prisoned maiden sang:

"Oh, stranger, as you play,
I recognize your touch;
And all that I can say
Is, thank you very much."

He seized his clarion straight,
And blew thereat, until
A warden oped the gate.
"Oh, what might be your will?"

"I've come, Sir Knave, to see
The master of these halls:
A maid unwillingly
Lies prisoned in their walls."

With barely stifled sigh
That porter drooped his head,
With teardrops in his eye,
"A many, sir," he said.

He stayed to hear no more,
But pushed that porter by,
And shortly stood before
SIR HUGH DE PECKHAM RYE.

SIR HUGH he darkly frowned,
"What would you, sir, with me?"
The troubadour he downed
Upon his bended knee.

"I've come, DE PECKHAM RYE,
To do a Christian task;
You ask me what would I?
It is not much I ask.

"Release these maidens, sir,
Whom you dominion o'er -
Particularly her
Upon the second floor.

"And if you don't, my lord" -
He here stood bolt upright,
And tapped a tailor's sword -
"Come out, you cad, and fight!"

SIR HUGH he called - and ran
The warden from the gate:
"Go, show this gentleman
The maid in Forty-eight."

By many a cell they past,

And stopped at length before
A portal, bolted fast:
The man unlocked the door.

He called inside the gate
With coarse and brutal shout,
"Come, step it, Forty-eight!"
And Forty-eight stepped out.

"They gets it pretty hot,
The maidens what we cotch -
Two years this lady's got
For collaring a wotch."

"Oh, ah! - indeed - I see,"
The troubadour exclaimed -
"If I may make so free,
How is this castle named?"

The warden's eyelids fill,
And sighing, he replied,
"Of gloomy Pentonville
This is the female side!"

The minstrel did not wait
The Warden stout to thank,
But recollected straight
He'd business at the Bank.

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Two Majors

An excellent soldier who's worthy the name
Loves officers dashing and strict:
When good, he's content with escaping all blame,
When naughty, he likes to be licked.

He likes for a fault to be bullied and stormed,
Or imprisoned for several days,
And hates, for a duty correctly performed,
To be slavered with sickening praise.

No officer sickened with praises his CORPS
So little as MAJOR LA GUERRE -
No officer swore at his warriors more
Than MAJOR MAKREDI PREPERE.

Their soldiers adored them, and every grade
Delighted to hear their abuse;
Though whenever these officers came on parade
They shivered and shook in their shoes.

For, oh! if LA GUERRE could all praises withhold,
Why, so could MAKREDI PREPERE,
And, oh! if MAKREDI could bluster and scold,
Why, so could the mighty LA GUERRE.

"No doubt we deserve it - no mercy we crave -
Go on - you're conferring a boon;
We would rather be slanged by a warrior brave,
Than praised by a wretched poltroon!"

MAKREDI would say that in battle's fierce rage
True happiness only was met:
Poor MAJOR MAKREDI, though fifty his age,
Had never known happiness yet!

LA GUERRE would declare, "With the blood of a foe
No tippie is worthy to clink."
Poor fellow! he hadn't, though sixty or so,
Yet tasted his favourite drink!

They agreed at their mess - they agreed in the glass -
They agreed in the choice of their "set,"
And they also agreed in adoring, alas!
The Vivandiere, pretty FILLETTE.

Agreement, you see, may be carried too far,
And after agreeing all round
For years - in this soldierly "maid of the bar,"
A bone of contention they found!

It may seem improper to call such a pet -
By a metaphor, even - a bone;
But though they agreed in adoring her, yet
Each wanted to make her his own.

"On the day that you marry her," muttered PREPERE
(With a pistol he quietly played),
"I'll scatter the brains in your noddle, I swear,
All over the stony parade!"

"I cannot do THAT to you," answered LA GUERRE,
"Whatever events may befall;
But this I CAN do - IF YOU wed her, MON CHER!
I'll eat you, moustachios and all!"

The rivals, although they would never engage,
Yet quarrelled whenever they met;
They met in a fury and left in a rage,
But neither took pretty FILLETTE.

"I am not afraid," thought MAKREDI PREPERE:
"For country I'm ready to fall;
But nobody wants, for a mere Vivandiere,
To be eaten, moustachios and all!"

"Besides, though LA GUERRE has his faults, I'll allow
He's one of the bravest of men:
My goodness! if I disagree with him now,
I might disagree with him then."

"No coward am I," said LA GUERRE, "as you guess -

I sneer at an enemy's blade;
But I don't want PREPERE to get into a mess
For splashing the stony parade!"

One day on parade to PREPERE and LA GUERRE
Came CORPORAL JACOT DEBETTE,
And trembling all over, he prayed of them there
To give him the pretty FILLETTE.

"You see, I am willing to marry my bride
Until you've arranged this affair;
I will blow out my brains when your honours decide
Which marries the sweet Vivandiere!"

"Well, take her,' said both of them in a duet
(A favourite form of reply),
"But when I am ready to marry FILLETTE.
Remember you've promised to die!"

He married her then: from the flowery plains
Of existence the roses they cull:
He lived and he died with his wife; and his brains
Are reposing in peace in his skull.

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Two Ogres

Good children, list, if you're inclined,
And wicked children too -
This pretty ballad is designed
Especially for you.

Two ogres dwelt in Wickham Wold -
Each TRAITS distinctive had:
The younger was as good as gold,
The elder was as bad.

A wicked, disobedient son
Was JAMES M'ALPINE, and
A contrast to the elder one,
Good APPLEBODY BLAND.

M'ALPINE - brutes like him are few -
In greediness delights,
A melancholy victim to
Unchastened appetites.

Good, well-bred children every day
He ravenously ate, -
All boys were fish who found their way
Into M'ALPINE'S net:

Boys whose good breeding is innate,
Whose sums are always right;
And boys who don't expostulate
When sent to bed at night;

And kindly boys who never search
The nests of birds of song;
And serious boys for whom, in church,
No sermon is too long.

Contrast with JAMES'S greedy haste
And comprehensive hand,
The nice discriminating taste
Of APPLEBODY BLAND.

BLAND only eats bad boys, who swear -
Who CAN behave, but DON'T -
Disgraceful lads who say "don't care,"
And "shan't," and "can't," and "won't."

Who wet their shoes and learn to box,
And say what isn't true,
Who bite their nails and jam their frocks,
And make long noses too;

Who kick a nurse's aged shin,
And sit in sulky mopes;
And boys who twirl poor kittens in
Distracting zoetropes.

But JAMES, when he was quite a youth,
Had often been to school,
And though so bad, to tell the truth,
He wasn't quite a fool.

At logic few with him could vie;
To his peculiar sect
He could propose a fallacy
With singular effect.

So, when his Mentors said, "Expound -
Why eat good children - why?"
Upon his Mentors he would round
With this absurd reply:

"I have been taught to love the good -
The pure - the unalloyed -
And wicked boys, I've understood,
I always should avoid.

"Why do I eat good children - why?
Because I love them so!"
(But this was empty sophistry,
As your Papa can show.)

Now, though the learning of his friends

Was truly not immense,
They had a way of fitting ends
By rule of common sense.

"Away, away!" his Mentors cried,
"Thou uncongenial pest!
A quirk's a thing we can't abide,
A quibble we detest!

"A fallacy in your reply
Our intellect descries,
Although we don't pretend to spy
Exactly where it lies.

"In misery and penal woes
Must end a glutton's joys;
And learn how ogres punish those
Who dare to eat good boys.

"Secured by fether, cramp, and chain,
And gagged securely - so -
You shall be placed in Drury Lane,
Where only good lads go.

"Surrounded there by virtuous boys,
You'll suffer torture wus
Than that which constantly annoys
Disgraceful TANTALUS.

("If you would learn the woes that vex
Poor TANTALUS, down there,
Pray borrow of Papa an ex-
Purgated LEMPRIERE.)

"But as for BLAND who, as it seems,
Eats only naughty boys,
We've planned a recompense that teems
With gastronomic joys.

"Where wicked youths in crowds are stowed
He shall unquestioned rule,
And have the run of Hackney Road

Reformatory School!"

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Way Of Wooing

A maiden sat at her window wide,
Pretty enough for a Prince's bride,
Yet nobody came to claim her.
She sat like a beautiful picture there,
With pretty bluebells and roses fair,
And jasmine-leaves to frame her.
And why she sat there nobody knows;
But this she sang as she plucked a rose,
The leaves around her strewing:
"I've time to lose and power to choose;
'T is not so much the gallant who woos,
But the gallant's WAY of wooing!"

A lover came riding by awhile,
A wealthy lover was he, whose smile
Some maids would value greatly -
A formal lover, who bowed and bent,
With many a high-flown compliment,
And cold demeanour stately,
"You've still," said she to her suitor stern,
"The 'prentice-work of your craft to learn,
If thus you come a-cooing.
I've time to lose and power to choose;
'T is not so much the gallant who woos,
As the gallant's WAY of wooing!"

A second lover came ambling by -
A timid lad with a frightened eye
And a colour mantling highly.
He muttered the errand on which he'd come,
Then only chuckled and bit his thumb,
And simpered, simpered shyly.
"No," said the maiden, "go your way;
You dare but think what a man would say,
Yet dare to come a-suing!
I've time to lose and power to choose;
'T is not so much the gallant who woos,
As the gallant's WAY of wooing!"

A third rode up at a startling pace -
A suitor poor, with a homely face -
No doubts appeared to bind him.
He kissed her lips and he pressed her waist,
And off he rode with the maiden, placed
On a pillion safe behind him.
And she heard the suitor bold confide
This golden hint to the priest who tied
The knot there's no undoing;
With pretty young maidens who can choose,
'T is not so much the gallant who woos,
As the gallant's WAY of wooing!"

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Working Monarch

Rising early in the morning,
We proceed to light the fire,
Then our Majesty adorning
In its work-a-day attire,
We embark without delay
On the duties of the day.

First, we polish off some batches
Of political despatches,
And foreign politicians circumvent;
Then, if business isn't heavy,
We may hold a Royal LEVEE,
Or ratify some Acts of Parliament:
Then we probably review the household troops -
With the usual "Shaloo humps" and "Shaloo hoops!"
Or receive with ceremonial and state
An interesting Eastern Potentate.
After that we generally
Go and dress our private VALET -

(It's a rather nervous duty - he a touchy little man) -
Write some letters literary
For our private secretary -
(He is shaky in his spelling, so we help him if we can.)
Then, in view of cravings inner,
We go down and order dinner;
Or we polish the Regalia and the Coronation Plate -
Spend an hour in titivating
All our Gentlemen-in-Waiting;
Or we run on little errands for the Ministers of State.
Oh, philosophers may sing
Of the troubles of a King,
Yet the duties are delightful, and the privileges great;
But the privilege and pleasure
That we treasure beyond measure
Is to run on little errands for the Ministers of State!

After luncheon (making merry
On a bun and glass of sherry),

If we've nothing in particular to do,
We may make a Proclamation,
Or receive a Deputation -
Then we possibly create a Peer or two.
Then we help a fellow-creature on his path
With the Garter or the Thistle or the Bath:
Or we dress and toddle off in semi-State
To a festival, a function, or a FETE.
Then we go and stand as sentry
At the Palace (private entry),
Marching hither, marching thither, up and down and to and fro,
While the warrior on duty
Goes in search of beer and beauty
(And it generally happens that he hasn't far to go).
He relieves us, if he's able,
Just in time to lay the table.

Then we dine and serve the coffee; and at half-past twelve or one,
With a pleasure that's emphatic;
Then we seek our little attic
With the gratifying feeling that our duty has been done.
Oh, philosophers may sing
Of the troubles of a King,
But of pleasures there are many and of troubles there are none;
And the culminating pleasure
That we treasure beyond measure
Is the gratifying feeling that our duty has been done!

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Yarn Of The Nancy Bell

'Twas on the shores that round our coast
From Deal to Ramsgate span,
That I found alone on a piece of stone
An elderly naval man.

His hair was weedy, his beard was long,
And weedy and long was he,
And I heard this wight on the shore recite,
In a singular minor key:

"Oh, I am a cook and a captain bold,
And the mate of the NANCY brig,
And a bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig."

And he shook his fists and he tore his hair,
Till I really felt afraid,
For I couldn't help thinking the man had been drinking,
And so I simply said:

"Oh, elderly man, it's little I know
Of the duties of men of the sea,
And I'll eat my hand if I understand
However you can be

"At once a cook, and a captain bold,
And the mate of the NANCY brig,
And a bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig."

Then he gave a hitch to his trousers, which
Is a trick all seamen larn,
And having got rid of a thumping quid,
He spun this painful yarn:

"'Twas in the good ship NANCY BELL
That we sailed to the Indian Sea,
And there on a reef we come to grief,
Which has often occurred to me.

"And pretty nigh all the crew was drowned
(There was seventy-seven o' soul),
And only ten of the NANCY'S men
Said 'Here!' to the muster-roll.

"There was me and the cook and the captain bold,
And the mate of the NANCY brig,
And the bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig.

"For a month we'd neither wittles nor drink,
Till a-hungry we did feel,
So we drewed a lot, and, accordin' shot
The captain for our meal.

"The next lot fell to the NANCY'S mate,
And a delicate dish he made;
Then our appetite with the midshipmite
We seven survivors stayed.

"And then we murdered the bo'sun tight,
And he much resembled pig;
Then we wittled free, did the cook and me,
On the crew of the captain's gig.

"Then only the cook and me was left,
And the delicate question, 'Which
Of us two goes to the kettle?' arose,
And we argued it out as sich.

"For I loved that cook as a brother, I did,
And the cook he worshipped me;
But we'd both be blowed if we'd either be stowed
In the other chap's hold, you see.

"'I'll be eat if you dines off me,' says TOM;
'Yes, that,' says I, 'you'll be, -
'I'm boiled if I die, my friend,' quoth I;
And 'Exactly so,' quoth he.

"Says he, 'Dear JAMES, to murder me

Were a foolish thing to do,
For don't you see that you can't cook ME,
While I can - and will - cook YOU!

"So he boils the water, and takes the salt
And the pepper in portions true
(Which he never forgot), and some chopped shalot.
And some sage and parsley too.

"Come here,' says he, with a proper pride,
Which his smiling features tell,
'T will soothing be if I let you see
How extremely nice you'll smell.'

"And he stirred it round and round and round,
And he sniffed at the foaming froth;
When I ups with his heels, and smothers his squeals
In the scum of the boiling broth.

"And I eat that cook in a week or less,
And - as I eating be
The last of his chops, why, I almost drops,
For a wessel in sight I see!

"And I never larf, and I never smile,
And I never lark nor play,
But sit and croak, and a single joke
I have - which is to say:

"Oh, I am a cook and a captain bold,
And the mate of the NANCY brig,
And a bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig!"

William Schwenck Gilbert

Thespis: Act I

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

GODS

Jupiter, Aged Diety
Apollo, Aged Diety
Mars, Aged Diety
Diana, Aged Diety
Mercury

THESPIANS

Thespis
Sillimon
Timidon
Tipseion
Preposteros
Stupidas
Sparkeion
Nicemis
Pretteia
Daphne
Cymon

ACT I - Ruined Temple on the Summit of Mount Olympus

[Scene--The ruins of the The Temple of the Gods, on summit of Mount Olympus. Picturesque shattered columns, overgrown with ivy, etc. R. and L. with entrances to temple (ruined) R. Fallen columns on the stage. Three broken pillars 2 R.E. At the back of stage is the approach from the summit of the mountain. This should be "practicable" to enable large numbers of people to ascend and descend. In the distance are the summits of adjacent mountains. At first all this is concealed by a thick fog, which clears presently. Enter (through fog) Chorus of Stars coming off duty as fatigued with their night's work]

CHO. Through the night, the constellations,
Have given light from various stations.
When midnight gloom falls on all nations,
We will resume our occupations.

SOLO. Our light, it's true, is not worth mention;
What can we do to gain attention.
When night and noon with vulgar glaring
A great big moon is always flaring.

[During chorus, enter Diana, an elderly goddess. She is carefully wrapped up in cloaks, shawls, etc. A hood is over her head, a respirator in her mouth, and galoshes on her feet. During the chorus, she takes these things off and discovers herself dressed in the usual costume of the Lunar Diana, the goddess of the moon.

DIA. [shuddering] Ugh. How cold the nights are. I don't know how it is, but I seem to feel the night air a good deal more than I used to. But it is time for the sun to be rising. [Calls] Apollo.

AP. [within] Hollo.

DIA. I've come off duty--it's time for you to be getting up.

[Enter Apollo. He is an elderly "buck" with an air of assumed juvenility and is dressed in dressing gown and smoking cap.

AP. [yawning] I shan't go out today. I was out yesterday and the day before and I want a little rest. I don't know how it is, but I seem to feel my work a great deal more than I used to.

DIA. I am sure these short days can't hurt you. Why you don't rise til six and you're in bed again by five; you should have a turn at my work and see how you like that--out all night.

AP. My dear sister, I don't envy you--though I remember when I did--but that was when I was a younger sun. I don't think I'm quite well. Perhaps a little change of air will do me good. I've a mind to show myself in London this winter. They'll be very glad to see me. No. I shan't go out today. I shall send them this fine, thick wholesome fog and they won't miss me. It's the best substitute for a blazing sun--and like most substitutes, nothing

at all like the real thing.

[Fog clears away and discovers the scene described. Hurried music. Mercury shoots up from behind precipice at the back of stage. He carries several parcels afterwards described. He sits down, very much fatigued.]

MER. Home at last. A nice time I've had of it.

DIA. You young scamp you've been out all night again. This is the third time you've been out this week.

MER. Well you're a nice one to blow me up for that.

DIA. I can't help being out all night.

MER. And I can't help being down all night. The nature of Mercury requires that he should go down when the sun sets, and rise again when the sun rises.

DIA. And what have you been doing?

MER. Stealing on commission. There's a set of false teeth and a box of Life Pills for Jupiter--an invisible peruke and a bottle of hair dye--that's for Apollo--a respirator and a pair of galoshes--that's for Cupid--a full bottomed chignon, some auricomous fluid, a box of pearl-powder, a pot of rouge, and a hare's foot--that's for Venus.

DIA. Stealing. You ought to be ashamed of yourself.

MER. Oh, as the god of thieves I must do something to justify my position.

DI AP. [contemptuously] Your position.

MER. Oh, I know it's nothing to boast of even on earth. Up here, it's simply contemptible. Now that you gods are too old for your work, you've made me the miserable drudge of Olympus--groom, valet, postman, butler, commissionaire, maid of all work, parish beadle, and original dustman.

AP. Your Christmas boxes ought to be something considerable.

MER. They ought to be but they're not. I'm treated abominably. I make everybody and I'm nobody. I go everywhere and I'm nowhere. I do everything and I'm nothing. I've made thunder for Jupiter, odes for Apollo, battles for Mars, and love for Venus. I've married couples for Humen and six weeks afterwards, I've divorced them for Cupid, and in return I get all the kicks while they pocket the halfpence. And in compensation for robbing me of the halfpence in question, what have they done for me.

AP. Why they've--. they've made you the god of thieves.

MER. Very self denying of them. There isn't one of them who hasn't a better claim to the distinction than I have.

Oh, I'm the celestial drudge,
For morning to night I must stop at it.
On errands all day I must trudge,
And stick to my work til I drop at it.
In summer I get up at one.
(As a good-natured donkey I'm ranked for it.)
then I go and I light up the sun.
And Phoebus Apollo gets thanked for it.
Well, well, it's the way of the world.
And will be through all its futurity.
Though noodles are baroned and earled,
There's nothing for clever obscurity.

I'm the slave of the Gods, neck and heels,
And I'm bound to obey, though I rate at 'em.
And I not only order their meals,
But I cook 'em and serve'em and wait at 'em.
Then I make all their nectar, I do.
(What a terrible liquor to rack us is.)
And whenever I mix them a brew,
Why all the thanksgivings are Bacchus's.
Well, well, it's the way of the world, etc.....

The reading and writing I teach.
And spelling-books many I've edited.
And for bringing those arts within reach,

That donkey Minerva gets credited.
Then I scrape at the stars with a knife,
And plate-powder the moon (on the days for it).
And I hear all the world and his wife
Awarding Diana the praise for it.
Well, well, it's the way of the world, etc....

[After song--very loud and majestic music is heard]

DIA and MER [looking off] Why, who's this? Jupiter, by Jove.

[Enter Jupiter, an extremely old man, very decrepit, with very thin straggling white beard, he wears a long braided dressing gown, handsomely trimmed, and a silk night-cap on his head. Mercury falls back respectfully as he enters.]

JUP. Good day, Diana. Ah, Apollo. Well, well, well, what's the matter? What's the matter?

DIA. Why that young scamp Mercury says that we do nothing, and leave all the duties of Olympus to him. Will you believe it, he actually says that our influence on earth is dropping down to nil.

JUP. Well, well. Don't be hard on the lad. To tell you the truth, I'm not sure that he's far wrong. Don't let it go any further, but, between ourselves, the sacrifices and votive offerings have fallen off terribly of late. Why, I can remember the time when people offered us human sacrifices, no mistake about it, human sacrifices. Think of that.

DIA. Ah. Those good old days.

JUP. Then it fell off to oxen, pigs, and sheep.

AP. Well, there are worse things than oxen, pigs and sheep.

JUP. So I've found to my cost. My dear sir, between ourselves, it's dropped off from one thing to another until it has positively dwindled down to preserved Australian beef. What do you think of that?

AP. I don't like it at all.

JUP. You won't mention it. It might go further.

DIA. It couldn't fare worse.

JUP. In short, matters have come to such a crisis that there's no mistake about it--something must be done to restore our influence, the only question is, what?

MER. [Coming forward in great alarm. Enter Mars]

Oh incident unprecedented.

I hardly can believe it's true.

MARS. Why, bless the boy, he's quite demented.

Why, what's the matter, sir, with you?

AP. Speak quickly, or you'll get a warming.

MER. Why, mortals up the mount are swarming

Our temple on Olympus storming,

In hundreds--aye in thousands, too.

ALL. Goodness gracious

How audacious

Earth is spacious

Why come here?

Our impeding

Their proceeding

Were good breeding

That is clear.

DIA. Jupiter, hear my plea.

Upon the mount if they light.

There'll be an end of me.

I won't be seen by daylight.

AP. Tartarus is the place

These scoundrels you should send to--

Should they behold my face.

My influence there's an end to.

JUP. [looking over precipice]
What fools to give themselves
so much exertion

DIA. A government survey I'll make assertion.

AP. Perhaps the Alpine clubs their diversion.

MER. They seem to be more like a "Cook's" excursion.

ALL. Goodness gracious, etc.

AP. If, mighty Jove, you value your existence,
Send them a thunderbolt with your regards.

JUP. My thunderbolts, though valid at a distance,
Are not effective at a hundred yards.

MER. Let the moon's rays, Diana, strike 'em flighty,
Make 'em all lunatics in various styles.

DIA. My lunar rays unhappily are mighty
Only at many hundred thousand miles.

ALL. Goodness gracious, etc...

[Exeunt Jupiter, Apollo, Diana, and Mercury into ruined temple]

[Enter Sparkeion and Nicemis climbing mountain at back.]

SPAR. Here we are at last on the very summit, and we've left the
others ever so far behind. Why, what's this?

NICE. A ruined palace. A palace on the top of a mountain. I
wonder who lives here? Some mighty kind, I dare say, with wealth
beyond all counting who came to live up here--

SPAR. To avoid his creditors. It's a lovely situation for a
country house though it's very much out of repair.

NICE. Very inconvenient situation.

SPAR. Inconvenient.

NICE. Yes, how are you to get butter, milk, and eggs up here? No pigs, no poultry, no postman. Why, I should go mad.

SPAR. What a dear little practical mind it is. What a wife you will make.

NICE. Don't be too sure--we are only partly married--the marriage ceremony lasts all day.

SPAR. I have no doubt at all about it. We shall be as happy as a king and queen, though we are only a strolling actor and actress.

NICE. It's very nice of Thespis to celebrate our marriage day by giving the company a picnic on this lovely mountain.

SPAR. And still more kind to allow us to get so much ahead of all the others. Discreet Thespis. [kissing her]

NICE,. There now, get away, do. Remember the marriage ceremony is not yet completed.

SPAR. But it would be ungrateful to Thespis's discretion not to take advantage of it by improving the opportunity.

NICE. Certainly not; get away.

SPAR. On second thought the opportunity's so good it don't admit of improvement. There. [kisses her]

NICE. How dare you kiss me before we are quite married?

SPAR. Attribute it to the intoxicating influence of the mountain air.

NICE. Then we had better do down again. It is not right to expose ourselves to influences over which we have no control.

SPAR. Here far away from all the world,
Dissension and derision,
With Nature's wonders all unfurled

To our delighted vision,
With no one here
(At least in sight)
To interfere
With our delight,
And two fond lovers sever,
Oh do not free,
Thine hand from mine,
I swear to thee
My love is ever thine
For ever and for ever.

NICE. On mountain top the air is keen,
And most exhilarating,
And we say things we do not mean
In moments less elating.
So please to wait
For thoughts that crop,
En tete-a-tete,
On mountain top,
May not exactly tally
With those that you
May entertain,
Returning to
The sober plain
Of yon relaxing valley

SPAR. Very well--if you won't have anything to say to me, I know who will.

NICE. Who will?

SPAR. Daphne will.

NICE. Daphne would flirt with anybody.

SPAR. Anybody would flirt with Daphne. She is quite as pretty as you and has twice as much back-hair.

NICE. She has twice as much money, which may account for it.

SPAR. At all events, she has appreciation. She likes good looks.

NICE. We all like what we haven;t got.

SPAR. She keeps her eyes open.

NICE. Yes--one of them.

SPAR. Which one.

NICE. The one she doesn't wink with.

SPAR. Well, I was engaged to her for six months and if she still makes eyes at me, you must attribute it to force of habit. Besides--remember--we are only half-married at present.

NICE. I suppose you mean that you are going to treat me as shamefully as you treated her. Very well, break it off if you like. I shall not offer any objection. Thespis used to be very attentive to me. I'd just as soon be a manager's wife as a fifth-rate actor's.

[Chorus heard, at first below, then enter Daphne, Pretteia, Preposteros, Stupidas, Tipseion, Cymon, and other members of Thespis's company climbing over rocks at back. All carry small baskets.]

CHO. [with dance] Climbing over rocky mountain
 Skipping rivulet and fountain,
 Passing where the willows quiver
 By the ever rolling river,
 Swollen with the summer rain.
 Threading long and leafy mazes,
 Dotted with unnumbered daisies,
 Scaling rough and rugged passes,
 Climb the hearty lads and lasses,
 Til the mountain-top they gain.

FIRST VOICE. Fill the cup and tread the measure
 Make the most of fleeting leisure.
 Hail it as a true ally
 Though it perish bye and bye.

SECOND VOICE. Every moment brings a treasure
Of its own especial pleasure,
Though the moments quickly die,
Greet them gaily as they fly.

THIRD VOICE. Far away from grief and care,
High up in the mountain air,
Let us live and reign alone,
In a world that's all our own.

FOURTH VOICE. Here enthroned in the sky,
Far away from mortal eye,
We'll be gods and make decrees,
Those may honor them who please.

CHO. Fill the cup and tread the measure...etc.

[After Chorus and Couples enter, Thespis climbing over rocks]

THES. Bless you, my people, bless you. Let the revels commence.
After all, for thorough, unconstrained unconventional enjoyment
give me a picnic.

PREP. [very gloomily] Give him a picnic, somebody.

THES. Be quiet, Preposterous. Don't interrupt.

PREP. Ha. Ha. Shut up again. But no matter.

[Stupidas endeavors, in pantomime, to reconcile him. Throughout
the scene Prep shows symptoms of breaking out into a furious
passion, and Stupidas does all he can to pacify and restrain
him.]

THES. The best of a picnic is that everybody contributes what he
pleases, and nobody knows what anybody else has brought til the
last moment. Now, unpack everybody and let's see what there is
for everybody.

NICE. I have brought you--a bottle of soda water--for the claret-
cup.

DAPH. I have brought you--lettuce for the lobster salad.

SPAR. A piece of ice--for the claret-cup.

PRETT. A bottle of vinegar--for the lobster salad.

CYMON. A bunch of burrage for the claret-cup.

TIPS. A hard boiled egg--for the lobster salad.

STUP. One lump of sugar for the claret-cup.

PREP. He has brought one lump of sugar for the claret-cup? Ha. Ha. Ha. [laughing melodramatically]

STUP. Well, Preposteros, what have you brought?

PREP. I have brought two lumps of the very best salt for the lobster salad.

THES. Oh--is that all?

PREP. All. Ha. Ha. He asks if it is all. {Stup. consoles him}

THES. But, I say--this is capital so far as it goes. Nothing could be better, but it doesn't go far enough. The claret, for instance. I don't insist on claret--or a lobster--I don't insist on lobster, but a lobster salad without a lobster, why it isn't lobster salad. Here, Tipseion.

TIP. [a very drunken, bloated fellow, dressed, however, with scrupulous accuracy and wearing a large medal around his neck] My master. [Falls on his knees to Thes. and kisses his robe.]

THES. Get up--don't be a fool. Where's the claret? We arranged last week that you were to see to that.

TIPS. True, dear master. But then I was a drunkard.

THES. You were.

TIPS. You engaged me to play convivial parts on the strength of

my personal appearance.

THES. I did.

TIPS. Then you found that my habits interfered with my duties as low comedian.

THES. True.

TIPS. You said yesterday that unless I took the pledge you would dismiss me from your company.

THES. Quite so.

TIPS. Good. I have taken it. It is all I have taken since yesterday. My preserver. [embraces him]

THES. Yes, but where's the wine?

TIPS. I left it behind that I might not be tempted to violate my pledge.

PREP. Minion. [Attempts to get at him, is restrained by Stupidas]

THES. Now, Preposterous, what is the matter with you?

PREP. It is enough that I am down-trodden in my profession. I will not submit to imposition out of it. It is enough that as your heavy villain I get the worst of it every night in a combat of six. I will not submit to insult in the day time. I have come out. Ha. Ha. to enjoy myself.

THES. But look here, you know--virtue only triumphs at night from seven to ten--vice gets the best of it during the other twenty one hours. Won't that satisfy you? [Stupidas endeavours to pacify him.]

PREP. [Irritated to Stupidas] Ye are odious to my sight. Get out of it.

STUP. [In great terror] What have I done?

THES. Now what is it. Preposterous, what is it?

PREP. I a -- hate him and would have his life.

THES. [to Stup.] That's it--he hates you and would have your life. Now go and be merry.

STUP. Yes, but why does he hate me?

THES. Oh--exactly. [to Prep.] Why do you hate him?

PREP. Because he is a minion.

THES. He hates you because you are a minion. It explains itself. Now go and enjoy yourselves. Ha. Ha. It is well for those who can laugh--let them do so--there is no extra charge. The light-hearted cup and the convivial jest for them--but for me--what is there for me?

SILLI. There is some claret-cup and lobster salad [handing some]

THES. [taking it] Thank you. [Resuming] What is there for me but anxiety--ceaseless gnawing anxiety that tears at my very vitals and rends my peace of mind asunder? There is nothing whatever for me but anxiety of the nature I have just described. The charge of these thoughtless revellers is my unhappy lot. It is not a small charge, and it is rightly termed a lot because there are many. Oh why did the gods make me a manager?

SILL. [as guessing a riddle] Why did the gods make him a manager?

SPAR. Why did the gods make him a manager.

DAPH. Why did the gods make him a manager?

PRETT. Why did the gods make him a manager?

THES. No--no--what are you talking about? What do you mean?

DAPH. I've got it--no don't tell us.

ALL. No--no--because--because

THES. [annoyed] It isn't a conundrum. It's misanthropical question.

DAPH. [Who is sitting with Spar. to the annoyance of Nice. who is crying alone] I'm sure I don't know. We do not want you. Don't distress yourself on our account--we are getting on very comfortably--aren't we Sparkeion.

SPAR. We are so happy that we don't miss the lobster or the claret. What are lobster and claret compared with the society of those we love? [embracing Daphne.]

DAPH. Why, Nicemis, love, you are eating nothing. Aren't you happy dear?

NICE. [spitefully] You are quite welcome to my share of everything. I intend to console myself with the society of my manager. [takes Thespis' arm affectionately].

THES. Here I say--this won't do, you know--I can't allow it--at least before my company--besides, you are half-married to Sparkeion. Sparkeion, here's your half-wife impairing my influence before my company. Don't you know the story of the gentleman who undermined his influence by associating with his inferiors?

ALL. Yes, yes--we know it.

PREP. [formally] I do not know it. It's ever thus. Doomed to disappointment from my earliest years. [Stup. endeavours to console him]

THES. There--that's enough. Preposterous--you shall hear it.

I once knew a chap who discharged a function
On the North South East West Diddlesex Junction.
He was conspicuous exceeding,
For his affable ways, and his easy breeding.
Although a chairman of directions,
He was hand in glove with the ticket inspectors.
He tipped the guards with brand new fivers,

And sang little songs to the engine drivers.
'Twas told to me with great compunction,
By one who had discharged with unction
A chairman of directors function
On the North South East West Diddlesex Junction.
Fol diddle, lol diddle, lol lol lay.

Each Christmas day he gave each stoker
A silver shovel and a golden poker.
He'd button holw flowers for the ticket sorters
And rich Bath-buns for the outside porters.
He'd moun the clerks on his first-class hunters,
And he build little villas for the road-side shunters,
And if any were fond of pigeon shooting,
He'd ask them down to his place at Tooting.
Twas told to me....etc.

In course of time there spread a rumour
That he did all this from a sense of humour.
So instead of signalling and stoking,
They gave themselves up to a course of joking.
Whenever they knew that he was riding,
They shunted his train on a lonely siding,
Or stopped all night in the middle of a tunnel,
On the plea that the boiler was a-coming through the funnel.
Twas told to me...etc.

It he wished to go to Perth or Stirling,
His train through several counties whirling,
Would set him down in a fit of larking,
At four a.m. in the wilds of Barking.
This pleased his whim and seemed to strike it,
But the general public did not like it.
The receipts fell, after a few repeatings,
And he got it hot at the annual meetings.
Twas told to me...etc.

He followed out his whim with vigour,
The shares went down to a nominal figure.
These are the sad results proceeding
From his affable ways and his easy breeding.
The line, with its rais and guards and peelers,

Was sold for a song to marine store dealers
The shareholders are all in the work'us,
And he sells pipe-lights in the Regent Circus.
Twas told to me...etc.

It's very hard. As a man I am naturally of an easy disposition.
As a manager, I am compelled to hold myself aloof, that my
influence may not be deteriorated. As a man I am inclined to
fraternize with the pauper--as a manager I am compelled to walk
around like this: Don't know yah. Don't know yah. Don't know yah.

[Strides haughtily about the stage. Jupiter, Mars, and Apollo, in
full Olympian costume appear on the three broken columns.
Thespians scream.]

JUP, MARS, AP. Presumptuous mortal.

THES. Don't know ya. Don't know yah.

JUP, MARS, AP. [seated on broken pillars] Presumptuous mortal.

THES. I do not know you. I do not know you.

JUP, MARS, AP. Presumptuous mortal.

THES. Remove this person.

[Stup and Prep seize Ap and Mars]

JUP. Stop, you evidently don't know me. Allow me to offer you my
card. [Throws flash paper]

THES. Ah yes, it's very pretty, but we don't want any at present.
When we do our Christmas piece, I'll let you know. [Changing his
manner] Look here, you know this is a private party and we
haven't the pleasure of your acquaintance. There are a good many
other mountains about, if you must have a mountain all to
yourself. Don't make me let myself down before my company.
[Resuming] Don't know yah, Don't know yah.

JUP. I am Jupiter, the king of the gods. This is Apollo. This is
Mars. [All kneel to them except Thespis]

THES. Oh. Then as I'm a respectable man, and rather particular about the company I keep, I think I'll go.

JUP. No--no--stop a bit. We want to consult you on a matter of great importance. There. Now we are alone. Who are you?

THES. I am Thespis of the Thessalian Theatres.

JUP. The very man we want. Now as a judge of what the public likes are you impressed with my appearance as father of the gods?

THES. Well to be candid with you, I am not. In fact I'm disappointed.

JUP. Disappointed?

THES. Yes, you see you're so much out of repair. No, you don't come up to my idea of the part. Bless you, I've played you often.

JUP. You have.

THES. To be sure I have.

JUP. And how have you dressed the part.

THES. Fine commanding party in the prime of life. Thunderbolt--full beard--dignified manner--a good deal of this sort of thin "Don't know ya. Don't know yah. Don't know yah.

JUP. [much affected] I--I'm very much obliged to you. It's very good of you. I--I--I used to be like that. I can't tell you how much I feel it. And do you find I'm an impressive character to play?

THES. Well no, I can't say you are. In fact we don't you you much out of burlesque.

JUP. Burlesque!

THES. Yes, it's a painful subject, drop it, drop it. The fact is, you are not the gods you were--you're behind your age.

JUP. Well, but what are we to do? We feel that we ought to do something, but we don't know what.

THES. Why don't you all go down to earth, incog, mingle with the world, hear and see what people think of you, and judge for yourselves as to the best means to take to restore your influence?

JUP. Ah, but what's to become of Olympus in the meantime?

THES. Lor' bless you, don't distress yourself about that. I've a very good company, used to take long parts on the shortest notice. Invest us with your powers and we'll fill your places till you return.

JUP. [aside] The offer is tempting. But suppose you fail?

THES. Fail. Oh, we never fail in our profession. We've nothing but great successes.

JUP. Then it's a bargain.

THES. It's a bargain. [they shake hands on it]

JUP. And that you may not be entirely without assistance, we will leave you Mercury and whenever you find yourself in a difficulty you can consult him. [enter Mercury]

JUP. So that's arranged--you take my place, my boy,
While we make trial of a new existence.
At length I will be able to enjoy
The pleasures I have envied from a distance.

MER. Compelled upon Olympus here to stop,
While the other gods go down to play the hero.
Don't be surprised if on this mountain top
You find your Mercury is down at zero.

AP. To earth away to join in mortal acts.
And gather fresh materials to write on.
Investigate more closely, several facts,

That I for centuries have thrown some light on.

DIA. I, as the modest moon with crescent bow.
Have always shown a light to nightly scandal,
I must say I'd like to go below,
And find out if the game is worth the candle.

[enter all thespians, summoned by Mercury]

MER. Here come your people.

THES. People better now.

THES. While mighty Jove goes down below
With all the other deities.
I fill his place and wear his "clo,"
The very part for me it is.
To mother earth to make a track,
They are all spurred and booted, too.
And you will fill, till they come back,
The parts you best are suited to.

CHO. Here's a pretty tale for future Iliads and Odysseys
Mortals are about to personate the gods and goddesses.
Now to set the world in order, we will work in unity.
Jupiter's perplexity is Thespis's opportunity.

SPAR. Phoebus am I, with golden ray,
The god of day, the god of day.
When shadowy night has held her sway,
I make the goddesses fly.
Tis mine the task to wake the world,
In slumber curled, in slumber curled.
By me her charms are all unfurled
The god of day am I.

CHO. The god of day, the god of day,
The park shall our Sparkeion play,
Ha Ha, etc.
The rarest fun and rarest fare
That ever fell to mortal share
Ha ha etc.

NICE. I am the moon, the lamp of night.
I show a light -- I show a light.
With radiant sheen I put to flight
The shadows of the sky.
By my fair rays, as you're aware,
Gay lovers swear--gay lovers swear,
While greybeards sleep away their care,
The lamp of night am I.

CHO. The lamp of night-the lamp of night.
Nicemis plays, to her delight.
Ha Ha Ha Ha.
The rarest fun and rarest fare,
That ever fell to mortal share,
Ha Ha Ha Ha

TIM. Mighty old Mars, the god of war,
I'm destined for--I'm destined for.
A terribly famous conqueror,
With sword upon his thigh.
When armies meet with eager shout
And warlike rout, and warlike rout,
You'll find me there without a doubt.
The God of War am I.

CHO. The god of war, the god of war
Great Timidon is destined for.
Ha Ha Ha Ha
The rest fun and rarest fare
That ever fell to mortal share
Ha Ha Ha Ha

DAPH. When, as the fruit of warlike deeds,
The soldier bleed, the soldier bleeds,
Calliope crowns heroic deeds,
With immortality.
From mere oblivion I reclaim
The soldier's name, the soldier's name
And write it on the roll of fame,
The muse of fame am I.

CHO. The muse of fame, the muse of fame.

Callipe is Daphne's name.

Ha Ha Ha Ha

The rarest fun and rarest fare,
That ever fell to mortal share.

Ha Ha Ha Ha.

TUTTI. Here's a pretty tale.

[Enter procession of old Gods, they come down very much
astonished at all they see, then passing by, ascent the platform
that leads to the descent at the back.]

GODS. We will go,

Down below,

Revels rare,

We will share.

Ha Ha Ha

With a gay

Holiday

All unknown,

And alone

Ha Ha Ha.

TUTTI. Here's a pretty tale.

[The gods, including those who have lately entered in procession
group themselves on rising ground at back. The Thespians kneeling
bid them farewell.]

William Schwenck Gilbert

Thespis: Act II

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

GODS

Jupiter, Aged Diety
Apollo, Aged Diety
Mars, Aged Diety
Diana, Aged Diety
Mercury

THESPIANS

Thespis
Sillimon
Timidon
Tipseion
Preposteros
Stupidas
Sparkeion
Nicemis
Pretteia
Daphne
Cymon

ACT II - The same Scene, with the Ruins Restored

SCENE-the same scene as in Act I with the exception that in place of the ruins that filled the foreground of the stage, the interior of a magnificent temple is seen showing the background of the scene of Act I, through the columns of the portico at the back. High throne. L.U.E. Low seats below it. All the substitute gods and goddesses [that is to say, Thespians] are discovered grouped in picturesque attitudes about the stage, eating and drinking, and smoking and singing the following verses.

CHO. Of all symposia
The best by half

Upon Olympus, here await us.
We eat ambrosia.
And nectar quaff,
It cheers but don't inebriate us.
We know the fallacies,
Of human food
So please to pass Olympian rosy,
We built up palaces,
Where ruins stood,
And find them much more snug and cosy.

SILL. To work and think, my dear,
Up here would be,
The height of conscientious folly.
So eat and drink, my dear,
I like to see,
Young people gay--young people jolly.
Olympian food my love,
I'll lay long odds,
Will please your lips--those rosy portals,
What is the good, my love
Of being gods,
If we must work like common mortals?

CHO. Of all symposia...etc.

[Exeunt all but Nicemis, who is dressed as Diana and Pretteia,
who is dressed as Venus. They take Sillimon's arm and bring him
down]

SILL. Bless their little hearts, I can refuse them nothing. As
the Olympian stage-manager I ought to be strict with them and
make them do their duty, but i can't. Bless their little hearts,
when I see the pretty little craft come sailing up to me with a
wheedling smile on their pretty little figure-heads, I can't turn
my back on 'em. I'm all bow, though I'm sure I try to be stern.

PRET. You certainly are a dear old thing.

SILL. She says I'm a dear old thing. Deputy Venus says I'm a
dear old thing.

NICE. It's her affectionate habit to describe everybody in those terms. I am more particular, but still even I am bound to admit that you are certainly a very dear old thing.

SILL. Deputy Venus says I'm a dear old thing, and Deputy Diana who is much more particular, endorses it. Who could be severe with such deputy divinities.

PRET. Do you know, I'm going to ask you a favour.

SILL. Venus is going to ask me a favour.

PRET. You see, I am Venus.

SILL. No one who saw your face would doubt it.

NICE. [aside] No one who knew her character would.

PRET. Well Venus, you know, is married to Mars.

SILL. To Vulcan, my dear, to Vulcan. The exact connubial relation of the different gods and goddesses is a point on which we must be extremely particular.

PRET. I beg your pardon--Venus is married to Mars.

NICE. If she isn't married to Mars, she ought to be.

SILL. Then that decides it--call it married to Mars.

PRET. Married to Vulcan or married to Mars, what does it signify?

SILL. My dear, it's a matter on which I have no personal feeling whatever.

PRET. So that she is married to someone.

SILL. Exactly. So that she is married to someone. Call it married to Mars.

PRET. Now here's my difficulty. Presumptios takes the place of Mars, and Presumptios is my father.

SILL. Then why object to Vulcan?

PRET. Because Vulcan is my grandfather.

SILL. But, my dear, what an objection. You are playing a part till the real gods return. That's all. Whether you are supposed to be married to your father--or your grandfather, what does it matter? This passion for realism is the curse of the stage.

PRET. That's all very well, but I can't throw myself into a part that has already lasted a twelvemonth, when I have to make love to my father. It interferes with my conception of the characters. It spoils the part.

SILL. Well, well. I'll see what can be done. [Exit Pretteia, L.U.E.] That's always the way with beginners, they've no imaginative power. A true artist ought to be superior to such considerations. [Nicemis comes down R.] Well, Nicemis, I should say, Diana, what's wrong with you? Don't you like your part?

NICE. Oh, immensely. It's great fun.

SILL. Don't you find it lonely out by yourself all night?

NICE. Oh, but I'm not alone all night.

SILL. But, I don't want to ask any injudicious questions, but who accompanies you?

NICE. Who? Why Sparkeion, of course.

SILL. Sparkeion? Well, but Sparkeion is Phoebus Apollo [enter Sparkeion] He's the sun, you know.

NICE. Of course he is. I should catch my death of cold, in the night air, if he didn't accompany me.

SPAR. My dear Sillimon, it would never do for a young lady to be out alone all night. It wouldn't be respectable.

SILL. There's a good deal of truth in that. But still--the sun--

at night--I don't like the idea. The original Diana always went out alone.

NICE. I hope the original Diana is no rule for me. After all, what does it matter?

SILL. To be sure--what does it matter?

SPAR. The sun at night, or in the daytime.

SILL. So that he shines. That's all that's necessary. [Exit Nicemis, R.U.E.] But poor Daphne, what will she say to this.

SPAR. Oh, Daphne can console herself; young ladies soon get over this sort of thing. Did you never hear of the young lady who was engaged to Cousin Robin?

SILL. Never.

SPAR. Then I'll sing it to you.

Little maid of Arcadee
Sat on Cousin Robin's knee,
Thought in form and face and limb,
Nobody could rival him.
He was brave and she was fair,
Truth they made a pretty pair.
Happy little maiden she--
Happy maid of Arcadee.

Moments fled as moments will
Happily enough, until
After, say, a month or two,
Robin did as Robins do.
Weary of his lover's play,
Jilted her and went away,
Wretched little maiden, she--
Wretched maid of Arcadee.

To her little home she crept,
There she sat her down and wept,
Maiden wept as maidens will--

Grew so thin and pale--until
Cousin Richard came to woo.
Then again the roses grew.
Happy little maiden she--
Happy maid of Arcadee. [Exit Sparkeion]

SILL. Well Mercury, my boy, you've had a year's experience of us here. How do we do it? I think we're rather an improvement on the original gods--don't you?

MER. Well, you see, there's a good deal to be said on both sides of the question; you are certainly younger than the original gods, and, therefore, more active. On the other hand, they are certainly older than you, and have, therefore, more experience. On the whole I prefer you, because your mistakes amuse me.

Olympus is now in a terrible muddle,
The deputy deities all are at fault
They splutter and splash like a pig in a puddle
And dickens a one of 'em's earning his salt.
For Thespis as Jove is a terrible blunder,
Too nervous and timid--too easy and weak--
Whenever he's called on to lighten or thunder,
The thought of it keeps him awake for a week.

Then mighty Mars hasn't the pluck of a parrot.
When left in the dark he will quiver and quail;
And Vulcan has arms that would snap like a carrot,
Before he could drive in a tenpenny nail.
Then Venus's freckles are very repelling,
And Venus should not have a quint in her eyes;
The learned Minerva is weak in her spelling,
And scatters her h's all over the skies.

Then Pluto in kindhearted tenderness erring,
Can't make up his mind to let anyone die--
The Times has a paragraph ever recurring,
"Remarkable incidence of longevity."
On some it has some as a serious onus,
to others it's quite an advantage--in short,
While ev're life office declares a big bonus,
The poor undertakers are all in the court.

Then Cupid, the rascal, forgetting his trade is
To make men and women impartially smart,
Will only shoot at pretty young ladies,
And never takes aim at a bachelor's heart.
The results of this freak--or whatever you term it--
Should cover the wicked young scamp with disgrace,
While ev'ry young man is as shy as a hermit,
Young ladies are popping all over the place.

This wouldn't much matter--for bashful and shymen,
When skillfully handled are certain to fall,
But, alas, that determined young bachelor Hymen
Refuses to wed anybody at all.
He swears that Love's flame is the vilest of arsons,
And looks upon marriage as quite a mistake;
Now what in the world's to become of the parsons,
And what of the artist who sugars the cake?

In short, you will see from the facts that I'm showing,
The state of the case is exceedingly sad;
If Thespis's people go on as they're going,
Olympus will certainly go to the bad.
From Jupiter downward there isn't a dab in it,
All of 'em quibble and shuffle and shirk,
A premier in Downing Street forming a cabinet,
Couldn't find people less fit for their work.

[enter Thespis L.U.E.]

THES. Sillimon, you can retire.

SILL. Sir, I--

THES. Don't pretend you can't when I say you can. I've seen you do it--go. [exit Sillimon bowing extravagantly. Thespis imitates him]Well, Mercury, I've been in power one year today.

MER. One year today. How do you like ruling the world?

THES. Like it. Why it's as straightforward as possible. Why there hasn't been a hitch of any kind since we came up here. Lor'

the airs you gods and goddesses give yourselves are perfectly sickening. Why it's mere child's play.

MER. Very simple isn't it?

THES. Simple? Why I could do it on my head.

MER. Ah--I darsay you will do it on your head very soon.

THES. What do you mean by that, Mercury?

MER. I mean that when you've turned the world quite topsy-turvy you won't know whether you're standing on your head or your heels.

THES. Well, but Mercury, it's all right at present.

MER. Oh yes--as far as we know.

THES. Well, but, you know, we know as much as anybody knows; you know I believe the world's still going on.

MER. Yes--as far as we can judge--much as usual.

THES. Well, the, give the Father of the Drama his due Mercury. Don't be envious of the Father of the Drama.

MER. But you see you leave so much to accident.

THES. Well, Mercury, if I do, it's my principle. I am an easy man, and I like to make things as pleasant as possible. What did I do the day we took office? Why I called the company together and I said to them: "Here we are, you know, gods and goddesses, no mistake about it, the real thing. Well, we have certain duties to discharge, let's discharge them intelligently. Don't let us be hampered by routine and red tape and precedent, let's set the original gods an example, and put a liberal interpretation on our duties. If it occurs to any one to try an experiment in his own department, let him try it, if he fails there's no harm done, if he succeeds it is a distinct gain to society. Don't hurry your work, do it slowly and well." And here we are after a twelvemonth and not a single complaint or a single petition has reached me.

MER. No, not yet.

THES. What do you mean by "no,not yet?"

MER. Well, you see, you don't understand things. All the petitions that are addressed by men to Jupiter pass through my hands, and its my duty to collect them and present them once a year.

THES. Oh, only once a year?

MER. Only once a year--

THES. And the year is up?

MER. Today.

THES. Oh, then I suppose there are some complaints?

MER. Yes, there are some.

THES. [Disturbed] Oh, perhaps there are a good many?

MER. There are a good many.

THES. Oh, perhaps there are a thundering lot?

MER. There are a thundering lot.

THES. [very much disturbed] Oh.

MER. You see you've been taking it so very easy--and so have most of your company.

THES. Oh, who has been taking it easy?

MER. Well, all except those who have been trying experiments.

THES. Well but I suppose the experiment are ingenious?

MER. Yes; they are ingenious, but on the whole ill-judged. But

it's time go and summon your court.

THES. What for.

MER. To hear the complaints. In five minutes they will be here.
[Exit]

THES. [very uneasy] I don't know how it is, but there is something in that young man's manner that suggests that the father of the gods has been taking it too easy. Perhaps it would have been better if I hadn't given my company so much scope. I wonder what they've been doing. I think I will curtail their discretion, though none of them appear to have much of the article. It seems a pity to deprive 'em of what little they have.

[Enter Daphne, weeping]

THES. Now then, Daphne, what's the matter with you?

DAPH. Well, you know how disgracefully Sparkeion--

THES. [correcting her] Apollo--

DAPH. Apollo, then--has treated me. He promised to marry me years ago and now he's married to Nicemis.

THES. Now look here. I can't go into that. You're in Olympus now and must behave accordingly. Drop your Daphne--assume your Calliope.

DAPH. Quite so. That's it. [mysteriously]

THES. Oh--that is it? [puzzled]

DAPH. That is it. Thespis. I am Calliope, the muse of fame. Very good. This morning I was in the Olympian library and I took down the only book there. Here it is.

THES. [taking it] Lempriere's Classical Dictionary. The Olympian Peerage.

DAPH. Open it at Apollo.

THES. [opens it] It is done.

DAPH. Read.

THES. "Apollo was several times married, among others to Issa, Bolina, Coronis, Chymene, Cyrene, Chione, Acacallis, and Calliope."

DAPH. And Calliope.

THES. [musing] Ha. I didn't know he was married to them.

DAPH. [severely] Sir. This is the family edition.

THES. Quite so.

DAPH. You couldn't expect a lady to read any other?

THES. On no consideration. But in the original version--

DAPH. I go by the family edition.

THES. Then by the family edition, Apollo is your husband.

[Enter Nicemis and Sparkeion]

NICE. Apollo your husband? He is my husband.

DAPH. I beg your pardon. He is my husband.

NICE. Apollo is Sparkeion, and he's married to me.

DAPH. Sparkeion is Apollo, and he's married to me.

NICE. He is my husband.

DAPH. He's your brother.

THES. Look here, Apollo, whose husband are you? Don't let's have any row about it; whose husband are you?

SPAR. Upon my honor I don't know. I'm in a very delicate position, but I'll fall in with any arrangement Thespis may propose.

DAPH. I've just found out that he's my husband and yet he goes out every evening with that "thing."

THES. Perhaps he's trying an experiment.

DAPH. I don't like my husband to make such experiments. The question is, who are we all and what is our relation to each other.

SPAR. You're Diana. I'm Apollo
And Calliope is she.

DAPH. He's your brother.

NICE. You're another. He has fairly married me.

DAPH. By the rules of this fair spot
I'm his wife and you are not.

SPAR & DAPH. By the rules of this fair spot
I'm/she's his wife and you are not.

NICE. By this golden wedding ring,
I'm his wife, and you're a "thing."

DAPH, NICE, SPAR. By this golden wedding ring,
I'm/She's his wife and you're a "thing."

ALL. Please will someone kindly tell us.
Who are our respective kin?
All of us/them are very jealous
Neither of us/them will give in.

NICE. He's my husband, I declare,
I espoused him properlee.

SPAR. That is true, for I was there,

And I saw her marry me.

DAPH. He's your brother--I'm his wife.
If we go by Lempriere.

SPAR. So she is, upon my life.
Really, that seems very fair.

NICE. You're my husband and no other.

SPAR. That is true enough I swear.

DAPH. I'm his wife, and you're his brother.

SPAR. If we go by Lempriere.

NICE. It will surely be unfair,
To decide by Lempriere. [crying]

DAPH. It will surely be quite fair,
To decide by Lempriere.

SPAR & THES How you settle it I don't care,
Leave it all to Lempriere.
[Spoken] The Verdict
As Sparkeion is Apollo,
Up in this Olympian clime,
Why, Nicemis, it will follow,
He's her husband, for the time. [indicating Daphne]

When Sparkeion turns to mortal
Join once more the sons of men.
He may take you to his portal [indicating Nicemis]
He will be your husband then.
That oh that is my decision,
'Cording to my mental vision,
Put an end to all collision,
My decision, my decision.

ALL. That oh that is his decision. etc.

[Exeunt Thes, Nice., Spar and Daphne, Spar. with Daphne, Nicemis]

weeping with Thespis. mysterious music. Enter Jupiter, Apollo and Mars from below, at the back of stage. All wear cloaks, as disguise and all are masked]

JUP., AP., MARS. Oh rage and fury, Oh shame and sorrow.

We'll be resuming our ranks tomorrow.
Since from Olympus we have departed,
We've been distracted and brokenhearted,
Oh wicked Thespis. Oh villain scurvy.
Through him Olympus is topsy turvy.
Compelled to silence to grin and bear it.
He's caused our sorrow, and he shall share it.
Where is the monster. Avenge his blunders.
He has awakened Olympian thunders.

[Enter Mercury]

JUP. Oh monster.

AP. Oh monster.

MARS. Oh monster.

MER. [in great terror] Please sir, what have I done, sir?

JUP. What did we leave you behind for?

MER. Please sir, that's the question I asked for when you went away.

JUP. Was it not that Thespis might consult you whenever he was in a difficulty?

MER. Well, here I've been ready to be consulted, chockful of reliable information--running over with celestial maxims--advice gratis ten to four--after twelve ring the night bell in cases of emergency.

JUP. And hasn't he consulted you?

MER. Not he--he disagrees with me about everything.

JUP. He must have misunderstood me. I told him to consult you whenever he was in a fix.

MER. He must have though you said in-sult. Why whenever I opened my mouth he jumps down my throat. It isn't pleasant to have a fellow constantly jumping down your throat--especially when he always disagrees with you. It's just the sort of thing I can't digest.

JUP. [in a rage] Send him here. I'll talk to him.

[enter Thespis. He is much terrified]

JUP. Oh monster.

AP. Oh monster.

MARS. Oh monster.

[Thespis sings in great terror, which he endeavours to conceal]

JUP. Well sir, the year is up today.

AP. And a nice mess you've made of it.

MARS. You've deranged the whole scheme of society.

THES. [aside] There's going to be a row. [aloud and very familiarly]My dear boy, I do assure you--

JUP. Be respectful.

AP. Be respectful.

MARS. Be respectful.

THES. I don't know what you allude to. With the exception of getting our scene painter to "run up" this temple, because we found the ruins draughty, we haven't touched a thing.

JUP. Oh story teller.

AP. Oh story teller.

MARS. Oh story teller.

[Enter thespians]

THES. My dear fellows, you're distressing yourselves unnecessarily. The court of Olympus is about to assemble to listen to the complaints of the year, if any. But there are none, or next to none. Let the Olympians assemble. [Thespiis takes chair. JUP., AP., and MARS sit below him.

Ladies and gentlemen, it seems that it is usual for the gods to assemble once a year to listen to mortal petitions. It doesn't seem to me to be a good plan, as work is liable to accumulate; but as I am particularly anxious not to interfere with Olympian precedent, but to allow everything to go on as it has always been accustomed to go--why, we'll say no more about it. [aside] But how shall I account for your presence?

JUP. Say we are the gentlemen of the press.

THES. That all our proceedings may be perfectly open and above-board I have communicated with the most influential members of the Athenian press, and I beg to introduce to your notice three of its most distinguished members. They bear marks emblematic of the anonymous character of modern journalism. [Business of introduction. Thespiis is very uneasy] Now then, if you're all ready we will begin.

MER. [brings tremendous bundle of petitions] Here is the agenda.

THES. What's that? The petitions?

MER. Some of them. [opens one and reads] Ah, I thought there'd be a row about it.

THES. Why, what's wrong now?

MER. Why, it's been a foggy Friday in November for the last six months and the Athenians are tired of it.

THES. There's no pleasing some people. This craving for perpetual change is the curse of the country. Friday's a very nice day.

MER. So it is, but a Friday six months long.--it gets monotonous.

JUP, AP, MARS. [rising] It's perfectly ridiculous.

THES. [calling them] Cymon.

CYM. [as time with the usual attributes] Sir.

THES. [Introducing him to the three gods] Allow me--Father Time--rather young at present but even time must have a beginning. In course of time, time will grow older. Now then, Father Time, what's this about a wet Friday in November for the last six months.

CYM. Well, the fact is, I've been trying an experiment. Seven days in the week is an awkward number. It can't be halved. Two;'s into seven won't go.

THES. [tries it on his fingers] Quite so--quite so.

CYM. So I abolished Saturday.

JUP, AP, MARS. Oh but. [Rising]

THES. Do be quiet. He's a very intelligent young man and knows what he is about. So you abolished Saturday. And how did you find it answer?

CYM. Admirably.

THES. You hear? He found it answer admirably.

CYM. Yes, only Sunday refused to take its place.

THES. Sunday refused to take its place?

CYM. Sunday comes after Saturday--Sunday won't go on duty after Friday. Sunday's principles are very strict. That's where my experiment sticks.

THES. Well, but why November? Come, why November?

CYM. December can't begin until November has finished. November can't finish because he's abolished Saturday. There again my experiment sticks.

THES. Well, but why wet? Come now, why wet?

CYM. Ah, that is your fault. You turned on the rain six months ago and you forgot to turn it off again.

JUP., AP., MARS. [rising] On this is monstrous.

ALL. Order. Order.

THES. Gentlemen, pray be seated. [to the others] The liberty of the press, one can't help it. [to the three gods] It is easily settled. Athens has had a wet Friday in November for the last six months. Let them have a blazing Tuesday in July for the next twelve.

JUP., AP., MARS. But--

ALL. Order. Order.

THES. Now then, the next article.

MER. Here's a petition from the Peace Society. They complain because there are no more battles.

MARS. [springing up] What.

THES. Quiet there. Good dog--soho; Timidon.

TIM. [as Mars] Here.

THES. What's this about there being no battles?

TIM. I've abolished battles; it's an experiment.

MARS. [spring up] Oh come, I say--

THES. Quiet then. [to Tim] Abolished battles?

TIM. Yes, you told us on taking office to remember two things. To try experiments and to take it easy. I found I couldn't take it easy while there are any battles to attend to, so I tried the experiment and abolished battles. And then I took it easy. The Peace Society ought to be very much obliged to me.

THES. Obligated to you. Why, confound it. Since battles have been abolished, war is universal.

TIM. War is universal?

THES. To b sure it is. Now that nations can't fight, no two of 'em are on speaking terms. The dread of fighting was the only thing that kept them civil to each other. Let battles be restored and peace reign supreme.

MER. Here's a petition from the associated wine merchants of Mytilene? Are there no grapes this year?

THES. Well, what's wrong with the associated wine merchants of Mytilene? Are there no grapes this year?

THES. Plenty of grapes. More than usual.

THES. [to the gods] You observe, there is no deception. There are more than usual.

MER. There are plenty of grapes, only they are full of ginger beer.

THREE GODS. Oh, come I say [rising they are put down by Thespis.]

THES. Eh? what [much alarmed] Bacchus.

TIPS. [as Bacchus] Here.

THES. There seems to be something unusual with the grapes of Mytilene. They only grow ginger beer.

TIPS. And a very good thing too.

THES. It's very nice in its way but it is not what one looks for from grapes.

TIPS. Beloved master, a week before we came up here, you insisted on my taking the pledge. By so doing you rescued me from my otherwise inevitable misery. I cannot express my thanks. Embrace me. [attempts to embrace him.]

THES. Get out, don't be a fool. Look here, you know you're the god of wine.

TIPS. I am.

THES. [very angry] Well, do you consider it consistent with your duty as the god of wine to make the grapes yield nothing but ginger beer?

TIPS. Do you consider it consistent with my duty as a total abstainer to grow anything stronger than ginger beer?

THES. But your duty as the god of wine--

TIPS. In every respect in which my duty as the god of wine can be discharged consistently with my duty as a total abstainer, I will discharge it. But when the functions clash, everything must give way to the pledge. My preserver. [Attempts to embrace him]

THES. Don't be a confounded fool. This can be arranged. We can't give over the wine this year, but at least we can improve the ginger beer. Let all the ginger beer be extracted from it immediately.

THREE GODS. We can't stand this,
We can't stand this.
It's much too strong.
We can't stand this.
It would be wrong.
Extremely wrong.
If we stood this.

If we stand this
If we stand this
We can't stand this.

DAPH, SPAR, NICE. Great Jove, this interference.
Is more than we can stand;
Of them make a clearance,
With your majestic hand.

JOVE. This cool audacity, it beats us hollow.
I'm Jupiter.

MARS. I'm Mars.

AP. I'm Apollo.

[Enter Diana and all the other gods and goddesses.]

ALL. [kneeling with their foreheads on the ground]

Jupiter, Mars, and Apollo
Have quitted the dwellings of men;
The other gods quickly will follow.
And what will become of us then.
Oh pardon us, Jove and Apollo,
Pardon us, Jupiter, Mars:
Oh see us in misery wallow.
Cursing our terrible stars.

[enter other gods.]

ALL THESPIANS: Let us remain, we beg of you pleadingly.

THREE GODS: Let them remain, they beg of us pleadingly.

THES. Life on Olympus suits us exceedingly.

GODS. Life on Olympus suits them exceedingly.

THES. Let us remain, we pray in humility.

GODS. Let 'em remain, they pray in humility.

THES. If we have shown some little ability.

GODS. If they have shown some little ability.
Let us remain, etc...

JUP. Enough, your reign is ended.
Upon this sacred hill.
Let him be apprehended
And learn out awful will.
Away to earth, contemptible comedians,
And hear our curse, before we set you free'
You shall be all be eminent tragedians,
Whom no one ever goes to see.

ALL. We go to earth, contemptible tragedians,
We hear his curse, before he sets us free,
We shall all be eminent tragedians,
Whom no one ever, ever goes to see.

SILL, SPAR, THES. Whom no one
Ever goes to see.

[The thespians are driven away by the gods, who group themselves
in attitudes of triumph.]

THES. Now, here you see the arrant folly
Of doing your best to make things jolly.
I've ruled the world like a chap in his senses,
Observe the terrible consequences.
Great Jupiter, whom nothing pleases,
Splutters and swears, and kicks up breezes,
And sends us home in a mood avengin'
In double quick time, like a railroad engine.
And this he does without compunction,
Because I have discharged with unction
A highly complicated function
Complying with his own injunction,
Fol, lol, lay

CHO. All this he does....etc.

[The gods drive the thespians away. The thespians prepare to descend the mountain as the curtain falls.]

CURTAIN

William Schwenck Gilbert

They'LI None Of 'Em Be Missed

As some day it may happen that a victim must be found,
I've got a little list - I've got a little list
Of social offenders who might well be underground,
And who never would be missed - who never would be missed!
There's the pestilential nuisances who write for autographs -
All people who have flabby hands and irritating laughs -
All children who are up in dates, and floor you with 'em flat -
All persons who in shaking hands, shake hands with you like THAT -
And all third persons who on spoiling TETE-E-TETES insist -
They'd none of 'em be missed - they'd none of 'em be missed!

There's the nigger serenader, and the others of his race,
And the piano organist - I've got him on the list!
And the people who eat peppermint and puff it in your face,
They never would be missed - they never would be missed!
Then the idiot who praises, with enthusiastic tone,
All centuries but this, and every country but his own;
And the lady from the provinces, who dresses like a guy,
And who "doesn't think she waltzes, but would rather like to try";
And that FIN-DE-SIECLE anomaly, the scorching motorist -
I don't think he'd be missed - I'm SURE he'd not be missed!

And that NISI PRIUS nuisance, who just now is rather rife,
The Judicial humorist - I've got HIM on the list!
All funny fellows, comic men, and clowns of private life -
They'd none of 'em be missed - they'd none of 'em be missed!
And apologetic statesmen of the compromising kind,
Such as - What-d'ye-call-him - Thing'em-Bob, and likewise - Never-
mind,
And 'St - 'st - 'st - and What's-his-name, and also - You-know-who-
(The task of filling up the blanks I'd rather leave to YOU!)
But it really doesn't matter whom you put upon the list,
For they'd none of 'em be missed - they'd none of 'em be missed!

William Schwenck Gilbert

Thomas Winterbottom Hance

IN all the towns and cities fair
On Merry England's broad expanse,
No swordsman ever could compare
With THOMAS WINTERBOTTOM HANCE.

The dauntless lad could fairly hew
A silken handkerchief in twain,
Divide a leg of mutton too -
And this without unwholesome strain.

On whole half-sheep, with cunning trick,
His sabre sometimes he'd employ -
No bar of lead, however thick,
Had terrors for the stalwart boy.

At Dover daily he'd prepare
To hew and slash, behind, before -
Which aggravated MONSIEUR PIERRE,
Who watched him from the Calais shore.

It caused good PIERRE to swear and dance,
The sight annoyed and vexed him so;
He was the bravest man in France -
He said so, and he ought to know.

"Regardez donc, ce cochon gros -
Ce polisson! Oh, sacre bleu!
Son sabre, son plomb, et ses gigots
Comme cela m'ennuye, enfin, mon Dieu!

"Il sait que les foulards de soie
Give no retaliating whack -
Les gigots morts n'ont pas de quoi -
Le plomb don't ever hit you back."

But every day the headstrong lad
Cut lead and mutton more and more;
And every day poor PIERRE, half mad,
Shrieked loud defiance from his shore.

HANCE had a mother, poor and old,
A simple, harmless village dame,
Who crowed and clapped as people told
Of WINTERBOTTOM'S rising fame.

She said, "I'll be upon the spot
To see my TOMMY'S sabre-play;"
And so she left her leafy cot,
And walked to Dover in a day.

PIERRE had a doating mother, who
Had heard of his defiant rage;
HIS Ma was nearly ninety-two,
And rather dressy for her age.

At HANCE'S doings every morn,
With sheer delight HIS mother cried;
And MONSIEUR PIERRE'S contemptuous scorn
Filled HIS mamma with proper pride.

But HANCE'S powers began to fail -
His constitution was not strong -
And PIERRE, who once was stout and hale,
Grew thin from shouting all day long.

Their mothers saw them pale and wan,
Maternal anguish tore each breast,
And so they met to find a plan
To set their offsprings' minds at rest.

Said MRS. HANCE, "Of course I shrinks
From bloodshed, ma'am, as you're aware,
But still they'd better meet, I thinks."
"Assurement!" said MADAME PIERRE.

A sunny spot in sunny France
Was hit upon for this affair;
The ground was picked by MRS. HANCE,
The stakes were pitched by MADAME PIERRE.

Said MRS. H., "Your work you see -

Go in, my noble boy, and win."
"En garde, mon fils!" said MADAME P.
"Allons!" "Go on!" "En garde!" "Begin!"

(The mothers were of decent size,
Though not particularly tall;
But in the sketch that meets your eyes
I've been obliged to draw them small.)

Loud sneered the doughty man of France,
"Ho! ho! Ho! ho! Ha! ha! Ha! ha!
"The French for 'Pish'" said THOMAS HANCE.
Said PIERRE, "L'Anglais, Monsieur, pour 'Bah.'"

Said MRS. H., "Come, one! two! three! -
We're sittin' here to see all fair."
"C'est magnifique!" said MADAME P.,
"Mais, parbleu! ce n'est pas la guerre!"

"Je scorn un foe si lache que vous,"
Said PIERRE, the doughty son of France.
"I fight not coward foe like you!"
Said our undaunted TOMMY HANCE.

"The French for 'Pooh!'" our TOMMY cried.
"L'Anglais pour 'Va!'" the Frenchman crowed.
And so, with undiminished pride,
Each went on his respective road.

William Schwenck Gilbert

Thomson Green And Harriet Hale

(To be sung to the Air of "An 'Orrible Tale.")

Oh list to this incredible tale
Of THOMSON GREEN and HARRIET HALE;
Its truth in one remark you'll sum -
"Twaddle twaddle twaddle twaddle twaddle twum!"

Oh, THOMSON GREEN was an auctioneer,
And made three hundred pounds a year;
And HARRIET HALE, most strange to say,
Gave pianoforte lessons at a sovereign a day.

Oh, THOMSON GREEN, I may remark,
Met HARRIET HALE in Regent's Park,
Where he, in a casual kind of way,
Spoke of the extraordinary beauty of the day.

They met again, and strange, though true,
He courted her for a month or two,
Then to her pa he said, says he,
"Old man, I love your daughter and your daughter worships me!"

Their names were regularly banned,
The wedding day was settled, and
I've ascertained by dint of search
They were married on the quiet at St. Mary Abbot's Church.

Oh, list to this incredible tale
Of THOMSON GREEN and HARRIET HALE,
Its truth in one remark you'll sum -
"Twaddle twaddle twaddle twaddle twaddle twum!"

That very self-same afternoon
They started on their honeymoon,
And (oh, astonishment!) took flight
To a pretty little cottage close to Shanklin, Isle of Wight.

But now - you'll doubt my word, I know -

In a month they both returned, and lo!
Astounding fact! this happy pair
Took a gentlemanly residence in Canonbury Square!

They led a weird and reckless life,
They dined each day, this man and wife
(Pray disbelieve it, if you please),
On a joint of meat, a pudding, and a little bit of cheese.

In time came those maternal joys
Which take the form of girls or boys,
And strange to say of each they'd one -
A tiddy-iddy daughter, and a tiddy-iddy son!

Oh, list to this incredible tale
Of THOMSON GREEN and HARRIET HALE,
Its truth in one remark you'll sum -
"Twaddle twaddle twaddle twaddle twaddle twum!"

My name for truth is gone, I fear,
But, monstrous as it may appear,
They let their drawing-room one day
To an eligible person in the cotton-broking way.

Whenever THOMSON GREEN fell sick
His wife called in a doctor, quick,
From whom some words like these would come -
FIAT MIST. SUMENDUM HAUSTUS, in a COCHLEYAREUM.

For thirty years this curious pair
Hung out in Canonbury Square,
And somehow, wonderful to say,
They loved each other dearly in a quiet sort of way.

Well, THOMSON GREEN fell ill and died;
For just a year his widow cried,
And then her heart she gave away
To the eligible lodger in the cotton-broking way.

Oh, list to this incredible tale
Of THOMSON GREEN and HARRIET HALE,
Its truth in one remark you'll sum -

"Twaddle twaddle twaddle twaddle twaddle twaddle twum!"

William Schwenck Gilbert

To A Little Maid - By A Politician

Come with me, little maid,
Nay, shrink not, thus afraid -
I'll harm thee not!
Fly not, my love, from me -
I have a home for thee -
A fairy grot,
Where mortal eye
Can rarely pry,
There shall thy dwelling be!

List to me, while I tell
The pleasures of that cell,
Oh, little maid!
What though its couch be rude,
Homely the only food
Within its shade?
No thought of care
Can enter there,
No vulgar swain intrude!

Come with me, little maid,
Come to the rocky shade
I love to sing;
Live with us, maiden rare -
Come, for we "want" thee there,
Thou elfin thing,
To work thy spell,
In some cool cell
In stately Pentonville!

William Schwenck Gilbert

To My Bride (Whoever She May Be)

Oh! little maid! - (I do not know your name
Or who you are, so, as a safe precaution
I'll add) - Oh, buxom widow! married dame!
(As one of these must be your present portion)
Listen, while I unveil prophetic lore for you,
And sing the fate that Fortune has in store for you.

You'll marry soon - within a year or twain -
A bachelor of CIRCA two and thirty:
Tall, gentlemanly, but extremely plain,
And when you're intimate, you'll call him "BERTIE."
Neat - dresses well; his temper has been classified
As hasty; but he's very quickly pacified.

You'll find him working mildly at the Bar,
After a touch at two or three professions,
From easy affluence extremely far,
A brief or two on Circuit - "soup" at Sessions;
A pound or two from whist and backing horses,
And, say three hundred from his own resources.

Quiet in harness; free from serious vice,
His faults are not particularly shady,
You'll never find him "SHY" - for, once or twice
Already, he's been driven by a lady,
Who parts with him - perhaps a poor excuse for him -
Because she hasn't any further use for him.

Oh! bride of mine - tall, dumpy, dark, or fair!
Oh! widow - wife, maybe, or blushing maiden,
I've told YOUR fortune; solved the gravest care
With which your mind has hitherto been laden.
I've prophesied correctly, never doubt it;
Now tell me mine - and please be quick about it!

You - only you - can tell me, an' you will,
To whom I'm destined shortly to be mated,
Will she run up a heavy MODISTE'S bill?
If so, I want to hear her income stated

(This is a point which interests me greatly).
To quote the bard, "Oh! have I seen her lately?"

Say, must I wait till husband number one
Is comfortably stowed away at Woking?
How is her hair most usually done?
And tell me, please, will she object to smoking?
The colour of her eyes, too, you may mention:
Come, Sibyl, prophesy - I'm all attention.

William Schwenck Gilbert

To Phoebe

"GENTLE, modest little flower,
Sweet epitome of May,
Love me but for half an hour,
Love me, love me, little fay."
Sentences so fiercely flaming
In your tiny shell-like ear,
I should always be exclaiming
If I loved you, PHOEBE dear.

"Smiles that thrill from any distance
Shed upon me while I sing!
Please ecstaticize existence,
Love me, oh, thou fairy thing!"
Words like these, outpouring sadly
You'd perpetually hear,
If I loved you fondly, madly; -
But I do not, PHOEBE dear.

William Schwenck Gilbert

To The Terrestrial Globe

Roll on, thou ball, roll on!
Through pathless realms of Space
Roll on!
What though I'm in a sorry case?
What though I cannot meet my bills?
What though I suffer toothache's ills?
What though I swallow countless pills?
Never YOU mind!
Roll on!

Roll on, thou ball, roll on!
Through seas of inky air
Roll on!
It's true I've got no shirts to wear;
It's true my butcher's bill is due;
It's true my prospects all look blue -
But don't let that unsettle you!
Never YOU mind!
Roll on!

[IT ROLLS ON.]

William Schwenck Gilbert

Trial By Jury

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

THE LEARNED JUDGE

THE PLAINTIFF

THE DEFENDANT

COUNSEL FOR THE PLAINTIFF

USHER

FOREMAN OF THE JURY

ASSOCIATE

FIRST BRIDESMAID

SCENE - A Court of Justice, Barristers, Attorney, and Jurymen
discovered.

CHORUS

Hark, the hour of ten is sounding:
Hearts with anxious fears are bounding,
Hall of Justice, crowds surrounding,
 Breathing hope and fear--
For to-day in this arena,
Summoned by a stern subpoena,
Edwin, sued by Angelina,
 Shortly will appear.

Enter Usher

SOLO - USHER

Now, Jurymen, hear my advice--
All kinds of vulgar prejudice
 I pray you set aside:
With stern, judicial frame of mind
From bias free of every kind,
 This trial must be tried.

CHORUS

From bias free of every kind,
This trial must be tried.

[During Chorus, Usher sings fortissimo, "Silence in Court!"]

USHER Oh, listen to the plaintiff's case:
Observe the features of her face--
The broken-hearted bride.
Condole with her distress of mind:
From bias free of every kind,
This trial must be tried!

CHORUS From bias free, etc.

USHER And when, amid the plaintiff's shrieks,
The ruffianly defendant speaks--
Upon the other side;
What he may say you needn't mind---
From bias free of every kind,
This trial must be tried!

CHORUS From bias free, etc.

Enter Defendant

RECIT -- DEFENDANT

Is this the court of the Exchequer?

ALL. It is!

DEFENDANT (aside) Be firm, be firm, my pecker,
Your evil star's in the ascendant!

ALL. Who are you?

DEFENDANT. I'm the Defendant.

CHORUS OF JURYMEN (shaking their fists)

Monster, dread our damages.

We're the jury!

Dread our fury!

DEFENDANT Hear me, hear me, if you please,
These are very strange proceedings--

For permit me to remark
On the merits of my pleadings,
You're at present in the dark.

[Defendant beckons to Jurymen--they leave the box and gather around him as they sing the following:

That's a very true remark--
On the merits of his pleadings
We're at present in the dark!
Ha! ha!--ha! ha!

SONG -- DEFENDANT

When first my old, old love I knew,
My bosom welled with joy;
My riches at her feet I threw--
I was a love-sick boy!
No terms seemed too extravagant
Upon her to employ--
I used to mope, and sigh, and pant,
Just like a love-sick boy!
Tink-a-tank! Tink-a-tank!

But joy incessant palls the sense;
And love, unchanged, will cloy,
And she became a bore intense
Unto her love-sick boy!
With fitful glimmer burnt my flame,
And I grew cold and coy,
At last, one morning, I became
Another's love-sick boy.
Tink-a-tank! Tink-a-tank!

CHORUS OF JURYMEN (advancing stealthily)

Oh, I was like that when a lad!
A shocking young scamp of a rover,
I behaved like a regular cad;
But that sort of thing is all over.
I'm now a respectable chap
And shine with a virtue resplendent

And, therefore, I haven't a scrap
Of sympathy with the defendant!
He shall treat us with awe,
If there isn't a flaw,
Singing so merrily--Trial-la-law!
Trial-la-law! Trial-la-law!
Singing so merrily--Trial-la-law!

[They enter the Jury-box.]

RECIT--USHER (on Bench)

Silence in Court, and all attention lend.
Behold your Judge! In due submission bend!

Enter Judge on Bench

CHORUS

All hail, great Judge!
To your bright rays
We never grudge
Ecstatic praise.
All hail!

May each decree
As statute rank
And never be
Reversed in banc.
All hail!

RECIT--JUDGE

For these kind words, accept my thanks, I pray.
A Breach of Promise we've to try to-day.
But firstly, if the time you'll not begrudge,
I'll tell you how I came to be a Judge.

ALL. He'll tell us how he came to be a Judge!

JUDGE. I'll tell you how...

ALL. He'll tell us how...

JUDGE. I'll tell you how...

ALL. He'll tell us how...

JUDGE Let me speak...!

ALL. Let him speak!

JUDGE. Let me speak!

ALL. (in a whisper). Let him speak!

He'll tell us how he came to be a Judge!

USHER. Silence in Court! Silence in Court!

SONG--JUDGE

When I, good friends, was called to the bar,
I'd an appetite fresh and hearty.
But I was, as many young barristers are,
An impecunious party.

I'd a swallow-tail coat of a beautiful blue--
And a brief which I bought of a booby--
A couple of shirts, and a collar or two,
And a ring that looked like a ruby!

CHORUS. A couple of shirts, etc.

JUDGE. At Westminster Hall I danced a dance,
Like a semi-despondent fury;
For I thought I never should hit on a chance
Of addressing a British Jury--
But I soon got tired of third-class journeys,
And dinners of bread and water;
So I fell in love with a rich attorney's
Elderly, ugly daughter.

CHORUS. So he fell in love, etc.

JUDGE. The rich attorney, he jumped with joy,
And replied to my fond professions:
"You shall reap the reward of your pluck, my boy,
At the Bailey and Middlesex sessions.
You'll soon get used to her looks," said he,
"And a very nice girl you will find her!
She may very well pass for forty-three
In the dusk, with a light behind her!"

CHORUS. She may very well, etc.

JUDGE. The rich attorney was good as his word;
 The briefs came trooping gaily,
 And every day my voice was heard
 At the Sessions or Ancient Bailey.
 All thieves who could my fees afford
 Relied on my orations.
 And many a burglar I've restored
 To his friends and his relations.

CHORUS. And many a burglar, etc.

JUDGE. At length I became as rich as the Gurneys--
 An incubus then I thought her,
 So I threw over that rich attorney's
 Elderly, ugly daughter.
 The rich attorney my character high
 Tried vainly to disparage---
 And now, if you please, I'm ready to try
 This Breach of Promise of Marriage!

CHORUS. And now if you please, etc.

JUDGE. For now I'm a Judge!

ALL. And a good Judge, too!

JUDGE. For now I'm a Judge!

ALL. And a good Judge, too!

JUDGE. Though all my law be fudge,

 Yet I'll never, never budge,

 But I'll live and die a Judge!

ALL. And a good Judge, too!

JUDGE (pianissimo). It was managed by a job--

ALL. And a good job, too!

JUDGE. It was managed by a job!

ALL. And a good job too!

JUDGE. It is patent to the mob,

 That my being made a nob

 Was effected by a job.

ALL. And a good job too!

[Enter Counsel for Plaintiff. He takes his place in front row of
Counsel's seats

RECIT -- COUNSEL

Swear thou the jury!

USHER. Kneel, Jurymen, oh, kneel!

[All the Jury kneel in the Jury-box, and so are hidden from
audience.

USHER. Oh, will you swear by yonder skies,
Whatever question may arise,
'Twixt rich and poor, 'twixt low and high,
That you will well and truly try?

JURY (raising their hands, which alone are visible)

To all of this we make reply
By the dull slate of yonder sky:
That we will well and truly try.
We'll try.

(All rise with the last note)

RECIT -- COUNSEL

Where is the Plaintiff?
Let her now be brought.

RECIT -- USHER

Oh, Angelina! Come thou into Court!
Angelina! Angelina!

Enter the Bridesmaids

CHORUS OF BRIDESMAIDS

Comes the broken flower--
Comes the cheated maid--

Though the tempest lower,
Rain and cloud will fade
Take, oh maid, these posies:
Though thy beauty rare
Shame the blushing roses,
They are passing fair!
Wear the flowers 'til they fade;
Happy be thy life, oh maid!

[The Judge, having taken a great fancy to First Bridesmaid, sends her a note by Usher, which she reads, kisses rapturously, and places in her bosom.

Enter Plaintiff

SOLO -- PLAINTIFF

O'er the season vernal,
Time may cast a shade;
Sunshine, if eternal,
Makes the roses fade!
Time may do his duty;
Let the thief alone--
Winter hath a beauty.
That is all his own.
Fairest days are sun and shade:
I am no unhappy maid!

[The Judge having by this time transferred his admiration to Plaintiff, directs the Usher to take the note from First Bridesmaid and hand it to Plaintiff, who reads it, kisses it rapturously, and places it in her bosom.

CHORUS OF BRIDESMAIDS

Comes the broken flower, etc.

JUDGE. Oh, never, never, never,
Since I joined the human race,
Saw I so excellently fair a face.

THE JURY (shaking their forefingers at him). Ah, sly dog!
Ah, sly dog!

JUDGE (to Jury). How say you?

Is she not designed for capture?

FOREMAN (after consulting with the Jury). We've but one word,
m'lud, and that is--Rapture!

PLAINTIFF (curtseying). Your kindness, gentlemen, quite
overpowers!

JURY. We love you fondly, and would make you ours!

BRIDESMAIDS (shaking their forefingers at Jury).

Ah, sly dogs! Ah, sly dogs!

RECIT -- COUNSEL for PLAINTIFF

May it please you, m'lud!
Gentlemen of the jury!

ARIA -- COUNSEL

With a sense of deep emotion,
I approach this painful case;
For I never had a notion
That a man could be so base,
Or deceive a girl confiding,
Vows, etcetera deriding.

ALL. He deceived a girl confiding,
Vows, etcetera, deriding.

[Plaintiff falls sobbing on Counsel's breast and remains there.]

COUNSEL. See my interesting client,
Victim of a heartless wile!
See the traitor all defiant
Wear a supercilious smile!
Sweetly smiled my client on him,
Coyly woo'd and gently won him.

ALL. Sweetly smiled, etc.

COUNSEL. Swiftly fled each honeyed hour
Spent with this unmanly male!

Camberwell became a bow'r,
Peckham an Arcadian Vale,
Breathing concentrated otto!--
An existence ... la Watteau.

ALL. Bless, us, concentrated otto! etc.

COUNSEL. Picture, then, my client naming,
And insisting on the day:
Picture him excuses framing--
Going from her far away;
Doubly criminal to do so,
For the maid had bought her trousseau!

ALL. Doubly criminal, etc.

COUNSEL (to Plaintiff, who weeps)

Cheer up, my pretty--oh, cheer up!

JURY. Cheer up, cheer up, we love you!

[Counsel leads Plaintiff fondly into Witness-box; he takes a tender
leave of her, and resumes his place in Court.

(Plaintiff reels as if about to faint)

JUDGE. That she is reeling
Is plain to see!

FOREMAN. If faint you're feeling
Recline on me!

[She falls sobbing on to the Foreman's breast.

PLAINTIFF (feebly). I shall recover
If left alone.

ALL. (shaking their fists at Defendant)
Oh, perjured lover,
Atone! atone!

FOREMAN. Just like a father
I wish to be.

[Kissing her

JUDGE. (approaching her)
Or, if you'd rather,
Recline on me!

[She jumps on to Bench, sits down by the Judge, and falls sobbing
on his breast.

COUNSEL. Oh! fetch some water
From far Cologne!

ALL. For this sad slaughter
Atone! atone!

JURY. (shaking fists at Defendant)
Monster, monster, dread our fury--
There's the Judge, and we're the Jury!
Come! Substantial damages,
Dam---

USHER. Silence in Court!

SONG -- DEFENDANT

Oh, gentlemen, listen, I pray,
Though I own that my heart has been ranging,
Of nature the laws I obey,
For nature is constantly changing.
The moon in her phases is found,
The time, and the wind, and the weather.
The months in succession come round,
And you don't find two Mondays together.
Consider the moral, I pray,
Nor bring a young fellow to sorrow,
Who loves this young lady to-day,
And loves that young lady to-morrow.

BRIDESMAIDS (rushing forward, and kneeling to Jury).

Consider the moral, etc.

One cannot eat breakfast all day,
Nor is it the act of a sinner,
When breakfast is taken away,
To turn his attention to dinner.
And it's not in the range of belief,
To look upon him as a glutton,
Who, when he is tired of beef,
Determines to tackle the mutton.
But this I am willing to say,
If it will appease her sorrow,
I'll marry this lady to-day,
And I'll marry the other to-morrow.

BRIDESMAIDS (rushing forward as before)

But this he is willing say, etc.

RECIT -- JUDGE

That seems a reasonable proposition,
To which, I think, your client may agree.

COUNSEL

But I submit, m'lud, with all submission,
To marry two at once is Burglaree!
[Referring to law book.

In the reign of James the Second,
It was generally reckoned
As a rather serious crime
To marry two wives at a time.

[Hands book up to Judge, who reads it.

ALL. Oh, man of learning!

QUARTETTE

JUDGE. A nice dilemma we have here,
That calls for all our wit:

COUNSEL. And at this stage, it don't appear

That we can settle it.

DEFENDANT (in Witness-box).

If I to wed the girl am loth
A breach 'twill surely be--

PLAINTIFF. And if he goes and marries both,
It counts as Burglaree!

ALL. A nice dilemma we have here,
That calls for all our wit.

DUET -- PLAINTIFF and DEFENDANT

PLAINTIFF (embracing him rapturously)

I love him--I love him--with fervour unceasing
I worship and madly adore;
My blind adoration is ever increasing,
My loss I shall ever deplore.
Oh, see what a blessing, what love and caressing
I've lost, and remember it, pray,
When you I'm addressing, are busy assessing
The damages Edwin must pay---
Yes, he must pay!

DEFENDANT (repelling her furiously)

I smoke like a furnace--I'm always in liquor,
A ruffian--a bully--a sot;
I'm sure I should thrash her, perhaps I should kick her,
I am such a very bad lot!
I'm not prepossessing, as you may be guessing,
She couldn't endure me a day!
Recall my professing, when you are assessing
The damages Edwin must pay!

PLAINTIFF. Yes, he must pay!

[She clings to him passionately; after a struggle, he throws her
off into arms of Counsel.

JURY. We would be fairly acting,
But this is most distracting!
If, when in liquor he would kick her,
That is an abatement.

RECIT -- JUDGE

The question, gentlemen--is one of liquor.
You ask for guidance--this is my reply:
He says, when tipsy, he would thrash and kick her.
Let's make him tipsy, gentlemen, and try!

COUNSEL. With all respect,
I do object!

PLAINTIFF. I do object!

DEFENDANT. I don't object!

ALL. With all respect
We do object!

JUDGE (tossing his books and paper about)

All the legal furies seize you!
No proposal seems to please you,
I can't sit up here all day,
I must shortly get away.
Barristers, and you, attorneys,
Set out on your homeward journeys;
Gentle, simple-minded Usher,
Get you, if you like, to Russher;
Put your briefs upon the shelf,
I will marry her myself!

[He comes down from Bench to floor of Court. He embraces
Angelina.

FINALE

PLAINTIFF. Oh, joy unbounded,
With wealth surrounded,

The knell is sounded
Of grief and woe.

COUNSEL. With love devoted
On you he's doated,
To castle moated
Away they go.

DEFENDANT. I wonder whether
They'll live together,
In marriage tether
In manner true?

USHER. It seems to me, sir,
Of such as she, sir,
A Judge is he, sir,
And a good Judge, too!

JUDGE. Yes, I am a Judge!

ALL. And a good Judge, too!

JUDGE. Yes, I am a Judge!

ALL. And a good Judge, too!

JUDGE. Though homeward as you trudge,
You declare my law is fudge.
Yet of beauty I'm a judge.

ALL. And a good Judge too!

JUDGE. Though defendant is a snob,

ALL. And a great snob, too!

JUDGE. Though defendant is a snob,

ALL. And a great snob, too!

JUDGE. Though defendant is a snob,
I'll reward him from his fob.

So we've settled with the job,

ALL. And a good job, too!

CURTAIN

William Schwenck Gilbert

True Diffidence

My boy, you may take it from me,
That of all the afflictions accurst
With which a man's saddled
And hampered and addled,
A diffident nature's the worst.
Though clever as clever can be -
A Crichton of early romance -
You must stir it and stump it,
And blow your own trumpet,
Or, trust me, you haven't a chance.

Now take, for example, MY case:
I've a bright intellectual brain -
In all London city
There's no one so witty -
I've thought so again and again.
I've a highly intelligent face -
My features cannot be denied -
But, whatever I try, sir,
I fail in - and why, sir?
I'm modesty personified!

As a poet, I'm tender and quaint -
I've passion and fervour and grace -
From Ovid and Horace
To Swinburne and Morris,
They all of them take a back place.
Then I sing and I play and I paint;
Though none are accomplished as I,
To say so were treason:
You ask me the reason?
I'm diffident, modest, and shy!

William Schwenck Gilbert

When A Merry Maiden Marries

When a merry maiden marries,
Sorrow goes and pleasure tarries;
Every sound becomes a song,
All is right and nothing's wrong!
From to-day and ever after
Let your tears be tears of laughter -
Every sigh that finds a vent
Be a sigh of sweet content!
When you marry merry maiden,
Then the air with love is laden;
Every flower is a rose,
Every goose becomes a swan,
Every kind of trouble goes
Where the last year's snows have gone;
Sunlight takes the place of shade
When you marry merry maid!

When a merry maiden marries
Sorrow goes and pleasure tarries;
Every sound becomes a song,
All is right, and nothing's wrong.
Gnawing Care and aching Sorrow,
Get ye gone until to-morrow;
Jealousies in grim array,
Ye are things of yesterday!
When you marry merry maiden,
Then the air with joy is laden;
All the corners of the earth
Ring with music sweetly played,
Worry is melodious mirth,
Grief is joy in masquerade;
Sullen night is laughing day -
All the year is merry May!

William Schwenck Gilbert

When I First Put This Uniform On

When I first put this uniform on,
I said, as I looked in the glass,
"It's one to a million
That any civilian
My figure and form will surpass.
Gold lace has a charm for the fair,
And I've plenty of that, and to spare,
While a lover's professions,
When uttered in Hessians,
Are eloquent everywhere!"
A fact that I counted upon,
When I first put this uniform on!

I said, when I first put it on,
"It is plain to the veriest dunce
That every beauty
Will feel it her duty
To yield to its glamour at once.
They will see that I'm freely gold-laced
In a uniform handsome and chaste" -
But the peripatetics
Of long-haired aesthetics,
Are very much more to their taste -
Which I never counted upon
When I first put this uniform on!

William Schwenck Gilbert

Willow Waly!

[HE.] PRITHEE, pretty maiden - prithee, tell me true
(Hey, but I'm doleful, willow, willow waly!)
Have you e'er a lover a-dangling after you?
Hey, willow waly O!
I would fain discover
If you have a lover?
Hey, willow waly O!

[SHE.] Gentle sir, my heart is frolicsome and free -
(Hey, but he's doleful, willow, willow waly!)
Nobody I care for comes a-courting me -
Hey, willow waly O!
Nobody I care for
Comes a-courting - therefore,
Hey, willow waly O!

[HE.] Prithee, pretty maiden, will you marry me?
(Hey, but I'm hopeful, willow, willow waly!)
I may say, at once, I'm a man of propertee -
Hey, willow waly O!
Money, I despise it,
But many people prize it,
Hey, willow waly O!

[SHE.] Gentle sir, although to marry I design -
(Hey, but he's hopeful, willow, willow waly!)
As yet I do not know you, and so I must decline.
Hey, willow waly O!
To other maidens go you -
As yet I do not know you,
Hey, willow waly O!

William Schwenck Gilbert

Would You Know?

Would you know the kind of maid
Sets my heart a flame-a?
Eyes must be downcast and staid,
Cheeks must flush for shame-a!
She may neither dance nor sing,
But, demure in everything,
Hang her head in modest way
With pouting lips that seem to say,
"Kiss me, kiss me, kiss me, kiss me,
Though I die of shame-a!"
Please you, that's the kind of maid
Sets my heart a flame-a!

When a maid is bold and gay
With a tongue goes clang-a,
Flaunting it in brave array,
Maiden may go hang-a!
Sunflower gay and hollyhock
Never shall my garden stock;
Mine the blushing rose of May,
With pouting lips that seem to say
"Oh, kiss me, kiss me, kiss me, kiss me,
Though I die for shame-a!"
Please you, that's the kind of maid
Sets my heart a flame-a!

William Schwenck Gilbert