

**WILLIAM
SCHWENCK
GILBERT**

THE BAB BALLADS

William Schwenck Gilbert

The Bab Ballads

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Gilbert W.

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W. S. Gilbert

The Bab Ballads

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.

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 croquêt 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 croquêt, 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 croquêt? 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.

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!

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.

To A Little Maid—By A Policeman

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!

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.

Sir Guy The Crusader

Sir GUY was a doughty crusader,
A muscular knight,
Ever ready to fight,
A very determined invader,
And DICKEY 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 *coryphée*, 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.

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 bogy;
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 fogy.

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.

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 hie 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 catch—
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.

Ferdinando And Elvira; Or, The Gentle Pieman

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!

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 THÉRÈSE
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 là! 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, “Méchant THÉRÈSE,
Avec désespoir tu m'accables.
Penses-tu, DE LA SAUCE MAYONNAISE,
Ses intentions sont honorables?”

“Flirtez toujours, ma belle, si tu ôses—
Je me vengerai ainsi, ma chère,
Je lui dirai de quoi l'on compose
Vol au vent à la Financière!”

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 coryphée,
Who danced in the hindermost rows
At the Théâtre des Variétés.

MADEMOISELLE DE LA SAUCE MAYONNAISE
Didn't yield to a gnawing despair
But married a soldier, and plays
As a pretty and pert Vivandière.

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!

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 êtes 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, chère!” he also cried, I’m told,
“Par Jove,” he added, with a sigh.
“Oh, mon! oh, chère! 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)

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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