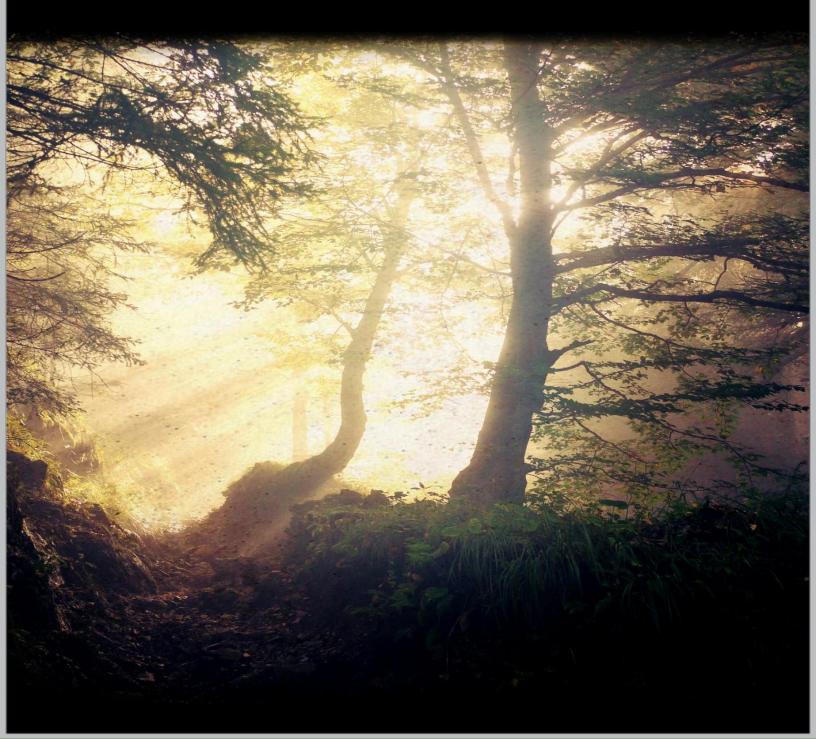
THE BAB BALLADS

W. S. Gilbert



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The Bab Ballads **CAPTAIN REECE** THE DARNED MOUNSEER THE RIVAL CURATES THE ENGLISHMAN **ONLY A DANCING GIRL** THE DISAGREEABLE MAN **GENERAL JOHN** THE COMING BY-AND-BY TO A LITTLE MAID THE HIGHLY RESPECTABLE GONDOLIER **IOHN AND FREDDY** THE FAIRY QUEEN'S SONG SIR GUY THE CRUSADER IS LIFE A BOON HAUNTED THE MODERN MAJOR-GENERAL THE BISHOP AND THE 'BUSMAN THE HEAVY DRAGOON THE TROUBADOUR PROPER PRIDE FERDINANDO AND ELVIRA OR, THE GENTLE **PIEMAN** THE POLICEMAN'S LOT LORENZO DE LARDY THE BAFFLED GRUMBLER DISILLUSIONED THE HOUSE OF PEERS **BABETTE'S LOVE** A MERRY MADRIGAL TO MY BRIDE THE DUKE AND THE DUCHESS

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THE BRITISH TAR **GENTLE ALICE BROWN** A MAN WHO WOULD WOO A FAIR MAID THE SORCERER'S SONG THE BUMBOAT WOMAN'S STORY THE FICKLE BREEZE THE TWO OGRES THE FIRST LORD'S SONG LITTLE OLIVER MISTER WILLIAM WOULD YOU KNOW? PASHA BAILEY BEN LIEUTENANT-COLONEL FLARE **SPECULATION** AH ME! LOST MR. BLAKE THE DUKE OF PLAZA-TORO THE BABY'S VENGEANCE THE ÆSTHETE THE CAPTAIN AND THE MERMAIDS SAID I TO MYSELF. SAID I ANNIE PROTHEROE SORRY HER LOT AN UNFORTUNATE LIKENESS THE CONTEMPLATIVE SENTRY GREGORY PARABLE, LL.D. THE PHILOSOPHIC PILL THE KING OF CANOODLE-DUM **BLUE BLOOD** FIRST LOVE THE JUDGE'S SONG **BRAVE ALUM BEY** WHEN I FIRST PUT THIS UNIFORM ON SIR BARNABY BAMPTON BOO SOLATIUM THE MODEST COUPLE

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HONGREE AND MAHRY THE TANGLED SKEIN THE REVEREND MICAH SOWLS MY LADY ONE AGAINST THE WORLD THE FORCE OF ARGUMENT PUT A PENNY IN THE SLOT GOOD LITTLE GIRLS THE PHANTOM CURATE LIFE LIMITED LIABILITY THE SENSATION CAPTAIN ANGLICISED UTOPIA AN ENGLISH GIRL **TEMPORA MUTANTUR** A MANAGER'S PERPLEXITIES **OUT OF SORTS** AT A PANTOMIME HOW IT'S DONE A CLASSICAL REVIVAL THE STORY OF PRINCE AGIB THE PRACTICAL JOKER THE NATIONAL ANTHEM **IOE GOLIGHTLY** HER TERMS THE INDEPENDENT BEE TO THE TERRESTRIAL GLOBE ETIQUETTE[12] THE DISCONCERTED TENOR **BEN ALLAH ACHMET:** THE PLAYED-OUT HUMORIST **Copyright**

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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 Bequiled 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 familee, 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 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've 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've 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've 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've 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've 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!

THE RIVAL CURATES



List while the poet trolls Of Mr. Clayton Hooper, Who had a cure of souls At Spiffton-extra-Sooper. 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-Sooper, 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.

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!

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).

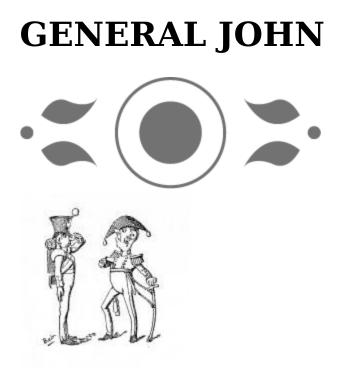
For fays don't suffer, I'm told, From bunions, coughs, or cold. And stately dames that bring Their daughters there to see, Pronounce the "dancing thing" No better than she should be. With her skirt at her shameful knee, And her painted, tainted phiz: Ah, matron, which of us is? (And, in sooth, it oft 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!

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!



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.

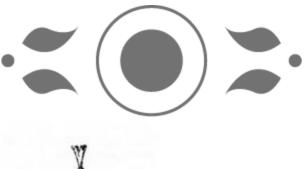


"A glimmering thought occurs to me (Its source I can't unearth), But I've a kind of a notion we Were cruelly changed at birth. "I've a strange idea that each other's names We've each of us here got on. Such things have been," said Private James. "They have!" sneered General John. "My General John, I 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.

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, То wreathe 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!

TO A LITTLE MAID



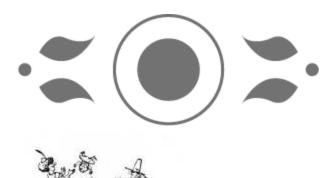
BY A POLICEMAN



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!

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—